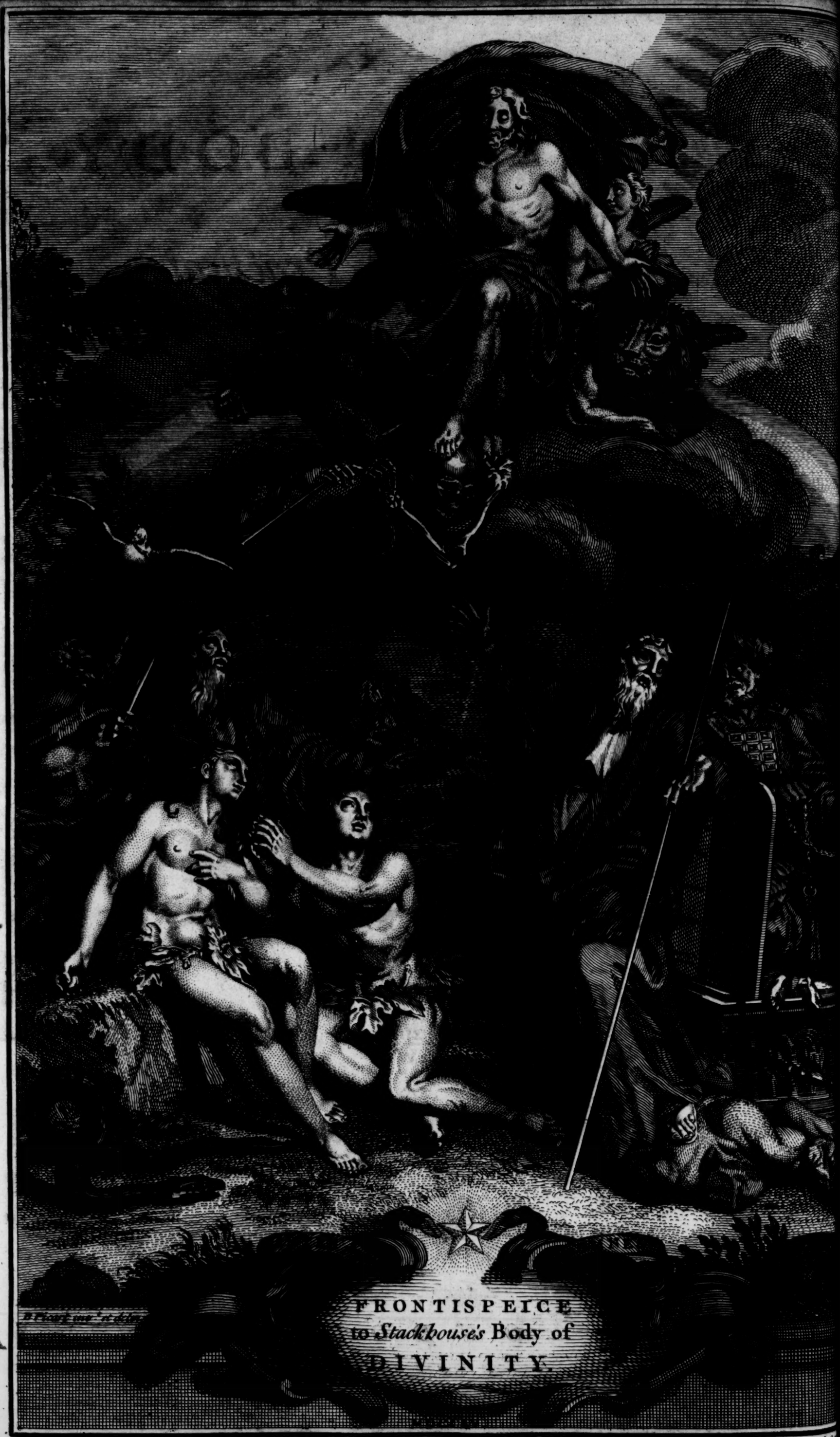

Be not slothful, but followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises. Heb. Chap. 6.

1605/533.

A COMPLEAT BODY OF *Speculative* and *Practical* DIVINITY,

Conſiſting of FIVE PARTS:

I. Of the *Being*, *Nature*, and *Attributes* of GOD, and of the *Evidences* of *Divine Revelation*.

II. Of the Works of *Creation*, and *Providence*.

III. Of the moſt *memorable Tranſactions*, from the Beginning of the World, to the Coming of CHRIST; with *proper Diſſertations* upon each.

IV. Of the *Myſteries* of our moſt *Holy Faith*.

V. Of the Great Precepts of *Moral* and *Evangelical Righteouſneſs*.

THE WHOLE

Extracted from the beſt *Ancient* and *Modern* WRITERS, but chiefly from the Works of ſuch, as have been reputed the moſt able *Divines*, and celebrated *Preachers* amongſt us.

To which are added,

An Alphabetical INDEX of the PRINCIPAL MATTERS contained in the BOOK.

LIKEWISE

A TABLE of Texts of Scripture explained, and more eſpecially referred to in this WORK.

By THOMAS STACKHOUSE, A.M.
Late Vicar of BEENHAM, in BERKSHIRE.

The FOURTH EDITION,
Reviſed, Corrected, and Improved by the AUTHOR.

LONDON:
Printed for J. HINTON, at the *King*'s-*Arms*, in *Newgate-Street*.
MDCCLX.

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THE INTRODUCTION.

THOUGH I am far from being a Friend to long *Prefaces*, as having uſually in them more of the Author's Vanity, than any neceſſary Inſtruction to the Reader; yet I think myſelf concern'd, at this Time, to acquaint the *Publick*, upon what Preſumption I undertook this Work, and in what Manner I have endeavoured to perform it.

THE World, I am very well aware, is ſuppoſed to be ſtored ſufficiently with Books of this Kind already. The Number of the *Syſtematical* Writers in the *Latin Tongue* is very large; and the Benefit, which a *cautious* Reader may gather from thence, is not altogether to be deſpiſed: But then ſome of them are ſo imperfect, and moſt of them ſo very voluminous, ſo loaded with Controverſies, ſo perplexed with Diſtinctions, and ſo full of Opinions, that are not truly Orthodox; that it requires more Sagacity, as well as Induſtry, than uſually falls to a common Reader's Share, to direct his Judgment in this Particular.

IN the *Engliſh Tongue*, if we take the Expoſitions of our Catechiſm (which ſome have thought a compleat Syſtem) into the Number, we have *Bodies of Divinity* almoſt innumerable; but, among ſuch as properly come under the Denomination, that of Dr *Edwards*, and that of Dr *Fiddes* (Men of very different Sentiments, and quite different Ways of Writing) are the beſt known, and moſt in uſe.

Dr *EDWARDS* was a very *Learned* Man, and his *Theologia Reformata* is a Magazine of Knowledge: But then his Matter lies in ſo much Diſorder, that he ſeems a little too negligent of Method. His Diction is ſtrong and nervous, but it is generally very harſh, and his Periods interrupted; the Diſplay of his Learning, in the frequent Interſperſion of *Latin* and *Greek* Quotations, as well as *Marginal* Notes; his taking too large a Compaſs in ſome Arguments, and affecting to ſay ſo much upon every one, as many times betrays him into needleſs Repetitions (to paſs by his Principles, which are purely *Calviniſtical*) have ſwelled his Work into three large Volumes, which, to his own Reputation,

as well as the Reader's Eaſe and Satisfaction, might very commodiouſly have been comprized in one.

Dr *FIDDES* was a *polite*, rather than a Learned Man, and his want of Books, and other proper Encouragements, put him under the Neceſſity of entertaining us with a fine Style, and Manner of Expreſſion, (whereof he was certainly a very great Maſter) when he knew himſelf inſufficient to go to the Bottom of his Argument. It is a melancholy Reflection, that a Perſon of his Genius ſhould be ſo far neglected by the World, as to live in want of any thing; but while we lament his Misfortune in this reſpect, we cannot, but, at the ſame time, in ſome meaſure, condole with his Reader, who (in the latter Part of his Work more eſpecially) to his great Joy, will meet with abundance of excellent Words, but as he reads over a Page or two, to his great Surprize and Diſappointment, will meet with *Words only*.

It was upon the Conſideration of ſuch frequent *Deficiencies in Theological Compoſitions*, eſpecially as to *that Part of Divinity*, which we call *poſitive*, that * a very learned and judicious Author has, ſo many Years ago, ſuggeſted this Thought,---namely, that, *if the choice and beſt Obſervations, which have been made diſperſedly in our* Engliſh *Sermons (leaving out the Largeneſs of Exhortations and Applications thereupon) were ſet down in a Continuance, it would be the beſt Work in Divinity, that has been writ ſince the Apoſtles Times.*

Upon this Suggeſtion, I was induced to think, that, if in the time when *Learning* was juſt breaking out of the Cloud of Ignorance, which had ſo long beſet it, a Deſign of this Nature was thought feaſible; it might much more effectually be executed now, after a long Succeſſion of able Divines, who have examined into the difficult Points of *Theology* with more Accuracy, have improved our Tongue, and brought the ſacred Oratory of the *Pulpit* to a much higher Pitch of Perfection than formerly.

In the Time, when our Author wrote, few or none of our *Divines* (as a † *Reverend Hiſtorian* tells us) had emancipated themſelves from a *ſervile* Imitation of their Forefathers. Their Sermons, in particular, were ſadly over-run with Pedantry and mixed Quotations, with Points of Controverſy, and different Expoſitions, with Puns, Quibbles, and other little Witticiſms, to ſay nothing of their Style, which was either very flat or dull, or ſwelled up to a *falſe Sublime*: But, in Proceſs of Time (eſpecially when a Spirit of Learning came in with the *Reſtoration*) this low and childiſh Method was laid aſide, and a more *maſculine*, as well as more *rational* Form of Writing introduced. *Cudworth* and *Whichcote*, *Wilkins* and *Moor*, &c. were the firſt that made the *Reformation*; and ‖ a very wicked Book, under a very odd Title, publiſhed at that Time, put them upon examining and vindicating

* Bacon *of Advancement of Learning*. † Vid. *Abridgment of Biſhop* Burnet's *Hiſtory of his own Times*, pag. 65. ‖ Hobbs's *Leviathan*.

vindicating the Principles of Religion and Morality, on clear and *philoſophical* Grounds. *Barrow* and *Tillotſon*, *Stillingfleet* and *Patrick*, &c. improved upon their Scheme, and have left it to thoſe of the preſent Generation to complete.

THE Foundation of a *Lecture* by the Honourable Mr *Boyle* has occaſioned the Principles of *Natural* and *Revealed* Religion to be more accurately ſtated, and the Foundation of another by the Lady *Moyer* has ſupplied us with a clearer Vindication of ſome leading Articles of our moſt Holy Faith, than ever perhaps we had before. The Treatiſes, that are written upon Subjects of this Nature, proceed in a fair and *argumentative* Way, and the very Oppoſition, which comes (with great Vigour) from the contrary Side, has *eventually* done the Service to Chriſtianity of detecting Error, and elucidating Truth. The *Commentaries* and *Annotations* we have upon the Scriptures, both from our own Countrymen, and from Foreigners, have of late Years, been very *judicious*; and the *Diſſertations* on particular Texts and Paſſages, extremely *learned* and *ingenious*. What has appeared in the *ſpeculative* Way, has a Sublimity of Thought; and what in the *practical*, a Clearneſs of Method and Diction, that few of our Anceſtors of a Century or two ago were, in any Degree, acquainted with; ſo that it muſt be allowed, that, in the preſent Age, there is no want of proper *Materials*, from whence to extract A COMPLEAT BODY OF DIVINITY.

HOW I have executed this Deſign, I muſt leave to my Readers to examine; but hope to eſcape the Rigour of their Cenſure, when they come to perceive, what a vaſt Track of Reading I have been forced to run through, and perhaps under ſome Diſcouragements, which I am rather inclinable to conceal. I have taken, in ſhort, all the Pains I was able, and omitted no Helps, that either my *Bookſellers* could acquire, or my Knowledge of Foreign Languages enabled me to read.

IN the *Speculative* Part of Divinity (wherein the *Great Myſteries of Godlineſs* are treated of) I have endeavoured to accommodate myſelf, as much as poſſible to the meaneſt Capacity; and, for that Reaſon, have put under the Page all Arguments of a *metaphyſical* Nature, as well as Expoſitions of Scripture, that depend on any Part of *Critical* Learning. All the great *Controverſies* in Divinity, I have fairly ſtated; and producing, in full Force, their Arguments on both Sides, have left them to the Judgment of the Reader, according as he finds the Matter in Evidence, except where the Prevalence of Reaſon was ſo manifeſt, that it would have looked like a ſecret Enmity to *Truth*, not to have declared for it. All the *Practical* Points of Chriſtianity, as they were chiefly borrowed from the beſt of our Sermons, fell naturally into that Method; and though I (who am *leſs than the leaſt* of that ſacred Order) am far from pretending to inſtruct my Brethren in any Thing, yet I thought it not improper to continue them in that Form, if haply they might convey any Thoughts or Obſervations to ſuch, as have

have not the Opportunity of conſulting, upon every Subject, ſuch a Variety of Books, as I have done.

THE *Hiſtorical* and *Philological* Part of the Work (which indeed has coſt me the greateſt Pains) I have extracted from the beſt and moſt polite Authors, I could meet with; but chiefly from thoſe of a Foreign Growth, becauſe we have not many of our own Countrymen (beſides the Learned Dr *Prideaux*) that have endeavoured to excel in that Kind of Writing. Without blaming others for their Omiſſion, I thought it, in ſome Meaſure, *eſſential* to a *Body* of *Divinity*, as well as no unuſeful Entertainment to my Reader, to ſet before him the moſt memorable Tranſactions, from the beginning of the World to the Coming of our Saviour CHRIST, and, now and then, to detain him a little with a ſhort *Diſſertation* upon ſuch Subjects, as are moſt remarkable, and moſt curious; that ſo he might, not only be better acquainted with the Series of ſacred Hiſtory, but, in ſome meaſure, able to *give a Reaſon for the Faith that is in him*, and to ſtop the Mouths of *Gain-ſayers*, who lie in wait to enſnare the *ignorant*, and think it a kind of Triumph, when they find them at a Loſs to account for the *wonderful Things*, that are recorded in the Book of God.

MY Reader therefore will not, I hope, be offended, that I have deviated from the common Road of *Syſtematical* Writers; when he finds, that, by this Means, I have introduced Subjects almoſt innumerable, that never fell under their Conſideration. If, in *juſtifying the Ways of Providence*, I have given him a rational Commentary upon ſeveral difficult Paſſages in Scripture, and have haply done this, in a plain Method, eaſy Style, and clear Diction, ſo as both to profit and pleaſe, both to entertain and improve at the ſame time,

Quæſitam meritis ſumo ſuperbiam. Hor. Car. L. 3.

THIS is what I had to ſay concerning the Execution of the Work: And if it proves of any Service (as I hope it will) to the Inſtruction or Edification of others, the Failings or Obſcurity of its Author, I hope, will not be laid in Counter-Balance to the Laudableneſs of his Deſign.

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THE

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A

COMPLEAT BODY

OF

Speculative and *Practical*

DIVINITY.

CHAP. I.

Of RELIGION *in general.*

RELIGION, in the general Notion of it, [a] is the Obligation of rational Creatures, to render unto God (for I beg to suppose at present that there is a God) such Acts of Worship, Homage, and Obedience, as are suitable to the Excellence of his Nature, and the Manner of our Dependence on him: For it is upon the Consideration of our own Nature and his, and the mutual Relation, that is between them, that all our Service of this Kind is unalterably founded. If we turn our Eyes upon ourselves, we can certainly never imagine that we were our own *Creators:* Since Nothing can *produce* itself, and since the *Effect* is always inferior to the *Cause*, we must necessarily have recourse to something above us, and (be the Gradations never so many) come at last to a *supreme Being*, from whom, not only our Existence, but all the Blessings and Comforts we enjoy, originally do proceed. And here making a Stand, to consider and contemplate *him*, [b] as our Creator and Parent, the Author of our Nature, and of all the Faculties belonging to it; and *ourselves*, as his Creatures, the Issue of his Power, and the Workmanship of his Hands; *him*, as our Protector, Governor, and Master; and *ourselves*, as his Dependents, Subjects, and Servants; *him*, as our Benefactor, and the Author of our Happiness; and *ourselves*, as obliged and indebted to him for every Thing we enjoy; we cannot but perceive, that not only all the Acts of outward Worship, such as *Adoration* to him, in Respect of his *Greatness*, as he is our *Creator*; *Invocation* of him, in Respect of his *Power*, as he is our *Protector*; and *Thankfulness* to him, in Respect of his *Goodness*, as he is our *Benefactor*; but all those *inward* Acts of Religion likewise, such as Faith and Hope, Trust and Reliance, Love, Fear, and Obedience, and whatever else results from a due Exercise of our Reason, and a full Consideration of his Attributes, become our necessary and indispensable Duty.

Religion *what*; *and that it arises,*

1. *From the Relation between God and us.*

[a] *Scot's* Christian Life, Vol. II.

[b] *Gastrel's* Certainty and Necessity of Religion.

2. *From the natural Diſpoſitions of our Minds.*

AND indeed, if we look into the Frame and Diſpoſition of our Minds, we ſhall ſoon perceive, that God has implanted in us ſuch Inclinations and Propenſions to the general Offices of Religion, as move us in a Manner *mechanically*, and without any previous Deliberation. [c] Thus, upon the Receipt of any conſiderable Kindneſs, we preſently find our Souls diſpoſed to all the Acts of Love and Eſteem, and to all the outward Expreſſions of Gratitude, we are capable of, without ever conſidering, that this is the likelieſt Way to procure the good Opinion of thoſe that behold us. And, in like Manner, when, by any viſible Indications of Power, we are induced to believe, that ſuch and ſuch a *Being* is able, at his Pleaſure, to contribute very much to our Happineſs or Miſery, we are immediately conſcious of all the different Sentiments of Hope, Fear, and Reverence; and are under a Diſpoſition to do what we think moſt agreeable to the Will of ſuch a Being, without any *expreſs Conſideration*, that we ſhall thereby recommend ourſelves to him, and engage his Power in our Favour. Theſe Sentiments, I ſay, which have a manifeſt Tendency to the Duties of Religion, are not the Reſult of our Reaſon, but produced in us whether we will or no: And from hence we cannot but infer, [d] that Religion is *eſſential* to Man, and the Thing indeed, which differences and diſtinguiſhes him from other Animals as much, nay more, than his *Reaſon* does. For, whereas ſome Footſteps of obſcure Reaſon are to be obſerv'd in many Creatures, beſides Man; in none, except him, is there found any Diſpoſition towards Religion, or any Thing that looks like it. This ſeems to be the [e] Prerogative of Mankind; and yet it is a Prerogative, wherein all do communicate, *ſince no People were ever yet found ſo ſavage and barbarous, as to be deſtitute of all Senſe, and Form of Religion.*

3. *From the Nature and Reaſon of Things.*

BUT beſides that Part of Religion, which conſiſts in the Worſhip and Service of God, and whoſe Obligation ariſes from the Nature and Conſtitution of Man, there is another Part of it, which we commonly call *Morality*, conſiſting in a right Conduct, with Relation to God, ourſelves, and our Neighbours; and this is founded in the Nature and Reaſon of Things. For, that there are natural Notions of Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, or certain Diſtinctions, reſulting from the Natures and Relations of Things, which cannot be alter'd, or deſtroy'd by any arbitrary Agreement or Inſtitution whatever; and that, [f] from theſe Diſtinctions, there neceſſarily ariſe certain moral Obligations, which are of themſelves incumbent on all rational Creatures, antecedent to any poſitive Command, is, what not only the greateſt and wiſeſt Part of Mankind has acknowledg'd, but common Experience ſufficiently verified; ſince no Man willingly and deliberately tranſgreſſes theſe Obligations, in any great and conſiderable Inſtance, who acts not contrary to the Judgment and Reaſon of his own Mind, and ſecretly reproaches himſelf for ſo doing; and no Man obſerves and obeys them ſteadily, (eſpecially in Caſes of Difficulty and Temptation, when it interferes with any preſent Intereſt, Pleaſure, or Paſſion) but his own Mind commends, and applauds him for executing what his Conſcience cou'd not forbear giving its Aſſent to, as juſt and right: And in this Senſe the Words of the Apoſtle are to be underſtood; [g] *when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contained in the Law, theſe, having not the Law, are a Law unto themſelves; which ſhew the Work of the Law, written in their Hearts, their Conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and their Thoughts, the mean while, accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.*

An Objection.

" BUT after all, it ſeems no improbable Thing (may the *Unbeliever* ſay) to find " out another Original for what you call *Religion*. Whoever has made it his " Obſervation, cannot but perceive, [h] that there is in Mankind, by Reaſon of " his *Natural Imbecillity*, a perpetual Anxiety, or Fear concerning future Events; " which, join'd with their *Natural Ignorance*, makes them apt (like Children in the " dark) to fancy *Spectres* and *Apparitions*, i. e. the Being of a God, and a future " State of Rewards and Puniſhments, *&c.* which are no where to be found, but " in their own Imaginations. Which Weakneſs of human Nature, ſome great " Prince, or Miniſter of State, taking the Advantage of, might, ſome Time or other, " (moſt probably towards the Beginning of the World, if it had a Beginning) very " commodiouſly introduce the Belief of Religion; and *that*, upon Experiment, be- " ing found to be an excellent *State-Engine*, or Politick Device, to keep the poor " ignorant

[c] *Gaſtrel*'s Certainty and Neceſſity of Religion. [d] *Sharp*'s Serm. Vol. I. [e] Ex tot generibus nullum eſt animal, præter hominem, quod habet notitiam aliquam Dei; deque ipſis hominibus nulla gens eſt, neque tam immanſueta, neque tam fera, quæ non, etiamſi ignoret qualem habere Deum deceat, tamen habendum ſciat. *Cic. de Leg. L.* 1. [f] *Clarke*, of Natural and Revealed Religion. [g] *Rom.* ii. 14, 15. [h] *Cudworth*'s Intellectual Syſtem.

" ignorant People in Awe, might, by the Strength of Cuſtom and Education, after-
" wards, be eaſily continued in the World to this Day."

Anſwer'd, by ſhewing that Religion aroſe not from Fear,

NOW, in Anſwer to this, it muſt be obſerv'd, that as the Objection allows [1] that Religion conduces very much to the Support of Government, and Order in the World, and conſequently is very beneficial to Mankind in general; ſo, to every Man in particular, where its Duties and Obligations are duly obſerv'd, it gives ſuch a Peace and Tranquillity of Mind, and ſuch a Firmneſs and Reſolution of Heart, as is utterly inconſiſtent with that groundleſs and unreaſonable Fear, which is here ſuppos'd to be the Parent of it. Fear indeed is a ſtrong and prevalent Paſſion in human Nature; but when a Fear is vain and fantaſtical, (as it is here ſuppoſed to be) and yet made uſe of to curb and reſtrain our natural Propenſions and Paſſions, (as the Deſign of all Religion is) it can hardly be imagin'd, but that ſenſual Appetites, Habits of indulging them, preſent Enjoyments, or near Proſpects of Pleaſure, would, at one Time or other, have had a much ſtronger and more powerful Influence upon the Judgments of Men, than any Impreſſions of a vain Fear, that contradicted theſe; eſpecially when Reaſon was on their Side, as the Patrons of Infidelity (ſuppoſing Religion to be a *Cheat*) are concern'd to maintain.

nor from Cuſtom,

EDUCATION, we own, and the Prevalence of Cuſtom are great; but then they muſt be ſuch, as ſtrike in with our corrupt Paſſions and Affections; and not ſuch as endeavour to reſtrain and controul them. What goes againſt the Grain can never laſt long; and therefore we may ſuppoſe, that *Religion*, which gives ſuch a Check to our deprav'd Appetites, had long ſince been exterminated the World, had it not laid ſuch faſt hold upon our Natures, that there is no ſhaking it off.

nor from Politicks, *which is prov'd from* Reaſon,

LET us then (for Argument's Sake) ſuppoſe, that there were an Inſtance or two in Hiſtory of ſome *great* and *politick Men*, who introduced Religion in Confirmation of their Government; and that this might poſſibly be, towards the Beginning of the World: Yet ſince theſe Men have been ſo long laid in their Graves, how comes it to paſs, that the Effect of their Policy ſtill remains all the World over? Every Age, we know, is apt to condemn the Wiſdom of thoſe that preceded it; and (whether we ſtand upon our Forefathers Shoulders or no) we certainly think that we ſee farther. 'Tis wonderful therefore, that, in ſo many Ages, as have paſſed, ſince theſe deep Politicians liv'd, no other Perſons have been able to make ſuch a Diſcovery of the Artifice of Religion, as to free Mankind from its pretended Slavery. [k] It cannot be ſaid, *that there were none to attempt it*, becauſe Efforts of this Kind have been but too frequent, tho' always ſucceſsleſs, and redounding to the greater Confirmation of Religion. It cannot be ſaid, *that there were none ready to join in ſuch a Deſign*; for all bad Men (whoſe Number is not ſmall) wiſh for no Kind of Religion at all, and what they wiſh for, they are willing to effect, if they could. How comes it then, after all, that Religion ſtill prevail'd, and the Terrors of a Deity could not be ſhaken off, no not by the greateſt Politicians themſelves, who thought they underſtood all the Arts of Government as well as any that went before them? If the Principles of Religion had been firſt introduced merely by a State-Policy, [l] the Politicians and Governors of the World, one would think, ſhould be likely to have known ſomething of it; at leaſt, ſo much as to be leſs ſubject to the Anxieties of *Conſcience*, which the deſpiſing of ſuch *Principles*, and living in Oppoſition to them, generally creates: Whereas we find, on the contrary, that, in all Ages, the greateſt of Men, who have had nothing to fear from human Power, have been as much affrighted by the ſecret Terrors of Religion, and have undergone as great *Agonies* of Mind, as the meaneſt Mortals.

and from Antiquity.

AND as the Reaſon of the Thing is ſufficient to convince us, that Religion at firſt was no *State-Juggle*; ſo, if we look into the Records of Antiquity, we ſhall eaſily perceive, that the farther we go backwards, the ſtronger is our Evidence againſt this Suggeſtion. [m] The moſt ancient Writings, that are in the World, without all Controverſy, are thoſe of the holy Scriptures; and, among theſe, the Book of *Job* is deſervedly accounted one of the earlieſt: And yet we may obſerve therein, not only the Senſe of the Duties of Religion, wherewith the People were poſſeſs'd in thoſe Days, but even how cuſtomary it was to appeal to the Tradition of former Times concerning theſe Matters: [n] *Enquire, I pray thee, of the former Age* (ſays one of *Job*'s Friends) *and prepare thyſelf to the Search of their Fathers; for we are but of yeſterday, and know nothing.* But what is it for, that he thus appeals to

[1] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [k] *Stilling fleet*'s Sermons. [l] *Leng*'s Sermons. [m] *Stilling fleet*, ibid.
[n] Job viii. 8, &c.

to the Obſervation of former Ages? Even to evince the bad Condition of all, that are not ſincere in their Religion; for *as the Ruſh*, ſays he, *without Mire, and the Flag without Water, wither before other Herbs; ſo are the Paths of all, that forget God, and the Hypocrite's Hope ſhall periſh.* From whence it is apparent, that, in the earlieſt Times we can read of, Men had the ſame Senſe of Religion, and the ſame Notions of God's Indignation againſt Impiety, that we now have: And therefore conſidering, that no Time or Place can be aſſigned, to give any reaſonable Ground for ſuppoſing, that the firſt *Principles* of Religion were any human Contrivance, we may, without farther Arguments, conclude, that they were from the Beginning, or (as [o] *Tully* expreſſes it) *that it was not any Conference, Compact, or Agreement of Men, which made them, nor was the Perſuaſion or Belief of them founded, or eſtabliſh'd in any Inſtitution, or Law; but that the Conſent of all Nations in them is to be eſteemed the Law of Nature.*

The Inference. WHAT then we may infer from the whole Matter is this—[p] That if Religion had been a Trick and Contrivance of ſo long a Date, as is pretended, it muſt neceſſarily have been found out at one Time, or other, and, in Conſequence of that, baniſh'd out of the World long before now: But, Thanks be to God, the Credit of it is not yet extinct; which can be owing to nothing, but the invincible Reaſons, whereon it ſtands. In every Age, there has not been wanting the Wit and Malice of profane Perſons, to undermine and blow it up; but the Foundations, whereon it is built, are ſo firm and ſtable, and have endur'd the violent Shocks, and ſecret Attempts of ſo many Ages, that, as long as Reaſon and good Order prevail in the World, we have no Occaſion to doubt, but that Religion will not fail. Only the Magiſtrate is to be reminded, how [q] much his Concern is, to protect, from all rude and violent Aſſaults, the Honour of *that*, which does not only tend to every Man's future Happineſs, but is the beſt Inſtrument of Civil Government, and of the temporal Proſperity of a Nation: For which Reaſon, [r] even *Atheiſtical* Politicians adviſe their Princes to take ſpecial Care of Religion, and to ſee it rooted, as firmly, as poſſible, in the Hearts of their People, how ſlender an Hold ſoever it may have of their own.

The Diviſion of Religion. SUCH is the Nature, and Origin of Religion in general: And, if we conſider it under its primary Diviſion, 'tis partly *Natural*, and partly *Revealed*. The Natural Part of it is that, which we come to the Knowledge of by the Principles of Reaſon, in the Contemplation of the Works, the Nature, and the Providence of God: The Revealed is that, which, in *ſome Points*, we could not have known at all; and, in *all*, not near ſo clearly, had it not been God's Pleaſure to diſcover it to us. In the former, is required a due Exerciſe of our *intellectual* Faculties; in the latter, a due Dependence on the *Authority* of God: And 'tis to the former of theſe, that we now apply ourſelves.

[o] Non enim id collocutio hominum aut conſenſus efficit: Non inſtitutis opinio eſt confirmata, non legibus. Omni autem in re conſenſio Gentium lex Naturæ putanda eſt. *Cic. Quæſt. Tuſc.* L. 1. c. 13. [p] *Stillingfleet*'s Serm. [q] *Tillotſon*'s Serm. Vol. I. [r] *Young*'s Serm. Vol. I.

CHAP. II.

Of the Exiſtence of GOD.

HE *that cometh to God* (as the Apoſtle [s] argues) *muſt believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of all them, that diligently ſeek him. To come to God*, [t] according to the Nature of the *Jewiſh* Language, is to *make Profeſſion of Religion*; but 'tis in vain for us to make Profeſſion of *that*, unleſs we are firſt firmly perſuaded of this Foundation, *the Being and Attributes of God*. Now by the Word GOD, we mean [u] a Being of infinite Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Power, the Creator and Governor of all Things, to whom the great Attributes of Eternity and Independency, Omniſcience and Immenſity, perfect Holineſs and Purity, perfect Juſtice and Veracity, complete Happineſs, glorious Majeſty, and ſupreme Right of Dominion, belong; and to whom the higheſt Veneration, and moſt profound Submiſſion and Obedience are due. That there is really ſuch

[s] *Heb.* xi. 6. [t] *Clarke*'s Serm. Vol. I. [u] *Barrow* on the Creed.

ſuch a Being in the World, deſerving ſuch Homage, and inveſted with ſuch Characters, a ſhort Survey of this beautiful Syſtem of Things, which are before us, and ſome few Conſiderations of their Production and Conſervation, their Order and Uſefulneſs, and wiſe Direction to their proper Ends, will be enough to convince us: And I make uſe of this Argument the rather, not only becauſe it ſtands clear of ſuch Objections, as are made to others of a more *abſtracted* Nature, but becauſe it is adapted to every one's Capacity, brings God down to our Senſes, as it were, and carries its own Conviction along with it, and is therefore the Proof, which the great Apoſtle of the *Gentiles* remits us to: [x] *For the inviſible Things of him, from the Creation of the World, are clearly ſeen*, ſays he, *being underſtood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* *The* Being *of God prov'd, from the* Frame *and* Order *of the World.*

[y] COULD we ſuppoſe a Number of Perſons to have lived in ſome Cavern of the Earth, (as *Tully* brings in *Ariſtotle* ſpeaking) with all the Enjoyments, that make Life eaſy, only had never been abroad upon the Surface of it, nor heard any Thing, but a very obſcure Report of an infinite Power and Being; could we ſuppoſe that, upon ſome caſual Opening of this Cavern, theſe Perſons ſhould come out into the World, and ſuddenly behold the Earth, the Sea, and the Heavens, the Vaſtneſs of the Clouds, and the Violence of the Winds, the Largeneſs, and Beauty, and Influence of the Sun, and how every Day depends upon its Preſence; could we ſuppoſe (that upon the Sun's withdrawing) they ſhould view the Face of the Heavens again, the Order and Ornament of the Moon and Stars, their Riſing and Setting, and their fix'd and determinate Courſes; we can hardly imagine that they could refrain from believing that there is a *Deity*, and that theſe were the Effects of his Power; for it is not the natural Dictate of Mens Minds, but a ſtrong Biaſs upon their Paſſions and Affections, that draws them into the contrary Sentiment.

1. LET us then caſt our Eyes up to the Firmament, where the Handy-Work of God preſents itſelf to our View, and aſk ourſelves ſome ſuch Queſtions as theſe. [z] † What Power built, over our Heads, this vaſt and magnificent Arch, and *ſpread out the Heavens like a Curtain?* Who garniſhed theſe Heavens with ſuch a Variety of ſhining Objects, a thouſand, and ten thouſand Times ten thouſand dif- *From the Heavens.*

[x] Rom. i. 20. [y] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [z] *Fenelon*'s Demonſtration of the Exiſtence of a God.

† The Words of a late learned Author, upon this Subject, are ſo very lofty and elegant, that, tho', in ſome Meaſure, they fall in with my Manner of treating it, I cannot forbear tranſcribing ſome of them. His Propoſition is ——*That the Frame and Conſtitution of the World, the aſtoniſhing Magnificence of it, the various Phænomena, and Kinds of Beings, the Uniformity obſerv'd in their Production, and the Uſes and Ends for which they ſerve*, &c. *do plainly ſhew, that there is ſome almighty Deſigner, an infinite Wiſdom and Power at the Top of all theſe Things.* "For, in Order to prove to "any one the *Grandneſs* of the Fabrick of the World, one need only bid him conſider the *Sun*, with that inſupport- "able Glory and Luſtre that ſurrounds it: To demonſtrate the vaſt *Diſtance*, *Magnitude*, and *Heat* of it: To repre- "ſent to him the *Chorus of Planets* moving *periodically*, by uniform Laws, in their ſeveral *Orbits* about it, affording "a regular Variety of Aſpects; guarded ſome of them by *Secondary Planets*, and, as it were, emulating the State of "the *Sun*; and probably all poſſeſs'd by proper Inhabitants: To remind him of thoſe *ſurprizing* Viſits the *Comets* make "us; the large *Trains*, or uncommon Splendor that attends them; the far Country they come from; and the Curi- "oſity and Horror they excite, not only among us, but in the Inhabitants of other Planets, who alſo may be up to ſee "the Entry and Progreſs of theſe *Miniſters* of *Fate:* To direct his Eye and Contemplation through thoſe *Azure* Fields, "and vaſt *Regions* above him, up to the *fixt Stars*, that radiant numberleſs *Hoſt of Heaven*; and to make him under- "ſtand, how unlikely a Thing it is, that they ſhould be placed there only to adorn and beſpangle a Canopy over our "Heads: To convince him, that they are rather ſo many *other Suns*, with their ſeveral Regions and *Sets* of *Planets* "about them: To ſhew him, by the Help of *Glaſſes*, ſtill more and more of theſe fixt Lights, and to beget in him an "Apprehenſion of their unaccountable *Numbers*, and of thoſe immenſe Spaces, that lie retir'd beyond our utmoſt "Reach, and even Imagination: I ſay, one needs but do this, and explain to him ſuch Things, as are now known almoſt "to every Body; and by it to ſhew him, that, if the World be not *Infinite*, it is *Infinito ſimilis*, and therefore ſure a "*magnificent* Structure, and the Work of an infinite *Architect:* And, in like Manner, who can obſerve the *Vapours* to "aſcend, eſpecially from the Sea, meet above in *Clouds*, and fall again, after *Condenſation*, and not underſtand this to "be a Kind of *Diſtillation*, in Order to clear the Water of its groſſer *Salts*, and then, by Rains and Dews, to ſupply "the Fountains and Rivers with freſh and wholeſome Liquor; to nouriſh the *Vegetables* below by *Showers*, which de- "ſcend in Drops, as from a *Watering-Pot*, upon a Garden: Who can view the Structure of a Plant, or Animal; the "indefinite Number of their Fibres and fine Veſſels, the Formation of larger Veſſels, and the ſeveral Members out of "them, and the apt Diſpoſition of all theſe; the Way laid out for the Reception and Diſtribution of *Nutriment*; the "Effect this Nutriment has in extending the Veſſels, bringing the Vegetable or Animal to its true Growth and Ex- "panſion, continuing the *Motion* of the ſeveral *Fluids*, repairing the Decays of the Body, and preſerving Life: Who "can take Notice of the ſeveral Faculties of Animals, their Arts of ſaving and providing for themſelves, or the Ways, "in which they are provided for; the Uſes of Plants to Animals, and of ſome Animals to others, particularly to Man- "kind; the Care taken that the ſeveral *Species* ſhould be propagated out of their proper Seeds, the ſtrong Inclinations "implanted in Animals for that Purpoſe, their Love of their Young, and the like: I ſay, who can do this, and not "ſee a Deſign in ſuch regular Pieces, ſo nicely wrought, and ſo preſerv'd? Since then we cannot ſuppoſe, that the "Parts of Matter at firſt contriv'd this wonderful Form of a World among themſelves, and then, by Agreement, took "their reſpective Poſts, and purſued conſtant Ends by certain Methods and Meaſures concerted, (becauſe theſe are "Acts, of which they are not capable) there muſt be ſome other *Being*, whoſe Wiſdom and Power are equal to ſuch "a mighty Work, as is the Structure and Preſervation of the World. There muſt be ſome Almighty Mind, who mo- "dels and adorns it; lays the *Cauſes* of Things ſo deep; preſcribes them ſuch *uniform* and ſteady *Laws*; deſtines and "adapts them to certain *Purpoſes*; and makes one Thing to fit and anſwer to another." *Woolaſton*'s *Religion of Nature delineated*, Sect. 5.

ferent Stars, new Suns, new Moons, new Worlds, in Compariſon of which, this Earth of ours is but a Point, all regular in their Motions, and ſwimming in the liquid Æther? Who painted the Clouds with ſuch a Variety of Colours, and in ſuch a Diverſity of Shapes and Figures, as is not in the Power of the fineſt Pencil to come up to? Who formed the Sun of ſuch a determinate Magnitude, and placed it at ſuch a convenient Diſtance, as not to annoy, but only refreſh us, and nouriſh the Ground with its kindly Warmth? If it were *larger*, it would ſet the Earth on Fire; if *leſs*, it would leave it frozen; if it were *nearer* us, we ſhould be ſcorch'd to Death; if *farther* from us, we ſhould not be able to live for Want of Heat; Who then hath made it ſo commodious [a] *a Tabernacle* (I ſpeak with the Scriptures, and according to the common Notion) *out of which it cometh forth, every Morning, like a Bridegroom out of his Chamber, and rejoiceth, as a Giant, to run its Courſe?* For ſo many Ages paſt it has never failed riſing at its appointed Time, nor once miſs'd ſending out the Dawn to proclaim its Approach: But at whoſe Voice does it ariſe, and by whoſe Hand is it directed in its *daily* and *annual* Courſe, to give us the bleſſed Viciſſitudes of Day and Night, and the regular Succeſſion of different Seaſons? That it ſhould always proceed in the ſame ſtrait Path, and never once be known to ſtep aſide; that it ſhould turn at a certain determinate Point, and not go forward in a Space, where there is nothing to obſtruct it; that it ſhould traverſe the ſame Path back again in the ſame conſtant and regular Pace, to bring on the Seaſons by gradual Advances: That the Moon ſhould ſupply the Office of the Sun, and appear, at ſet Times, with all the other Stars, to give us a *vicarious* Light, when its *Brother* is gone to carry the Day to the other *Hemiſphere:* In a Word, that all the innumerable Hoſt of heavenly Bodies ſhould perform their Revolutions with ſo much Certainty and Exactneſs, as never once to fail; but, for almoſt this ſix Thouland Years, come conſtantly about to the ſame Periods to the hundredth Part of a Minute: This is ſuch a clear and inconteſtable Proof of one original Being, the Divine Architect and Ruler of the Univerſe, as made the *Roman Philoſopher*, with good Reaſon, conclude, "That [b] whoever thinks, that the wonderful Order and incredible "Conſtancy of the heavenly Bodies and their Motions, (whereupon the Preſer- "vation and Welfare of all Things do depend) is not governed by an Intelli- "gent Being, himſelf is to be accounted void of all Underſtanding. For ſhall "we, when we ſee an *Artificial* Engine, a Sphere, a Dial, or any ſuch Thing, "acknowledge, at firſt Sight, that it is the Work of Art and Underſtanding; and "yet, when we behold the Heavens, moved and whirl'd about with a wonderful "Celerity, conſtantly finiſhing their anniverſary Viciſſitudes, make any Doubt, that "theſe are the Performances, not only of Reaſon, but of a certain excellent and "Divine Reaſon?"

Tully's *Sentiments.*

AND [c] if *Tully*, from the imperfect Knowledge of *Aſtronomy*, which his Times afforded, could be ſo confident, that the heavenly Bodies were framed and moved by a wiſe and underſtanding Mind, as to declare, That, in his Opinion, whoever aſſerted the Contrary, was himſelf deſtitute of Underſtanding; what would he have ſaid, if he had known the *modern Diſcoveries* in Aſtronomy; the immenſe Greatneſs of the World, that Part of it, I mean, that falls under our Obſervation; the exquiſite Regularity of all the Planets Motions, without any Deviation or Confuſion; the inexpreſſible Nicety of the Adjuſtment of the primary Velocity of the Earth's *Annual* Motion; the wonderful Proportion of its *Diurnal* Motion about its own *Center*, for the Diſtinction of Light and Darkneſs; the exact Accommodation of the *Denſities* of the *Planets* to their Diſtances from the Sun; the admirable Order, Number, and Uſefulneſs of the ſeveral *Satellites*, that move about their reſpective Planets; the Motion of the *Comets*, which are now found to be as regular and periodical, as that of other Planetary Bodies; and laſtly, the Preſervation of the ſeveral *Syſtems*, and of the ſeveral Planets and Comets in the ſame Syſtem, from falling upon each other: What, I ſay, would *Tully*, that great Maſter of Reaſon, have thought and ſaid, if theſe, and other newly-diſcovered Inſtances of the inexpreſſible Accuracy and Wiſdom of the Works of God, had been found out and known in his Time? Certainly Atheiſm, which even *then* was unable to withſtand the Arguments drawn from this *Topick*, muſt *now*, upon the additional Strength of theſe later Obſervations, which are ſo many unanſwerable

[a] Pſal. xix. 4, 5. [b] *Tully*, De Nat. Deor. [c] *Clarke*'s Demonſtration of a God.

ſwerable Proofs of the Creator's Power and Wiſdom, be utterly aſhamed to ſhew its Head.

2. BUT it is Time now to deſcend from Heaven, and take a ſhort Survey of the Globe we live upon. And here, in our Way, what a glorious Proof of a Divine Exiſtence is [d] the Expanſion of *the Air* in this intermediate Space? The Air we ſee is a Body ſo pure, ſo ſubtile, ſo tranſparent, that the Rays of the Stars, though placed at an immenſe Diſtance from us, pierce through it without any Difficulty, and in a Moment ſtrike our Eyes: And yet it has Strength and Subſtance enough to ſupport the winged Tribe, that are appointed to move therein. Had it been leſs *ſubtile*, it would have intercepted, at leaſt obſtructed the Light of the Day; had it been more *rarified*, it would not have ſuſtained its Inhabitants, nor afforded Moiſture for our Lungs: What exquiſite Wiſdom was it then, that tempered it ſo nicely, as, at one and the ſame Time, to ſupport *Clouds* for Rain, to afford *Winds* for Health and Traffick, to be proper for the Breath of Animals by its Spring, for cauſing Sound by its *Motion*, and for conveying Light by its *Tranſparency*? [e] What Power has made ſo thin and fluid an Element the ſafe Repoſitory of Thunder, Lightning, and moſt dreadful Tempeſts? By whoſe Command are theſe *Meteors* ſent out to purify the Air, and conſume the Vapours which would otherwiſe annoy us? And by what ſkilful Hand is the *Water*, which is drawn from the Sea, curiouſly diſtilled and bottled up in *Clouds*, to be ſent upon the Wings of the Wind, and ſcattered over the Face of the Earth in gentle Showers? [f] He, that in the leaſt reflects on this neceſſary Appendage of the Terraqueous Globe, the *Atmoſphere*, and the many great Ends and Purpoſes that it is known to ſerve, muſt be forced to reſolve all into the Work and Contrivance of Almighty God. *The Air.*

3. IF we come down upon *the Earth*, (without ever conſidering who laid the Foundations thereof) what a pleaſant Scene preſents itſelf to our View! Here the Vallies are cloathed with Graſs, there Plains are loaded with Corn; here the Hills riſe like an Amphitheatre, and are covered with Vineyards and Fruit-Trees, and there mighty Mountains, rearing their Heads to the Clouds, by ſending down Rains, and Rivers, and Fountains, give Fruitfulneſs to the Grounds below. [g] Herbs and Plants to nouriſh our Bodies, and remedy their Diſeaſes, fragrant Flowers of exquiſite Colour and Shape, to delight our Smell, and gratify our Sight, we find in every Field: But who has divided the ſeveral Kinds of them, and formed them into ſuch beautiful Order? [h] Who placed the *ſeminal* Plant in the Seed, as the Young is in the Womb of Animals, in ſuch elegant Complications, as afford at once both a pleaſing and aſtoniſhing Spectacle? Who conveys a prolifick Warmth into the Bowels of the Earth, and cauſes the Grain, which the Soil has putrefied, to revive and fructify? [i] Who painted and perfumed the Flowers? How comes it to paſs, that the ſame Water dyes them with various Colours, the Scarlet, the Purple, the Carnation? And whence have they thoſe ſweet Odours, which they breathe with inſenſible *Subtilty*, and diffuſe in the Air for our Delight? Theſe admirable Works of Nature ſurpaſs the Imitation and Comprehenſion of Men, and muſt therefore proceed from a Cauſe infinitely their Superior. *The Earth.*

4. IF we caſt our Eye upon *the Water*, we ſee that it is a liquid and tranſparent Body, and cannot but perceive, that, had it been more or leſs rarefied, it would not have been ſo proper for the Uſes of Man. But who gave it that juſt Configuration of Parts, and exact Degree of Motion, as to make it both ſo *fluent*, and, at the ſame Time, ſo *ſtrong*, as to carry and waft away the moſt unwieldy Burthens? Who taught the *Rivers* to run in winding Streams, through vaſt Tracts of Land, in Order to water them more plentifully; *then* throw themſelves into the *Ocean*, to make it the common *Center* of Commerce; and *ſo*, by ſecret and imperceptible Channels, return to their Fountain-Head in one perpetual Circulation? The great and wide *Sea* is a very awful and ſtupendous Work of God, and the Flux and Reflux of its Waters are not the eaſieſt *Phænomena* in Nature. [k] What we know of certainty is this, That the Tide carries, or brings us back to certain Places at preciſe Hours; but who is it, that makes it ſtop, and then return with ſuch Regularity? A little more or leſs Motion in this fluid Maſs would diſorder all Nature, and a ſmall Incitement upon a Tide drown whole Kingdoms: Who was ſo *Waters.*

wiſe

[d] *Fenelon*'s Demonſtration.
[e] *Clarke*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[f] *Derham*'s Phyſico-Theology.
[g] *Barrow* on the Creed.
[h] *Ray*'s Wiſdom of God.
[i] *Bates*'s Exiſtence of a God.
[k] *Fenelon*'s Demonſtration.

wiſe then, as to take ſuch exact Meaſures in immenſe Bodies, and ſo *ſtrong*, as to rule the Rage of that proud Element at Diſcretion? [l] *Even he, that hath placed the Sand for the Bound thereof, by a perpetual Decree, that it cannot paſs; and tho' the Waves thereof toſs themſelves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not paſs over.*

Animals. 5. IF we look again upon the Earth, and the Water, and Sea, we ſhall find them all inhabited and furniſhed with great Store of living Creatures, wonderfully made in the Frame of their Bodies, and adapted to the Offices, for which they were deſigned. Some walk, ſome creep, ſome fly, ſome ſwim, but every one has Members and Organs fitted for their peculiar Motions. [m] The *Wings* of Birds, for Inſtance, and the *Fins* of Fiſhes, are like Oars, that cut the Air or Water, and, at the ſame Time, ſteer their floating Bodies, whoſe Structure is not much unlike that of a Ship. The Pride of a Horſe, and the Feathers of the Peacock, the Largeneſs of the Camel, and the Smalneſs of the Inſect, are equal Indications of the Almighty Hand that formed them. Nay, the ſmaller the Creature is, the more amazing is the Workmanſhip; and when, in a little *Mite* we do, by the Help of Glaſſes, ſee Limbs perfectly well organiz'd, an Head, a Body, Legs, and Feet, as diſtinct, and well-proportion'd for their Size, as thoſe of the vaſteſt *Elephant*; and conſider withal, that in every Part of this living *Atom* there are Muſcles and Nerves, Veins, Arteries, and Blood; in that Blood, ramous Particles and Humours; and in thoſe Humours, ſome Drops, that are compoſed of other minute Particles: When we conſider all this, I ſay, how can we help being loſt in Wonder and Aſtoniſhment, and forc'd to cry out with the Apoſtle, [n] *Oh! the Depth of the Riches, both of the Wiſdom and Knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his Works, and his Ways* of Creation and Providence *paſt finding out!*

Their Inſtinct. 6. THERE is another Thing in Animals, no leſs wonderful than their Frame, and that is their *natural Inſtinct*: I call it *Inſtinct* in Compliance with the common Forms of Speech, but in Reality it is the providential Direction of them by an all-wiſe and all-powerful Mind. For what elſe has [o] infus'd into Birds the Art of building their Neſts, either hard or ſoft, according to the Conſtitution of their Young? What elſe makes them keep ſo conſtant in their Neſts, while they are hatching their Young, as if they knew the Philoſophy of their own Warmth, and its Aptneſs for *Animation?* What elſe moves the Swallows, upon the Approach of Winter, to fly to a more temperate Clime, as if they underſtood the Celeſtial Signs, the Influence of the Stars, and the Change of Seaſons? In a Word, [p] can we behold the Spider's Nets, or the Silkworm's Webs, the Bee's Cloſets, or the Ant's Granaries, without acknowledging a Superior Being, that has impreſs'd ſuch a Genius in them, and directs their unerring Motions? Thus every Creature is ſtampt with the Divine *Signature*, and loudly proclaims the Being of God; Man is the only one, that ſeems to gainſay the general Atteſtation: Let us therefore examine his Frame and Compoſition a little, in Order to ſee whether the Finger of God is not equally viſible in him.

The Texture of Man's Body. AND here (without troubling ourſelves to enquire after what we ſhall never be able thoroughly to find out, *viz.* in what Manner the *Plaſtick* Power of God has faſhion'd this wonderful Creature in the Womb) [q] What a prodigious Thing is it but barely to conſider, that, out of the ſame ſimple and indiſtinct Matter, ſuch a Variety of Parts of different Subſtance, Figure, and Qualities, ſhould ariſe; hard and dry for the Bones; liquid for the Humours; moiſt and ſoft for the Fleſh; tenacious for the Nerves; perforated for the Arteries and Veins; hot for the Liver and Heart; cold for the Brain; and tranſparent for the Eyes? How ſhould it raiſe our Wonder, I ſay, that *that* Matter, which in itſelf is ſimple, and all alike, ſhould, in the Hands of God, be capable of ſuch a Diverſity, and ſuch admirable Art, but that the conſtant Sight of living Productions cauſes our Neglect of them, and deprives him of his Honour? Let us then conſider *Man*, as he ſtands before us, in his full Proportion and Maturity. Had his *Stature* been conſiderably *leſs*, he muſt have been a Prey to moſt other Animals; had it been vaſtly larger, he muſt have become a Burthen to himſelf; and other Creatures, which are now made uſe of for that Purpoſe, would not have been able to have carried him: So that the wiſe Contrivance of God is viſible in this firſt Step, in regulating the Size of Man to ſo juſt a Standard, and proportioning that of other living Creatures exactly

[l] Jer. v. 22. [m] *Ray*'s Wiſdom of God. [n] Rom. xi. 33. [o] *Parker* De Deo.
[p] *Charnock*'s Exiſtence of a God. [q] *Bates*'s Exiſtence of a God.

exactly to it. [1] The Figure of his Body (wherein he differs from all other Animals) is erect, which not only gives him a Nobleneſs and Majeſty, even as to his outward Appearance, ſuperior to them, but a Facility likewiſe of contemplating the Heavens, (his native Seat) and, upon every View, of loving and admiring their Divine Creator. His *Body* is covered with a *Skin* all over full of Holes, like a *Sieve*, to admit of Perſpiration; but not ſo large as to let out the Blood; *thick* enough to defend the Nerves and Fibres, that are underneath it, and yet ſo *tranſparent*, as to give that lively, ſweet Colour to the Face, which Painters admire, but can but very imperfectly imitate. Under the Skin are an infinite Number of *Veins* and *Arteries*, all ſpread over the Body, to carry the Blood from the Heart, and to moiſten the Fleſh, as Springs and Rivers water the Earth: And the *Blood*, after it has gone its Round, returns to its Fountain again, there to be impregnated with freſh *Spirits*, in order to circulate without ceaſing.

THE Foot is, as it were, the *Baſis* of the Body, and therefore faſhioned in ſuch a Shape, and compoſed of ſuch Nerves, Tendons, and little Bones, as enable it to bear the Weight; and yet ſo ſubtilly joined together, as to make it a chief Inſtrument in all the Motions thereof. The *Legs* and *Thighs* are like two Pillars of different Orders, erected upon this Baſis, to ſupport the whole Fabrick. Their inward Part conſiſts of two Bones, joined together by proper Ligaments, and moving in each other, by the Help of a *mucilaginous* Unction, with the greateſt Facility. The Body of the Structure is proportion'd to the Height of the Pillars, and, becauſe it contains the moſt vital Parts, is placed in the Center, and ſecured by a Row of *Ribs*, [2] which come arching out from the Back-bone, like Branches from a Tree, but grow only ſo far, as to give Room for the free Dilatation of the Stomach and Entrails. Within this Encloſure of Ribs are placed all the great Organs, that ſerve for Reſpiration and Concoction. The *Lungs* are of a ſpungy Nature, eaſily dilating or contracting themſelves; and, as they inceſſantly take in, and blow out a great Quantity of Air, (which is the Nutriment of Life) they form a kind of Bellows, that are in perpetual Motion. The *Stomach* is made in the Figure of a Bagpipe, where our Aliments are ſoon diſſolved by a quick Digeſtion; and, while the *purer* Juice paſſes into Veſſels, deſign'd for the Preparation of the Blood, the *groſſer* Parts are ſeparated, as Bran is from Flour by a Sieve, and ſo thrown down, to eaſe the Body of them, through hidden Paſſages, that are moſt remote from the *ſenſitive* Organs, leſt they ſhould offend them.

FROM the Top of this Fabrick hang two *Arms* of equal Symmetry, knit to the Shoulders in ſuch a Manner, that they have a free Motion in that Joint, and are divided at the Elbow and Wriſt, to make them turn, and bend, and fold the quicker. Theſe Arms terminate in two Hands, which are a Contexture of Nerves and little Bones, ſet one within another in ſuch a curious Order, that they have both all the *Strength*, and all the *Pliableneſs* neceſſary for their ſeveral Uſes. [1] The *Fingers* (beſides their little Bones) are furniſhed with ſeveral Muſcles and Tendons, like ſo many Pullies to bend them forward, and, by the Variety and Delicacy of their Motions, are qualified to exerciſe the moſt curious Arts. Nay, the very Nails are not ſuperfluous: For, beſides their Beauty and Ornament, they are a Defence to the Points of the Fingers, and give Strength, and a quicker Senſe of Feeling to them. Above the Body riſes the *Neck*, which is either firm or flexible at Pleaſure; and, by the Help of its *Vertebræ*, can turn the Head to either Side, according as it directs. The *Head*, which is joined to the upper Part of it, is fortified, on all Sides, with very ſtrong Bones, to ſecure the Treaſure that it contains, and covered with *Hair* on the back Part, both to protect it againſt the Injuries of the Air, and to give Grace and Luſtre to the Face. The Face (which is the *fore Part* of the Head, where the principal *Senſations* meet and center) is a Compoſition of the fineſt Order and Proportion, unleſs ſome unhappy Accident has impair'd the Regularity of its Features. The Eye is ſo artfully contriv'd, and ſo commodiouſly ſituated, that nothing can be imagined like it, either for Uſe, Ornament, or Security. It is a Kind of Looking-glaſs, wherein all the Objects in the World are painted by Turns, and without Confuſion; and God Almighty, who formed it, has kindled a certain celeſtial Flame and Brightneſs in it, that is not to be found in all the other Works of Nature. The *Forehead* gives Majeſty and Gracefulneſs to the Face, and helps to heighten all the Features. The *Noſe* is placed contiguous to the Mouth, and ſerves

[1] *Fenelon*'s Demonſt. *paſſim*. [2] *Ray*'s Wiſdom of God in the Creation.

at once both for Reſpiration and Smell. The *Lips* not only vary the Sounds that form our Speech, but, by their lively Colour, render the Face more beautiful. The *Mouth* takes in the Aliments, which the Teeth grind, like a Mill, in order to prepare them for Digeſtion; and (to mention but one Member more) the *Tongue*, which is a Compoſition of ſmall Muſcles and Nerves, is ſo nimble and pliant in its Motions, that by the Help of a Pipe, which comes from the Breaſt, it can do more, than what either the Fingers, or the Bow of the moſt excellent Maſter of Muſick can do upon the beſt Inſtrument. 'In a Word, 'the Texture of our Body is ſo curiouſly wrought, and every Part of it ſo full of Miracle, that *Galen* (who was otherwiſe backward enough to believe a God) when he had anatomiz'd Man's Body, and carefully ſurveyed the Frame of it, viewed the Fitneſs and Uſefulneſs of every Part, and the many ſeveral Intentions of every little Vein, and Bone, and Muſcle, and the beautiful Compoſition of the whole, fell into a Pang of Devotion, and wrote an Hymn to his Creator's Praiſe. [u] And if he, ſo many Ages ſince, could find, in the Conſtruction and Conſtitution of human Bodies, ſuch undeniable Marks of Contrivance and Deſign, as forced him *then* to acknowledge and admire the Wiſdom of its Author, what would he have ſaid, had he known the late Diſcoveries in Anatomy and Phyſick; the Circulation of the Blood, the exact Structure of the Heart and Brain, the Uſes of numberleſs Glands and Valves, for the Secretion and Motion of the Juices in the Body; beſides ſeveral Veins, and other Veſſels and Receptacles, not at all known, or ſo much as imagined to have had any Exiſtence in his Days, but which are now diſcovered to ſerve the wiſeſt and moſt exquiſite Ends? Had he lived in our Days, I ſay, and under the Diſpenſation of ſo much better Light and Knowledge, he would have admired the divine Operations more abundantly, and improv'd his Hymn with that grateful Recognition of the Pſalmiſt, [x] *I will praiſe thee, O Lord, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, and that my Soul knoweth right well. My Subſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret, thine Eye did ſee it while it was imperfect, and in the Book* of thy vaſt and comprehenſive Mind *were all my Members written.*

Galen's *Admiration of it.*

And the Nature of his Soul.

8. BUT we have ſtill a nearer Proof and Conviction, than either the Make of the World, or the Frame of our Bodies, of the Being and Exiſtence of a God; and that is, the Nature of our rational and immortal *Souls:* For which Reaſon we may obſerve, that in the Deſcription which is given us of God, he not only [y] *ſtretcheth out the Heavens, and lays the Foundation of the Earth, but formeth likewiſe the Spirit of Man within him*; [z] which plainly intimates, that not only the viſible and natural World, but the ſpiritual and indiviſible Soul of Man is likewiſe a Declaration of a Deity.

Its Exiſtence.

1. THAT there is Something [a] in our Compoſition, that thinks, and apprehends, and reflects, and deliberates; that determines, and doubts, and conſents, and denies; that wills, and demurs, and reſolves, and chuſes, and rejects; that receives various Senſations and Impreſſions from outward Objects, and produces voluntary Motions in ſeveral Parts of the Body; this every one is conſcious of, neither can any be ſo *ſceptical*, as to doubt or deny it. In the next Place, it is ſelf-evident, that theſe Faculties and Operations of thinking, and willing, and perceiving, muſt proceed from ſomething or other, as their efficient Cauſe (mere Nothing being never able to produce any Thing at all); ſo that, if theſe Powers are not inherent in the Matter, we carry about with us (and Matter of itſelf can never be the Subject of *Cogitation*) it neceſſarily follows, that they ariſe from ſome thinking Subſtance, ſome incorporeal Inhabitant within us, which we call Spirit or *Soul:* And if there be ſuch an incorporeal Spirit within us, the Queſtion is, Whence did it proceed, or how came it into Being? It did not exiſt from all Eternity; [b] *that* the Account of our Age, which infers our Nativities, and *they*, our Conceptions, (before which we had no Being) plainly denies; nor did it produce itſelf, ſince Nothing can be the Effect and the Cauſe at the ſame Time. Something therefore muſt have created our Souls out of Nothing; and that *ſomething* muſt neceſſarily have in it all the Perfections, that it has given them: For it is ridiculous to think, that we were made by any Thing, that is of an inferior Nature to ourſelves. There is then an immaterial and intelligent Being, which created our Souls; and this Being was either *Eternal* itſelf, or created *immediately*, or *ultimately*, by ſome other *Eternal*, who has not only all the Perfections we

[u] *Clarke*'s Being and Attributes of a God.
[x] *Pſal.* cxxxix. 14, &c. [y] *Zech.* xii. 1. [z] Dr *Edwards* on the Creed. [a] *Bentley*'s Confutation of Atheiſm. [b] *Pearſon* on the Creed.

we find in ourſelves, but is likewiſe the Source and Original of all the Powers and Faculties, both of Body and Mind, which lie diſperſedly among the Children of Men.

Its Union with the Body.

2. THUS from the Nature of our Souls, and the Conſideration of their Exiſtence, we are led to the Knowledge of the Being of God: And if we proceed to obſerve further, how theſe ſpiritual Beings are joined to Subſtances of a quite different Nature, how they combine and operate together, and mutually partake in each other's Happineſs or Woe, we cannot but be forc'd to make the ſame Concluſion. For, let us but aſk ourſelves, how comes it to paſs, that Beings ſo vaſtly unlike are ſo intimately joined together; that certain Motions in the Body ſo ſuddenly, and ſo infallibly raiſe certain Thoughts in the Soul; and that the Thoughts of the Soul, in like Manner, occaſion certain Motions in the Body? Whence proceeds ſo regular a Concord and Society for this forty, fifty, or threeſcore Years perhaps, without Interruption? And what Hand had Skill enough, out of ſuch jarring Principles, to make up ſo compleat a *Compound*, that ſome have been tempted to think them both but one? 'Tis certain, they did not come together by mutual Conſent: For *Matter*, having in itſelf neither Thought nor Will to make Terms, was in no Capacity to enter into an Agreement with the Mind, and the Mind does not remember that it ever made an Agreement with Matter. Since then it is plain there is ſuch an Agreement, which both are ſubjected to, whether they will or no, there muſt neceſſarily be ſome Hand, equally powerful over both, that has brought them under the ſame Yoke, and united them thus cloſely together, without the Mind's Aſſent, or ſo much as its knowing in what Manner that Union was effected: And that Hand could only be his, who created them both; who knew their Conſtitutions beſt, and had an abſolute Right to put them under what Reſtraint and Limitations he pleaſed.

Its Underſtanding.

3. IF we look into our Souls a little nearer, and conſider what [c] Quickneſs and Vivacity there is in their intellectual Faculties above corporeal Motion; with what Facility the Mind turns itſelf from one Object to another; how ſuddenly it rangeth the whole World; how it trips over Mountains, croſſes the Ocean, mounts the Skies, aſcends the Empyrean Heaven, and all in the Twinkling of an intellectual Eye; we muſt needs be perſuaded that a moſt wiſe and powerful Spirit is the Author of theſe noble Faculties; that it is abſurd to imagine, an intelligent Being (as the Soul is) could be produced by one, that is not *ſo* itſelf; and that the Exiſtence of God conſequently is demonſtrable from the Operations of our Minds. For, what Power, leſs than infinite, could have form'd ſuch excellent Beings? "Among material and "earthly Things, ſays *Tully*, there is nothing, that has the Power of Memory, of "Underſtanding, and of Thought; that retains Things *paſt*, foreſees and provides "for Things *future*, and comprehends and conſiders Things *preſent*; ſo that the "Nature and Faculties of the Soul are of a peculiar and ſingular Kind, different "from all thoſe Natures, which we are acquainted with in this World; and therefore, "whatever is endowed with ſuch Vigour and Activity, as the Soul of Man, is of "heavenly and divine Original."

The Power and Blindneſs of its Will.

4. THERE is another Power in the Mind, which ought to be conſidered, and that is, the full and abſolute Command it has over the Body; inſomuch [d] that, upon the bare Dictate of the Will, all our Nerves are immediately diſtended, every Spring haſtens to concur in the Work, and the whole Machine obeys, as if it heard ſome ſupreme and omnipotent Voice. But the Power that is thus ſupreme and abſolute, we perceive, is blind at the ſame Time, and even, while it moves the Body, utterly ignorant of the Make and Situation of its Parts. The Mind of a Peaſant, for Inſtance, commands his Nerves, Muſcles, and Tendons, (Things that he never heard of) as well as the Philoſopher, that is ſkill'd in *Anatomy*. He finds them, without knowing where they lie, without knowing how to diſtinguiſh them, and employs ſuch, as he has Occaſion for, without ever miſtaking one for another. Now, what a Wonder and Prodigy is this! The Mind commands what it does not know, what it cannot ſee, nay, what neither has, nor is capable of any Knowledge to follow its Directions, and yet it is infallibly obeyed. How much *Blindneſs*, and how much *Power* at once do we find in this! The Blindneſs is entirely ours; but to whom can we aſcribe the Power, unleſs it be to him, that ſees what Man does not, and performs in him what ſurpaſſes our Underſtanding?

Its Conſcience.

5. IF we look into our Souls again, we ſhall find a ſtronger Teſtimony of the Being of a God, and that is, the Force and Dictates of *Conſcience*, and thoſe boading Fears and Dreads, which are made connatural to Guilt. [e] Conſcience, indeed, in the

[c] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [d] *Fenelon*'s Demonſt. [e] *Nichols*'s Conference with a Theiſt.

the Breaſt of Man, ſeems to have an uncontroulable Power, and to act like God's Vice-gerent here below. It admoniſhes every one of his Duty, and the indiſpenſable Neceſſity of performing it: It applauds the good Man, and gives him a Peace and Serenity of Mind, which the Frowns of the World, and the Storms of adverſe Fortune cannot impair: It tortures the Soul of a Sinner with a thouſand bitter Reflections; ſets his Crimes before his Face with all their aggravating Horrors and Deformities; and thunders in his Ears that dreadful Sentence, which awaits his Impiety, and makes him tremble at the Apprehenſions of his impending Doom. Now, that theſe Dreads and Anxieties are not occaſioned by the Fear of Men is plain, becauſe they have frequently been obſerved to be the Conſequences of Crimes, that were concealed from publick Light, and the Inmates of Perſons, who were ſet above the Reach of all human Laws: And that they do not proceed from the mere Judgment of our own Breaſt, upon the moral Turpitude of our Actions, we have this plain Argument to evince, [f] that, as no good Man *hopes from himſelf*, i. e. no good Man hopes, that he ſhall, at any Time hereafter, be at the Diſcretion of rewarding himſelf; ſo no ill Man *fears from himſelf*, that he ſhall, at any Time hereafter, come into the Mind of puniſhing himſelf. And therefore the ſimple Verdict of our Minds, upon good or evil Actions, would never be able to produce Hope or Fear, Joy or Grief in us, were it not for this farther Apprehenſion, that there is a God, who knows all, as well as we, and will take Care ſome Time or other, to make Retributions accordingly: And from hence it is, that every Operation of Conſcience is always found to terminate upon ſome Divine Attribute or other; [g] its Approbations evidence the Goodneſs; its Accuſations, the Holineſs; and its Comminations, the Juſtice of Almighty God.

AND as every Man's Conſcience is the Declaration of a God, ſo it is to be obſerved farther, that it is a Faculty independent on our Wills, that we cannot extinguiſh, would we never ſo fain; and will therefore, at one Time or other, infallibly exert itſelf, to the full Conviction of what the boldeſt Infidel ſeems now to deny. [h] Let *Caligula* then profeſs himſelf an *Atheiſt*, and, with that Profeſſion, hide his Head, or run under his Bed, when the Thunder ſtrikes his Ears, and the Lightning flaſhes in his Eyes. Theſe terrible Works of Nature put him in Mind of the *Power*, and his own guilty Conſcience, of the *Juſtice* of God, whom, while, in his wilful Opinion, he weakly denies, in his involuntary Action he ſtrongly aſſerts. So that the Belief of a Deity muſt either be granted, or it will be extorted from us: Only unhappy is the Man, that denies him to himſelf, and proves him to others, and will not acknowledge his *Exiſtence*, at the ſame Time that he trembles at his *Power*.

Its Deſires. 6. IF we look into our Souls once more, we ſhall find another Quality in them, that properly remits us to God; and that is, the immenſe *Deſire of Happineſs*, which nothing here below can content or ſatisfy. That there is ſuch an Appetite implanted in our Minds is very manifeſt from the reſtleſs Purſuits, we find ourſelves engag'd in, whenever we chance to place it upon wrong and undeſerving Objects; and that all the Acquiſitions in Life are not ſufficient to anſwer its Demands, our own Hearts will tell us, whenever we think on the Emptineſs of all worldly Delights, and how, by Reaſon either of their *offenſive Mixtures*, ſhort Continuance, or *neceſſary Decays*, they leave our Souls lean, and pining in the very Midſt of their Enjoyments. And indeed 'tis no ſmall Inſtance of the wiſe Diſpenſation of Providence, that he has given us ſuch Inclinations, and, at the ſame Time, not given us Objects fitted to content them; that he has decreed, that all worldly Things ſhould be vain and unſatisfying, and not anſwerable to that importunate Deſire of Happineſs, which he hath made connatural to us, on purpoſe to make us look up unto him, who is the only Source of ſolid Refreſhment, of ſincere and laſting Delectation, and ſuch as is adequate to the Meaſure of the Longings of our Soul. Now, if our Minds have ſuch Longings as theſe, who was it that firſt infus'd them? Or, how came they to underſtand, that there is ſomething ſtill wanting to make their Happineſs compleat, if they had not a Notion of a Being, more perfect, than what they meet with here below, and ſuch as is capable to fill their Capacities, and anſwer all their Wiſhes?

THE Exiſtence of the Deſire therefore muſt neceſſarily imply the Reality of the Object, [i] otherwiſe Mankind, of all the Works of the Creation, whereof they pretend

[f] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [g] *Charnock* on the Exiſtence of God. [h] *Pearſon* on the Creed.
[i] *Charnock*'s Exiſtence of a God.

pretend to be chief, are certainly moſt miſerable: And, while the Earth *drinks up the Rain, that comes into its Boſom,* and other Creatures are fed with the Products of the Earth, they only are left to pine under the Torment of an impatient Appetite, and the Impoſſibility of Enjoyment. But now, upon the Suppoſition that there is a God, the Soul of Man has its Object, and its Deſires are ſatisfied: It ſees him in its Meditations; it taſtes him in its Ordinances; it feels him in the Comforts of well-doing, while it continues here; and when it is tranſlated hence, obtains its perfect Conſummation and Bliſs, in the beatifick Viſion and Fruition of him to all Eternity.

THUS we have run through ſome of the Works of Nature, and upon the whole, cannot but perceive, [k] that whether we look up to Heaven, or down upon the Earth, whether upon ourſelves, or into ourſelves, whether upon the Things within us, or round about us, which Way ſoever we turn our Eyes, we meet with plain Evidences of an Almighty Cauſe; and that, from the brighteſt Star in the Firmament, to the meaneſt Pebble we tread on; from the talleſt Cedar, to the loweſt Shrub; from the Eagle, to the Inſect; from the Camel, to the Ant; every thing is ſtamp'd with the Divine Signature, and loudly proclaims the Being of a God.

Other Arguments briefly ſumm'd up.

WE might now purſue this Argument farther, [l] from the natural Inſtinct of all Creatures, both ſenſitive and vegetative, and their wiſe Direction to their proper Ends; [m] from the natural Notions we have of God, which always remain with us, until they are forcibly extinguiſhed; [n] and from the univerſal Conſent of Mankind; [o] ſince there is no Age ſo diſtant, no Country ſo remote, no People ſo barbarous, but what give Teſtimony to this Truth. We might farther illuſtrate this Doctrine from the Predictions of future Events, which nothing but a Divine Omniſcience could foreſee, and a Divine Power fulfil; [p] from the ſtrange and wonderful Occurrences in the World, which nothing but that Almighty Arm, that rules and controuls the Courſe of Nature, could effect; and from remarkable Judgments upon the Wicked, and as remarkable Preſervations of the Righteous, in all Ages, which nothing but the ſovereign Hand of Providence could diſpenſe. We might yet further evince this Truth, [q] from the bleſſed Work of the Holy Ghoſt upon the Minds of the Regenerate; from the inward Senſe and Feeling of Religion on their Conſciences; from the Teſtimony of Divine Goodneſs on their Spirits; from the Power and Energy of a lively Faith; and from the bleſſed Influences and Operations of heavenly Grace, which, to the Good and Godly, are more forcible and convincing Arguments, (becauſe experimental) than all that has gone before. But what has been ſaid is enough to convince us, that the Folly and Wickedneſs of thoſe muſt needs be very groſs, muſt needs be very daring, who exclude God from the World, and ſet up, in his ſtead, a blind and unthinking Principle of their own.

The great Folly and Danger of Atheiſm.

" [r] THAT Matter exiſted from Eternity, and all the Parts of it were in Mo-
" tion; which, after innumerable Trials, ſo hamper'd themſelves together at laſt,
" as to fall into the happy Order wherein we ſee Things now: That Men firſt
" ſprung up, like Muſhrooms, out of the Mud and Slime of the Earth; that all
" their Thoughts, and the whole of what they call *Soul* are only the various Actions
" and Repercuſſions of ſmall Particles of Matter; that the whole Syſtem of the
" World, in ſhort, and every Being therein is nothing but Matter and Motion;
" *Matter* dividing itſelf into Particles of ſuch and ſuch a Figure; and *Motion* direct-
" ing itſelf into ſuch Tracts, and Turnings, and Deviations: That they dance and
" friſk about, as they think fit, and yet keep every Thing in due Regularity, while
" the drowzy God ſits ſleeping in Heaven, never once concerning himſelf with the
" Matter:" Theſe are ſome of the wild extravagant Opinions of atheiſtical Spirits, which the bare mentioning of is enough to confute. [s] For, ſhall any one tell me, that the great and curious Frame of the World was made by Accident? As well may he pretend to ſay, that, once upon a Time, a certain Quantity of Stone, and Timber, and Iron, and Lead, and other Materials, met happily together by Chance at *Weſtminſter*, and then fell to Work; the Stones carved themſelves, the Timber hew'd itſelf, and the Iron and Lead got into their proper Places, and ſo finiſhed the famous *Cathedral*, without the Help of any Architect: For, alas! what Compariſon is there between the largeſt and moſt curious Building, and the immenſe Fabrick of the Univerſe? " Beyond all Credulity therefore (as a late Divine expreſſes it) is the *Credu-*

" *louſneſs*

[k] *Tillotſon*, Vol. I. Antidote againſt Atheiſm. [l] *Pearſon* on the Creed. [m] Vid. *Scot*'s Chriſtian Life, *Part* II. and *More*'s [n] *Stilling fleet*'s Origines Sacræ. [o] *Wilkins*'s Natural Religion. [p] Ibid. [q] *Edwards* on the Creed. [r] *Tillotſon*, Vol. II. [s] *Bentley*'s Confutation of Atheiſm. [t] *Tillotſon*, Vol. II.

" *louſneſs* of the *Atheiſt*, whoſe Belief is ſo abſurdly ſtrong, as to believe that " † *Chance* ſhould make the World, when it cannot build an Houſe; that *Chance* " ſhould produce all *Plants*, when it cannot paint a Landſkip; and that *Chance* " ſhould form all *Animals*, both *Rational* and *Irrational*, when it cannot ſo much " as make a *Watch*, or any other lifeleſs Machine."

" WERE the Belief of a God a Matter of meer *Speculation* indeed, a Man might trifle with it, and ſport himſelf with his *Motion* and *Atoms*, as long as he pleaſed; but ſince it is made a *fundamental* Point of his Salvation, he ſeems to *run* too great an Hazard, for the bare Gratification of a fooliſh Singularity, who adventures to deny it. For, beſides that he throws away the main Comfort of his Life, reſigns the Satisfaction of a good Conſcience, and quits the Hope of a bleſſed Eternity, he runs the Riſque of being eternally wretched in the World to come, and expoſes himſelf naked to the unquenchable Wrath of an everlaſting God. And for what End? Only to enjoy the Pleaſures of a riotous and tumultuary Life for a Moment; and then, if, when he comes to conclude the Scene, he finds himſelf miſtaken in his *atheiſtical* Confidence, and all Things *otherwiſe*, than what he had ſtated and determined them in this World; inſtead of his beloved *Sleep* and *Inſenſibility*, finds his Soul ſtill ſubſiſting after his Body, only remov'd into a new and ſtrange Place, amidſt a World of Spirits, and entered upon an everlaſting and unchangeable State; finds himſelf ſummoned to the Tribunal of that God, whoſe Being and Authority he had ſo peremptorily denied and affronted, and thence tranſmitted to a diſmal *Eternity*, there to languiſh out an endleſs Exiſtence in unpitied Woes and fruitleſs Lamentations; how ſadly will the Man be diſappointed, and ſurprized with Terrors on every Side, to find himſelf, I ſay, thus unexpectedly and irrecoverably plung'd into a State of Ruin and Deſperation!

AND thus it may happen, for any Thing he knows: For, as we cannot fancy Things into Being, ſo neither can we make them vaniſh into Nothing, by the ſtubborn Confidence of our Imagination. What is it then that makes him thus foolhardy, and tempts him to this deſperate Riſque? *'Tis to ſet the World free from the Prejudices of vulgar Errors*, he'll tell you, *and the Slavery of that Bug-bear, Conſcience.* Ah wretched Freedom! which, to deliver us from one imaginary Evil, brings upon us a Thouſand real Miſchiefs, which degrades the Dignity of human Nature, ſaps the Foundation of all Societies, opens a Sluice to all Kind of Wickedneſs, and takes away from Man his only Comfort in Time of Diſtreſs. For, ſince of himſelf he is infinitely inſufficient for his own Happineſs; is [x] liable to many Evils and Miſeries, which he can neither prevent nor redreſs; is full of Wants, which he cannot ſupply; ſurrounded with Infirmities, which he cannot remove; and obnoxious to Dangers, which he can no way eſcape; where can he turn himſelf without a God, or where repoſe his anxious Thoughts, but in his Divine Providence? In the Day of Adverſity eſpecially, when all other Friends are apt to forſake him, how dark and gloomy muſt every thing about him look without God! An unhappy Mortal, deep ſunk in Miſeries and Misfortunes, and ſtruggling with innumerable Hardſhips here upon *Earth*, and at the ſame Time deſtitute of a Protector and Patron in *Heaven*, is a Condition, not to be imagin'd without Horror. [y] But now, even in theſe Circumſtances, when he lifts up his Eyes to him, he will find vaſt and inconceivable

† They, who content themſelves with Words, may aſcribe the Formation of the World to *Fate*, or *Nature*, rather than *Chance*. *Chance* ſeems only to be a *Term*, by which we expreſs our Ignorance of the Cauſe of any Thing. For when we ſay a Thing comes by *Chance* we do not mean, that it had no other Cauſe, but only that we do not know the *true* Cauſe, which produced it, or interpoſed in ſuch a Manner as to make that fall out which was not expected. *Chance* can never produce any Thing of itſelf: Whatever Events or Effects there are, they muſt proceed from ſome Agent or Cauſe, which is either *free*, or not *free*, i. e. *neceſſary*. If it be *free*, it wills what it produces: And therefore that, which is produced, is produced with Deſign, and not by *Chance*. If it acts *neceſſarily*, the Event muſt neceſſarily be, and therefore it is not by Accident. As for *Fate*, it is nothing but a *Series* of *Events*, conſider'd as neceſſarily following in ſome certain Order. Now a Series of Events is the ſame with Events happening *ſeriatim*, which Words declare nothing concerning the Cauſe of that Concatenation of Events, or why it is. Time, Place, Manner, Neceſſity, are but Circumſtances of Things, that come to paſs, not the Cauſes of their Exiſtence. On the contrary, ſome *external* and *ſuperior* Cauſe muſt be ſuppos'd to put the *Series* in *Motion*, to project the *Order*, to connect the *Cauſes* and *Effects*, and to impoſe the Neceſſity; for which Reaſon, we find *Seneca* declaring, that in this Series God is *prima omnium Cauſa, ex qua cæteræ pendent*. And, laſtly, as for *Nature:* If it be uſed for the intrinſick Manner of exiſting, or that Conſtitution, Make, or Diſpoſition, with which any Thing is produced, or born; to ſay that, in this Senſe, Nature form'd any thing, is to ſay, that it form'd itſelf, or that the *Effect* is the *Efficient*. If it ſignifies the *Laws of* Nature, which ſeem to be follow'd, with a good deal of Uniformity, in the Conduct of Things; all Laws muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe ſome *Legiſlator*, and are conſequently poſterior to that which conſtituted them; or if it denotes natural or ſecond Cauſes, ſecond Cauſes are nothing elſe, but either the *inanimate* Motions of *ſenſeleſs* Matter, or the *voluntary* Motions of *dependent* Creatures; *one*, the direct Operation, and the other, only the free Permiſſion of him that ruleth over all. *Woolaſton*'s Religion of Nature, *Sect.* 5. and *Clarke*'s Sermons, *Vol.* I.

[u] *Scot*'s Chriſtian Life, *Part* II. [x] *Tillotſon*, Vol. I. [y] *Scot*'s Chriſtian Life, *Part* II.

inconceivable Comforts flowing in upon him; while he conſiders that *Omnipotence*, directed by unerring *Wiſdom*, and incited by infinite *Goodneſs*, is engag'd in his Favour, and under Covenant to ſuccour and relieve him; and under this Perſuaſion he can patiently ſuffer all Things, with chearful Submiſſion and Reſignation to the Divine Will, having a ſecret *Spring* of ſpiritual Joy, and the continual *Feaſt* of a good Conſcience within, that forbid him to be miſerable. For 'tis God, [z] *our Maker*, (as one of the Speakers in *Job* expreſſes it) *who giveth Songs in the Night*, in the *Night of Affliction, and in the Gloomineſs of human Deſpair.*

Praiſe and Admiration due to God.

WHAT has been ſaid may be of farther Uſe, to make us acknowledge, and admire, and praiſe, and adore the Deity, and thoſe Perfections, that are conſpicuous in his Works; and this the rather, becauſe, of all ſublunary Beings, we only are qualified to do it. Other Creatures indeed are called upon in Scripture to praiſe the Lord; but they are no otherwiſe capable of doing it, than by affording us the Matter and Subject of our Celebrations: And therefore, when the [a] Pſalmiſt invokes the *Sun, Moon, and Stars*, to praiſe God, [b] he, in Effect, calls upon Men, and Angels, and other rational Beings, to conſider theſe great Effects of Divine Wiſdom, their vaſt Dimenſions, their regular Motions and Periods, their admirable Diſpoſition and Order, their eminent Ends and Uſes, and to give him the Glory of his Power in making ſuch great and illuſtrious Bodies, in placing them in ſuch Regularity, and in giving them Virtues, ſo beneficial to the Uſe of Men. And in like Manner, when the Elements and all Meteors, the Trees, and other Vegetables, the Beaſts, and other Animals are incited to praiſe God; the Meaning is, that Man ſhould obſerve and take Notice of their curious Structures, Ends, and Uſes, and give God the Praiſe of his Wiſdom, and other great Attributes that are manifeſt therein. And indeed, for this very Reaſon it was, [c] that our wiſe Creator united theſe two diſtinct Natures in Man, and placed him on this Theatre of his Magnificence, that, by the Help of his Senſes, he might perceive the external Parts of the Creation, and, by his Reaſon, diſcover (what is moſt worthy to be known) the admirable Order, which diſtinguiſhes and unites ſo many and ſo different Natures, and guides all their Motions in ſuch a Manner, as ſhews their Dependence on one *Principle*, without knowing it, and their Tendency to one End, without willing it; that ſo, by gradual Advances, he might aſcend from Nature to God, and with deliberate Admiration, magnify him for the Operations of his Hands. And as this, in a great Meaſure, is the Buſineſs of our preſent State, ſo it ſeems to be no improbable Opinion, that ſome Part of our Employment, in the Regions of Bliſs, will be, to contemplate the Works of God, as well as his eternal Eſſence, and to give him the Praiſe and Adoration, that reſult from both: According to that known Form of the heavenly Doxology: [d] *And the four and twenty Elders fell down before him, that ſat on the Throne, and worſhipped him, that liveth for ever and ever, and caſt their Crowns before the Throne, ſaying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power; for thou haſt created all Things, and for thy Pleaſure they are, and were created.*

Love and Obedience.

WE can hardly quit this Argument of the Exiſtence of God from the Works of Creation, without reflecting upon ourſelves in particular, and upon the Love and Obedience which are due unto him upon that Account. [e] 'Tis a good Similitude that of St *Auſtin:* If a Sculptor, after having faſhioned a Piece of Marble into the Figure of a Man, could inſpire it with Life and Senſe, and give it Motion, and Speech, and Underſtanding, can it be imagin'd, but that its firſt Act would be to proſtrate itſelf at the Feet of the Maker, in Subjection and Thankfulneſs, and to offer all it is, and all it can do, in Homage and Obedience to him? Now this, and much more, has our gracious God done for us: He has not only formed our Bodies curiouſly, and breathed into them rational Souls, capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying him; but has ſurrounded us likewiſe on every Side with Bleſſings innumerable, inſomuch, [f] that though it may be carrying the Compliment to human Nature too far, to ſay, that the whole Syſtem of the World was created for Man's Uſe, yet ſo much of it is certainly ſubjected to him, as is enough to make his Wonder and Aſtoniſhment break out, upon the leaſt Reflection: [g] *Lord, what is Man, that thou art ſo mindful of him, and the Son of Man, that thou viſiteſt him! Thou madeſt him a little lower than the Angels, and haſt crowned him with Glory and Honour; thou madeſt him to have Dominion over the Works of thine Hands, and haſt put all Things under his Feet.* The Advice, which the [h] Moraliſt gives, as the beſt Expedient

[z] *Job* xxxv. 10. [a] *Pſal.* cxlviii. 3. [b] *Ray's* Wiſdom of God. [c] *Bates's* Exiſtence of a God.
[d] *Rev.* iv. 10, 11. [e] *Bates's* Exiſtence. [f] *Ray's* Wiſdom of God. [g] *Pſal.* viii. 4. [h] *Seneca.*

Expedient to make Men grateful, is to encompaſs them ſo with Benefits, that, wherever they turn, ſomething may recal their Memories, and make their Benefactor viſible to them. The limited Condition of Man will not allow him to be ſo diffuſe in his Favours: [i] But where'er we turn our Eyes, or fix our Thoughts, whether on our Perſons, or our Comforts, on our preſent, or our future State, (for God has given Eternity to our Duration) we find ourſelves incircled with his innumerable and inеſtimable Benefits. Let us every Day therefore, upon the Conſideration of *theſe*, renew the Senſe of our Obligations, and, by intenſe Thoughts, kindle the Affections of Love and Reverence, of Praiſe and Thankfulneſs; that in them (as Flames aſcending from an Altar) *we may offer up ourſelves, our Souls, and Bodies, an holy, and living Sacrifice unto God, which is our reaſonable Service.*

[i] *Bates's* Exiſtence of a God.

CHAP. III.

Of DIVINE REVELATION.

THE *Foundation* of Religion (which conſiſts in the *Being* and *Attributes* of a God) we have ſufficiently demonſtrated from the Works of Nature, in the foregoing Chapter; and come now to enquire into the *Rule* of Religion, contained in the holy Scriptures, which are ſaid to be a *Revelation* of the Divine Will. But, before we enter upon that, it will be neceſſary to premiſe ſomething concerning the Poſſibility, Expedience, and Neceſſity of God's making ſuch a Revelation to Mankind.

A Revelation, what.

BY a *Revelation*, we underſtand a ſupernatural Diſcovery, or Manifeſtation of any Thing to us, either *immediately* by God himſelf, or by the *Mediation* of Angels, as moſt, if not all, the Revelations of the *Old Teſtament* were: And that God can, if he pleaſes, make ſuch a Manifeſtation of himſelf, and his Will to Mankind, no one, that is really perſuaded of his Exiſtence, can have any Room to doubt: For what cannot he do, who has made the World, and is infinite in Wiſdom and Power?

The ſeveral Kinds of it.

THE ſeveral Kinds of Revelation taken Notice of by the *Jews*, are, *Viſion*, *Dreams*, *Prophecy*, *Oracle*, *Inſpiration*, what they call *Bath-Kol*, and what *Gradus Moſaicus*. [a] *Maimonides*, who treats of this Subject, has made many curious Obſervations about the Difference of theſe ſeveral Kinds of *Revelation*: As, that ſome of them were by direct Impreſſion upon the Underſtanding; others, upon the Imagination only; and others, upon the outward Senſes, *&c.* But the moſt ſimple and obvious Difference between them (ſo far as there is any Ground in Scripture to diſtinguiſh them) ſeems to be this:—That *Viſion* was the Repreſentation of ſomething to Men, when they were *awake*, in Oppoſition to *Dreams*, which were Repreſentations made to them in their *Sleep*; that *Prophecy* was either by Way of Dream or Viſion, only it carried a fuller Aſſurance along with it, foretold generally ſome Event of Moment to others, and was always attended with a ſtrong *Extaſy* and Tranſport of Mind; that *Oracle* was rendering Anſwers [b] *from above the Mercy-Seat; from between the two Cherubims, which were upon the Ark of the Teſtimony*; that *Inſpiration* was an inward Excitement of the Spirit, attended with Calmneſs and Serenity of Mind, wherewith *David* and other Prophets (as they tell us) wrote their Books; [c] that *Bath-Kol*, (which was the loweſt Kind of *Revelation*) was a Voice heard to deſcend from Heaven, directing Men what to do in any Matter or Concern whatever; and that the *Gradus Moſaicus* (which was the higheſt Kind of it) was a [d] particular Vouchſafement to *Moſes*, a more immediate, and perfect, and familiar Communion with God, (without any Awe upon his Spirits, or diſturbing Impreſſion on his Imagination) than ever Prophet had, except our Lord *Jeſus*, who was the only begotten Son of God, and had the Fulneſs of the Spirit always *abiding in him without Meaſure*.

THESE

[a] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. II. [b] Exod. xxv. 22. [c] *Edward's* Survey of Religion.
[d] Exod. xxxiii. 11. Numb. xii. 6. Deut. xxxiv. 10.

THESE are the ſeveral Sorts and Degrees of *Revelation*, which have commonly been aſcribed to God: And what do we ſee in any of them, that he cannot, when he pleaſes, make uſe of? [a] Cannot he, by ſome viſible Appearances, convince Men of his immediate Preſence, beyond the Poſſibility of Doubt? Cannot he, either with, or without ſuch viſible Appearances, talk as familiarly to them, as one Man converſes with another? Cannot he, who formed our Minds, and knows all the Springs of our Thoughts, draw ſuch clear and bright Scenes and Pictures of Things on our Fancy and Imagination, whether ſleeping or waking, as ſhall need no other Proof of their Divinity, but themſelves; even as Light is known by itſelf, and the firſt Principles of Reaſon by their own Evidence? [f] We find ourſelves capable of communicating our Thoughts to one another, either by Means of a Sound of Words, which ſtrikes the Ear, or by Writing, or other Signatures of our Intentions, which affect the Eye: And why cannot God make uſe of the like Means, to impreſs what Ideas he thinks fit on our Minds, or to give ſuch Motions to the Brain, as may occaſionally excite whatever Thoughts he would produce in us? Or rather indeed, why may not he, without any intermediate or occaſional Cauſe at all, enlighten the Mind by a direct and naked View of ſuch Truths, as he is deſirous it ſhould know? [g] *For he that planteth the Ear, and he that formeth the Eye*, ſhall not he have Acceſs to them? And ſhall not he have Power of communicating his Thoughts, *that teacheth Man Underſtanding?* *The Poſſibility of a divine Revelation.*

THERE is no Queſtion then, but that God can, if he pleaſes, inſpire Men with the Knowledge of his Will, either by Dreams and Viſions, by an audible Voice, and familiar Converſation, or by an immediate Impreſſion upon the higher Faculties of their Reaſon: And that he can accompany his own *Revelations* with ſuch a clear and overpowering Light, as ſhall diſcover the Divinity of them, and convince us of their Reality, no one can doubt, that conſiders the vaſt Power and Influence which he, that made the Soul of Man, and perfectly knows its Frame, muſt needs have upon the Mind and Underſtanding of Man.

SINCE then we muſt acknowledge, that it is *poſſible* for God to reveal his Will to Mankind in any of the Ways, that we have mentioned, let us now conſider which is moſt *probable*, which is moſt agreeable to the Notions we have of him, whether he ſhould, or ſhould not, make ſuch a Revelation. Now, [h] if we may judge of this by the general Senſe of Mankind, we ſhall hardly find any one, that believed the Exiſtence of a God, who did not believe likewiſe ſome Kind of Commerce and Communication between God and Men. This was the Foundation of all the religious Rites and Ceremonies, which every Nation pretended to receive from their Gods; and, what gave Birth to all their ſuperſtitious Arts of *Divination*, was the Perſuaſion, that their Gods had a perpetual Intercourſe with Men, and, by various Means, gave them Intelligence of Things to come. *The Expediency of it.*

AND indeed, 'tis hardly to be imagined, that God ſhould make reaſonable Creatures on purpoſe to know him, and to be happy in the Knowledge, and Love, and Admiration of him, and yet withdraw himſelf from them, without giving them any viſible Token of his Preſence, or any other View of his Glory, but what they might perceive in the Reflection of his Works. Had Man preſerved the Innocence and Purity of his Nature, he had been fit for the Preſence and Converſation of God, even as Angels, and *the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*, are; and in that State, there can be no Doubt, but that God would have ſhewn himſelf and his Glory to him, in ſome Meaſure and Proportion, as he does to Angels in Heaven, and did formerly to *Adam* in *Paradiſe*: So that Man was originally made (if I may ſpeak it with Reverence) for the Converſation of God; which pious and devout Souls recover, in ſome Meaſure, on Earth, and which we all hope to enjoy in Heaven.

SIN indeed has made a vaſt Diſtance between God and Man: But if we muſt live in the other World, and be happy or miſerable there; if God ſtill exerciſes any Care and Providence over Mankind; or if he has any Regard to his own Honour and Worſhip; it ſeems abſolutely neceſſary that he ſhould give ſome ſenſible Tokens of his Being and Preſence, and inſtruct them more perfectly in his Nature and Will, than what any Reaſoning of their own Minds, without a divine Aſſiſtance and Direction, can poſſibly teach them. And, for our farther Conviction in this Matter, let us look a little into the State of the World, while it lay in Darkneſs, and under the Deſtitution of a divine Revelation. *The Neceſſity of it.*

[a] *Sherlock*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[h] *Sherlock*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[f] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Part I.
[g] *Pſal.* xciv. 9.

From the wicked Condition the World lay in.

[l] 'TIS hardly poſſible to read the firſt Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, without Amazement, and many mortifying Reflections, to ſee rational Creatures capable of ſo wretched a Degeneracy, that no Object was ſo deſpicable, as not to be thought worthy of divine Honours, no Vice ſo deteſtable or brutiſh, as not only to obtain in common Converſation, but even to be admitted into their Rituals of Religion, and moſt ſolemn Acts of publick Worſhip. How Man became thus prone to all Kinds of Evil, we only know by *Revelation*; and therefore thoſe who reject all *Revelation*, muſt ſuppoſe, that he was at firſt created in this State of Sin and Miſery, which is a grievous Imputation upon the Goodneſs and Juſtice of God; and yet, to ſuppoſe him placed in this Condition without all Help or Remedy, is to *charge God ſtill more fooliſhly*. 'Tis, in ſhort, to deny his ſacred Attributes, to repreſent him as an unwiſe, unmerciful, and unholy Being, or at leaſt ſuch an one, as takes no Cognizance of human Affairs. For, how can we believe that a Being, of infinite Perfection, when he ſaw Mankind under the Deception of Sin, and the Deluſions of Satan, ſhould take no Care to rectify their Miſtakes, and reform their Manners? [k] Can we ſuppoſe it conſiſtent with infinite Truth, inſtead of manifeſting itſelf to the World, to ſuffer all Nations to be expoſed to the wicked Deſigns of ſeducing and apoſtate Spirits, without offering them ſufficient Means to undeceive and reſcue themſelves? Can we imagine, that a God of infinite Majeſty and Power, who is a *jealous* God, and will not *give his Honour to another*, ſhould allow the World to be guilty of Idolatry; to make themſelves Gods of Wood and Stone; nay, to offer their Sons and Daughters unto Devils, without concerning himſelf to vindicate his own Honour, and putting a Stop to ſuch abominable Practices? We have no true Notion of God, if we do not believe him to be infinite in Power, and Knowledge, and Holineſs, and Mercy, and Truth; and yet we may as well believe there is no God at all, as imagine that a God of *infinite Knowledge* ſhould take no Notice of what is done here below; that *infinite Power* ſhould ſuffer itſelf to be inſulted and deſpiſed, without requiring any Satisfaction; that *infinite Holineſs* ſhould behold the whole World overſpread with Wickedneſs, and find out no Way to remedy it; and that Superſtition, and Idolatry, and all the Tyranny of Sin and Satan, for ſo long a Time, ſhould enſlave and torment the Bodies and Souls of Men, and there ſhould be no Compaſſion in *infinite Mercy*, nor any Care over a deluded World in a *God of Truth*.

WE have not this Conception of a wiſe and good Father, that he will ſuffer his Children to run on in all Manner of Folly and Extravagance, without taking any Care to reclaim them: And much leſs can we ſuppoſe it in God, whom we cannot but repreſent to ourſelves, as beholding our forlorn Condition with all the Compaſſion of the tendereſt Parent, and without the Weakneſs and Infirmities that accompany human Nature.

SINCE the greateſt Part of Mankind then was under the Deception of the Devil, and led captive by him at his Will; "What ſhould the Creator of the Univerſe "(ſays St *Cyril*) do in this Caſe? Should he leave all Men under the Power of im- "pure *Demons*, and ſuffer the Devil's Malice to diſappoint his own Deſigns? Should "he not ſtretch forth his ſaving Hand to thoſe that were down? Should he not re- "claim thoſe that were enſlav'd to the groſſeſt Wickedneſs? Should he not call back "thoſe that were gone aſtray? How then could he be *good*, if when, without the "leaſt Trouble, he could effectually do all this, he had taken no Care of us? Why "did he at firſt bring Men into Being and give them Life, if he would extend no "Mercy to them, in this State of Miſery and Defection?"

And the Inability of Philoſophers to reform it.

THE Corruption of human Nature was not however ſo univerſal, but that ſome great Men rais'd themſelves above the common *Level*: [l] They lamented, and deſpiſed the Stupidity and Credulity of the Vulgar: But it muſt be obſerv'd, that as the Number of theſe was but very ſmall, ſo the Knowledge, which diſcover'd the Folly of others, was not able to attain *Wiſdom* itſelf; and the Effect of it ſeems to have been perpetual *Scepticiſm*, a Floating between all Opinions and Principles, diſcarding that, which was manifeſtly wrong, but not being able to ſettle their Minds in that, which was good and right. Beſides [m] their total Ignorance of the Cauſe of the Depravation of human Nature, of the Origin of Evil, and of the proper Manner of ſerving and worſhipping God acceptably; their Diſputes and Differences were infinite about his *Being* and *Providence*; about his Inſpection of human Actions; and being

[k] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, Vol. I.
[l] *Stanhope*, ibid. — [m] Biſhop of *London*'s ſecond Paſtoral Letter.

being pleaſed or diſpleaſed at them; about the Immortality of the Soul, and its final Condition after Death; Points, of the higheſt Concern for Men to know, and without which it is *impoſſible for them to pleaſe God.*

IN Matters too of moral Good and Evil, though ſome of the Rules and Reflections, they have left us, are at once Matter of Wonder and Reproach to *many* Chriſtians, who neglect the Improvement of much clearer Light; yet even *here* they, who advanced fartheſt, ſtopp'd a great Way ſhort, [n] and allow'd of many Actions, that were manifeſtly vicious and immoral, ſuch as *Revenge* and *Self-Murther*, *Popularity* and *vain Glory*, *expoſing their own Children*, and *committing Fornication*, and *unnatural Luſt*. The Truth is, the Nature and Obliquity of ſeveral Vices, the proper Ends of moral Actions in general, the Method of regaining the Favour of God when offended, the Certainty of a future State, the Reſurrection of the Dead, and the ſolemn Account to be render'd of all their Actions, (ſuch as now are, or ought to be, the *governing* Principles of every Chriſtian's Behaviour) were what they underſtood but little of, and conſequently what they could not much be influenc'd by: And this produc'd, both in their Diſcourſes ſuch Uncertainty, and in their Lives ſuch monſtrous Inconſiſtence, that one can hardly ſay, which is more ſurprizing, that they ſhould come ſo near Truth, and yet miſs it at laſt; that their Examples ſhould ſpeak them almoſt more than *Men* in ſome Actions, and yet little, if at all, better than *Brutes* in others: And, for the Confirmation of all this, we need only alledge the Judgment of *Cicero*, who was a Man, as able to paſs a Judgment in theſe Matters, as ever liv'd. "[o] Do you think, *ſays he*, that theſe Things (meaning the Precepts "of Morality) had any Influence upon theſe Men (except only a very few of them) "that thought, and wrote, and diſputed about them? No; Who is there of all the "Philoſophers, whoſe Mind, and Life, and Manners were conformable to right "Reaſon? Who ever made his Philoſophy the Law and Rule of his Life, and not "a mere Boaſt and Shew of his Wit and Parts? Who obſerv'd his own Inſtruc-"tions, and liv'd in Obedience to his own Precepts? On the Contrary, many of "them were Slaves to filthy Luſts; many to Pride; many to Covetouſneſs; and "the like."

[p] NAY, even the Things, which they certainly knew, and were fully perſuaded of, *the moſt obvious and neceſſary Duties of Life*, they had not Authority enough to enforce, and inculcate upon Men's Minds, with ſo ſtrong an Impreſſion, as to influence and govern their Conduct. The *Truths*, which they prov'd by *ſpeculative* Reaſon, were deſtitute of ſome more ſenſible *Authority* to back them, and to give them more Force and Energy in Practice; and the *Precepts*, which they laid down, (how reaſonable ſoever they were in themſelves) ſeem'd ſtill to want Weight, and to be no more than the *Precepts of Men*. And hence it came to paſs, that none of the Philoſophers were ever able to work any remarkable Change in the Minds and Lives of their Hearers; nor does it appear in Hiſtory, that any Number, even of *Socrates*'s Followers (himſelf, I think, is the only Martyr of that Kind, that we have upon Record) were ſo convinced of the Excellency of true Virtue, and the Certainty of its final Reward, as to be willing to lay down their Lives for its Sake, as innumerable Diſciples of *Chriſt* were known to do.

THE Truth is, the Philoſophers themſelves were ſenſible of the Defect of their own Rules in this particular. They complain very much of the Darkneſs of Men's Underſtandings, the Prevalence of their Paſſions, and the Perverſeneſs of their Wills: They confeſs that human Nature was ſtrangely corrupted, and acknowledge that this Corruption was a Diſeaſe, whoſe Cauſe they knew not, and for which they could not find out a ſufficient Remedy. [q] So that the great Duties of Religion were laid down by them as Matters of *Speculation*, rather than Rules of *Practice*, and not ſo much urg'd upon the *Lives* and Hearts of Men, as propos'd to their *Theory* and Admiration.

THIS, to any one that will look into it, was apparently the Condition of Mankind without a Revelation: And, to recover them out of ſuch Corruption and Degeneracy into a State ſuitable to the original Excellence of their Nature, there was plainly a ſupernatural Diſcovery of their Duty wanting. For if (as has been related before) the Generality of the World was ſo very ignorant and corrupt; ſo over-run with Idolatry and Licentiouſneſs; if the beſt of the Philoſophers themſelves were not exempt from the general Infection, and far from certain in the Doctrines, they pretended

[n] Paſtoral Letter, and *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, Vol. II.
[o] *Cic.* Tuſc. Quæſt. Lib. 2.
[p] *Clarke*'s Evidence, ibid.
[q] *Clarke*, ibid.

tended to advance; if the Points, wherein they were certain, they were not able to prove clearly enough to vulgar Underſtandings, and thoſe, they were able to prove, they had not ſufficient Authority to enforce: In a Word, if there was ſo much Inconſiſtency in themſelves, as to give Scandal to others, and ſo much Depravity in others as to make them deſpair of ever reforming them; then was there plainly a Want of ſome Divine *Revelation* to ſupply theſe Defects. There was wanting a Revelation, to diſcover in what Manner, and with what Kind of external Service, God might acceptably be worſhipped: There was wanting a Revelation, to diſcover what Expiation he would be pleaſed to accept for Sin, when his Honour and Authority were affronted: There was wanting a Revelation, to give Man Aſſurance of the great Motives of Religion, the Rewards and Puniſhments of a future State: In Fine, there was wanting ſome particular Revelation, to make the whole Doctrine of Religion clear and obvious to all Capacities, to add Weight and Authority to the plaineſt Precepts, and to furniſh Men with extraordinary Aſſiſtances, to enable them to overcome the Corruptions of their Nature: And without the Aſſiſtance of ſuch a *Revelation*, their wiſeſt Men were always of this Opinion, that the World could never be reformed. "Ye may e'en give over, [r] ſays *Socrates*, all Hopes of amend-"ing Men's Manners for the future, unleſs God be pleaſed to ſend you ſome other "Perſon to inſtruct you; [s] for whatſoever is ſet right, ſays *Plato*, in the preſent ill "State of the World, can only be done by the Interpoſition of God."

SINCE therefore there was confeſſedly wanting a *Divine Revelation*, to relieve the Neceſſities of Men in their natural Eſtate; and ſince none can preſume to ſay, that it is inconſiſtent with any of the Attributes of God, or unbecoming the Wiſdom of the Creator of all Things, to ſupply that Want: Nay, ſince, on the Contrary, it ſeems much more ſuitable to our natural Notions of the Goodneſs and Mercy of God, to ſuppoſe that he ſhould do all this, rather than that he ſhould not; it undeniably follows, that we have ſufficient Reaſon to believe that his Goodneſs was all along inclinable to make ſuch a Revelation, whenever his infinite Wiſdom ſhould think fit.

Why a Revelation was made no ſooner.

"BUT if a Revelation was ſo mightily wanted, as is pretended, Why did not "God vouchſafe one ſooner? Why did he ſuffer the World to lie ſo long in Ig-"norance and Corruption, eſpecially when it was ſo eaſy for his Power, and ſo "agreeable to his Goodneſs, to have corrected the Diſorder?" This is an Objection, that ſeems to meet us: And though it does not become weak Mortals to enquire into [t] *the Times or the Seaſons, that God hath put in his own Power*; though the Declaration of his Will to Mankind was an Act of free Grace, which he was entirely at Liberty to do, at what Time, or in what Manner he pleas'd, yet it may not be amiſs to conſider,

1. THAT the Succeſſion and Continuance of Time is not, to an eternal Mind, what we compute it. [u] *One Day with the Lord is as a thouſand Years, and a thouſand Years as one Day*, is a Poſition, which the Apoſtle deſires ſome People *not to be ignorant of*, when they ſeemed to be uneaſy at Chriſt's delaying his coming to Judgment: And, in like Manner, though the Compaſs of two thouſand Years and upwards, from the Time of *Adam*, to the Promulgation of the Law, be a prodigious Space to our Imagination, yet to him, who has all Eternity under one ſingle Intuition [x] *a thouſand Years are but as Yeſterday, ſeeing they paſs away* with him *as a Watch in the Night*.

HAD there indeed been no Proviſion made for Man's Information, during this Space of Time, but the bare Light of Nature, which ſoon came to be obſcur'd, ſome Imputations might then fall upon God's *providential* Care, which would not ſo eaſily be remov'd: But ſince he all along made ſuch Declarations of himſelf to the *Patriarchs*, both before and after the Flood, as they were obliged to tranſmit to their Poſterity, there cannot be any Want of a ſufficient Supply of Knowledge chargeable upon God; nor was there that Neceſſity for a ſtanding Revelation then, when the Longevity of Mankind (for *Adam* himſelf lived 950 Years, with whom *Methuſelah*, was contemporary 243, and with him *Noah* 600, and *Shem* 100 Years) gave a better Sanction and Authority to Tradition.

[y] AFTER the *Flood*, *Noah* (who lived till within two Years of the Birth of *Abraham*) and *Shem* (who lived till *Iſaac* was fifty Years old) had freſh Revelations given

[r] *Plato* in *Apol. Socratis.* [s] De Repub. Lib. VI. [t] *Acts* i. 7. [u] 2 *Pet.* iii. 8.
[x] *Pſal.* xc. 4. [y] *Vid. Waterland*'s Scripture vindicated, Part II. in the Poſtſcript; and *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, Vol. II.

given them; and the Religion of thoſe Times was a Mixture of natural and revealed Precepts and their Sanctions. Upon his *Call*, *Abraham* became the great Reviver and Reſtorer both of Natural and Revealed Religion, by himſelf, and his Iſſue, and by his Nephew *Lot*, and his Iſſue, which, in Proceſs of Time, grew up to many, and great Nations. During this Period, the holy Penman records *two* Perſons of the *Gentile* World, *Job*, and *Melchiſedech*, (and perhaps his own Father-in-Law *Jethro* may be reckoned a *third)* as Men of Renown for their Knowledge, and Worſhip of the true God.

UPON *giving of the Law*, the *Jews* † became as it were *a burning and ſhining Light* to the reſt of the World; and, by the Providence of God in all his Diſpenſations to that People, effectual Care was taken, that all the neceſſary Points of Religion, which concerned Mankind in general, ſhould by them be communicated to the reſt of the World. In the Time of *Joſhua*, and ſome Time after the Wars of *Canaan* carried in them ſuch *viſible Marks* of a divine Power, on the Side of *Iſrael*, as ſerved to ſpread the Fame of the true God in all the Nations round about. In the Time of *David*, the *Jews* grew a powerful People, and the Atchievements of their King were crowned with an uncommon Succeſs, (as himſelf tells us) [z] *to declare the Glory of God among the Heathen, and his Wonders among all People.* In the Time of *Solomon*, the Fame of the true God was ſo diffuſed all around, that we find, not only the [a] *Queen of Sheba*, who *came from the Eaſt to hear the Wiſdom of Solomon*, but *Hiram King of Tyre*, likewiſe [b] *bleſſing the Lord God of* Iſrael *who made Heaven and Earth.* Upon the *Diviſion* of the ten Tribes, and the Erection of the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, diſtinct from that of *Judah*, the many Leagues and Wars, which theſe two Kingdoms had with the Kings of *Egypt*, *Syria*, *Babylon*, and other Nations, could not but exceedingly conduce to the Propagation of the true Religion, and give the Prophets an Opportunity of working their Miracles among the Heathen: The *Captivity* of the *Jews* for ſeventy Years in *Babylon*, made their Religion almoſt as well known *there*, as in *Jeruſalem* itſelf; and for this Reaſon, we find it recommended by ſeveral publick *Edicts*, and all the People, under that large *Empire*, commanded [c] *to tremble and fear before the God of* Daniel, *for he is the only living God, and ſteadfaſt for ever.* The *Reſtoration* of the *Jews* by *Cyrus*, (who had been ſo long before appointed, and named by God himſelf for the Work) and his peculiar Favour to them (which raiſed their Repute among other Nations) was ordained for this very End [d] *that they might know, from the riſing of the Sun, and from the Weſt, that there is no God, beſides him, who created all Things.*

LOWER than this I might deſcend, and obſerve, how the *Scriptures* were tranſlated into a Language generally underſtood; how *Proſelytes* flowed in to them, in prodigious Numbers, every where; and how they, and their God, and their Religion came to be known in the *Grecian* and *Roman*, though not in ſo conſpicuous a Manner, as before in the *Egyptian*, *Babylonian*, and *Perſian* Empires. But what I have ſaid is ſufficient to ſatisfy every ſober Enquirer, that, in every Age, from the Beginning of Time, to the Commencement of *Chriſtianity*, Men were not left to mere natural Light, but had frequent Opportunities, (by one providential Means or other) of coming to the Knowledge of God's true Religion and Virtue.

BUT ſuppoſe this not to be the Caſe, but that inſtead of ſuch ample Diſcoveries all along, a thick Cloud of Darkneſs in a manner totally overſpread the heathen World; yet,

2. THE Scriptures have given us another Reaſon, *why God ſhould* [e] *wink at theſe Times of Ignorance, and ſuffer all Nations to walk in their own Ways*, without the Interpoſition of a ſtanding Revelation, in calling Chriſt *the* [f] *Mediator of the New Covenant, and the Lamb that was ſlain from the Foundation of the World:* For this intimates to us, that there was all along a Covenant between the Son of God and his Father, concerning the Redemption of Mankind; that, upon the Foreknowledge of

† To this purpoſe *Theodoret* obſerves, "That God ordain'd the Nation of the *Jews* to be a Guide to all Nations in "divine Knowledge. For, like as he appointed ſometimes *Moſes*, and at other times *Joſhua*, and then *Samuel*, and "afterwards one or other of the Prophets, to take the Charge of the People, and by a ſingle Man of approved Wiſdom, "benefited the whole *Brotherhood*; ſo by the ſingle Nation of *Iſrael* did God vouchſafe to call all Nations, Partakers "of one common Nature, to become Partners alſo in the ſame common Religion." *Vide* Dr *Waterland*'s Charge, p. 52.

[z] *Pſal.* xcvi. 3. [a] 1 *Kings* x. 9. [b] 2 *Chron.* ii. 12. [c] *Dan.* vi. 26. [d] *Iſa.* xlv. 6.
[e] *Acts* xiv. 16. [f] *Heb.* ix. 15. *Rev.* xiii. 8.

their Tranſgreſſion, Chriſt undertook to be their *Mediator*, and engaged, as their Proxy, to come down upon the Earth, to aſſume human Nature, to fulfil the Law, which they ſhould violate, and to ſatisfy God's Juſtice, by offering his Blood a Sacrifice for their Sins; that, until the Time ſhould come for Chriſt to execute this Engagement, all theſe Things ſhould be look'd upon as *actually* done; his Humiliation effected, his Blood ſhed, God's Juſtice ſatisfied, and Man in a State of Reconciliation with him: Conſequently, that there was a *Saviour* of the World, even before the World began, a conſtant *Mediator* between God and Man, a ſtanding *Propitiation* for Sin, and a daily *Interceſſor* at God's Right-Hand, whoſe Merits were available, and Righteouſneſs imputable, to all the Race of *Adam*, though they, in their ſeveral Generations, might not have the Happineſs to know it. And if this be the Import of the Words, (as undoubtedly it is) then will it follow, that Mankind, in the earlieſt Ages of the World, were under the ſame Diſpenſation, in effect, that we now are; had the ſame Admiſſion to the Throne of Grace, the ſame Aſſiſtance (though not in Degree) to live virtuouſly; *and if* [g] *any Man ſinned, the ſame Advocate with the Father, even Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous, who is the* eternal *Propitiation for Sin.* The only Difference is, that what was originally engaged for is ſince actually fulfilled; and the Bleſſings, which they had, but were not acquainted with, we are ſince poſitively aſſur'd of by an expreſs Revelation from God: But all this while, they were under the ſame Covenant, and in the ſame State of Salvation with us; for in every Age, [h] *and every Nation, he that feared God, and worked Righteouſneſs, was accepted with him*; and 'tis injuring the Goodneſs, and Juſtice, and other ſacred Attributes of God, to ſay, that he either is, or ever was, *a Reſpecter of Perſons.*

PUTTING all this together then, that the World was, from the Beginning, through the Mediation of his moſt bleſſed Son, in a State of Acceptance with God; that the *Patriarchs*, by their great Progenitor, were inſtructed in the true Religion, which the Length of their Lives enabled them to tranſmit to their Poſterity; that, in After-Ages, God made particular Revelations to ſome, though not in ſo full a Manner, and raiſed up others of diſtinguiſhed Merit and Abilities, to inſtruct and reform Mankind; and that in all Ages whatever, *he never expected to reap where he did not ſow, nor to gather Grapes from Thiſtles*; it will follow, that it was no Unkindneſs in God, to ſuffer Things to abide in this Condition for ſo many Ages, conſidering, what a momentary Duration two thouſand Years, or more, are to him; what wiſe Ends of his Providence ſo long a Continuance of Sin in the World might ſerve, and that there was not an abſolute Neceſſity for a ſtanding Revelation, until Mens Lives grew ſhort, and Tradition, by that Means, came to loſe its Credit.

How to diſtinguiſh a true from a falſe Revelation.

" BUT admitting it both reaſonable and neceſſary for God to reveal his Will to " Mankind, at one Time or other; yet how ſhall we know when he *actually* does " ſo? Falſe *Prophets* are innumerable, and a *Revelation* from God is the old ſtale " Trick, that every *Impoſtor* is known to ſet up with. Your *Politicians*, your " *Law-givers*, your *Tyrants*, and every one, that wanted to eſtabliſh his Deſigns, " or give Sanction to his Impoſitions, always pretended to a certain Familiarity with " Heaven; how then ſhall we diſtinguiſh the *real* from the *falſe* Revelation? Or by " what Characters can we be ſatisfied of the Truth and Veracity of thoſe, that pre- " tend to be ſent unto us from Almighty God?" This is a Queſtion of very great Importance to ſettle every Chriſtian's Faith upon a firm Foundation; and therefore we ſhall firſt enquire into the neceſſary Marks and Proofs of a Revelation's coming from God, and then apply them to the Subject that we are now upon.

NOW, in conſidering the Merit of a pretended Revelation, it ſeems reaſonable to examine,

I. INTO the perſonal Qualities and Behaviour of him that comes to us.
II. INTO the Nature and Tendency of the Doctrine he offers us.
III. INTO the Signs and Tokens he gives of his divine Commiſſion. And,
IV. INTO the Succeſs and Effects of what he affirms to be revealed.

I. TIS a ſtrong Preſumption then that a Revelation is true, when he that declares it, upon Examination, is found to be a Perſon of *real Goodneſs* and Integrity; virtuous without Noiſe, and without Affectation pious; cool and conſiderate enough not to

[g] 1 *John* ii. 1. [h] *Acts* x. 35.

to be impoſed on himſelf, and too wiſe and honeſt to think of impoſing upon others: When it appears, that he is a Perſon of no Trick or crafty Deſign, has no ſecular Ends to ſerve, no Vanity or Ambition to gratify; diſclaims all worldly Greatneſs and Emoluments, and intends nothing, but the Good of Mankind, and the Glory of that God, who ſent him: When it appears that himſelf is in earneſt, and really believes his own Commiſſion; is conſequently, deterred by no Threats, diſcouraged by no Oppoſition, but goes on with undaunted Courage, ſtill perſiſting in the ſame Aſſertions, and ready to lay down his Life in Confirmation of what he ſays.

II. 'TIS a ſtrong Preſumption that a Revelation is true, when its *Rules* are agreeable to the Notions, we have of the Wiſdom, and Juſtice, and Holineſs of God; when it holds forth ſuch *ſublime* Doctrines, as exceed human Comprehenſion, and are not ſo grateful to its natural Pride and Haughtineſs; and when, inſtead of adapting its *Maxims* to the vicious Inclinations of Men, it enjoins ſtrict Virtue and Morality, Chaſtity in their Thoughts, and Temperance in their moſt lawful Enjoyments; for the Man gives us good Reaſon to believe that himſelf is perſuaded of the Reality of what he labours to advance, when he offers to the World a Religion, ſo repugnant to its darling Luſts and Paſſions, and which nothing, but a full Aſſurance of its Veracity, could engage him to atteſt.

III. 'TIS a ſtrong Proof that a Revelation is true, when the Perſon who atteſts it, foretels *Events* of a very uncertain Contingency, and performs *Works* of a very ſupernatural Kind, in Confirmation of it. For, ſince Miracles and Propheſies require a divine Power, and are always looked upon as an *authentick* Evidence of a divine *Miſſion*, the Man that does them, and does them fairly before our Eyes, without any Fraud or Colluſion, muſt certainly be a *Prophet ſent from God*; otherwiſe, we muſt be reduc'd to the Neceſſity of allowing that God may ſometimes employ his Power [j] for the Confirmation of a Falſhood, and ſet the Broad-Seal of Heaven, as it were, to a Lye: Which is confounding the Notions we have of him, and inverting all his Attributes.

IV. 'TIS a ſtrong Proof that a Revelation is true, when it is attended with *Succeſs*, and ſoon comes to make a conſiderable Figure in the World. Not that Succeſs does neceſſarily infer the Truth of any Profeſſion, or the Juſtice of any Cauſe; [k] but when we ſee it acquir'd, in ſpite of all the Power and Oppoſition of the World, without any Force, or Violence, or Craft, and Policy, by Means ſeemingly improper, and very incompetent Inſtruments, we muſt then be conſtrained to impute it to the Bleſſing and manifeſt Interpoſition of him, who [l] *knows how to confound the wiſe and mighty Things of the World, with thoſe that are weak and fooliſh; and, by the Things that are not*, i. e. have no natural Efficacy towards their End, *brings to nought the Things that are, that no Fleſh ſhould glory in his Preſence.*

THESE are ſome of the Ways of diſtinguiſhing a true Revelation, and of diſcovering the Perſons, who pretend to be ſent to us from God: And we come now to apply all this to the Subject, that is under our preſent Conſideration.

SECT. I.

The MOSAICK REVELATION.

An Account of Moſes, *and his Education.*

1. THAT there really was ſuch a Perſon as *Moſes*, is atteſted by many of the Heathen Writers, who ſpeak of him as an extraordinary Man, and the Founder of the *Jewiſh* Laws and Religion. The *Egyptians* accounted him one of their Prieſts, as appears by the Teſtimonies produced out of *Cheremon* and *Manetho* by [m] *Joſephus*. [n] *Diodorus Siculus* mentions him, with great Reſpect, among the famous Legiſlators; and ſo does [o] *Strabo*, when he ſpeaks in Commendation of the Religion he eſtabliſhed. [p] *Juſtin Martyr*, *Euſebius*, and *Cyril* quote many *Pagan* Authors, who give a great Character of him. The Teſtimony of *Juvenal*, *Numenius*, and *Longinus* is ſufficiently known; and the Tranſlation of the *Septuagint* (which is of older Date than theſe Authorities) takes it all along for granted, not only that there was ſuch a Perſon, but that he was really the Compoſer of the *Hiſtory* and *Laws*, which went under his Name.

THAT

[j] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. App. Lib. I. [k] *Barrow* on the Creed. [l] 1 *Cor.* i. 27, &c. [m] Joſ. cont.
[n] Diod. Lib. i. [o] Strabo, Geogr. Lib. xvi. [p] Vid. Grot. de Veritate, Chap. 2.

THAT this *Moſes* pretended to have all theſe Laws from God, and, whatever he wrote or delivered to the People, to receive from him by immediate *Revelation*, is plain to any one, who looks into his Writings: But that his Pretenſions in this Reſpect were real; that he actually received what he delivered from the Mouth or Inſpiration of God; that he was neither capable of being deceived himſelf, nor deſirous to impoſe on others; this, (according to the Rules we have laid down) will appear, from the Evidence we have of his Wiſdom and Veracity; from the Nature and Tendency of his Precepts and Doctrines; and from the publick Demonſtrations, he gave of his divine Commiſſion. In order to which, it will be neceſſary for us to look a little into the holy Scriptures; deſiring however no more Aſſent to be given them as yet, than what is uſually given to *Plutarch*'s Lives, or any other Relation of the Actions of Perſons, who liv'd in former Ages.

[q] THEY acquaint us then, that, at the Time when *Moſes* was born, *Pharaoh* had publiſhed a cruel *Edict*, that all the *male* Children of the *Hebrews* ſhould be put to death: That, for fear of this Law, his Parents concealed him for three Months; but, deſpairing to do it any longer, committed him to the Providence of God, and expos'd him in an Ark of Bulruſhes upon the River *Nile*: That *Pharaoh*'s Daughter (whom *Joſephus* calls *Thermuſis*) walking by the River-ſide, ſaw him, and had Compaſſion on him; and, ſuppoſing him to be one of the *Hebrew* Children, called for a Nurſe of that Nation, who happened to be his own Mother, and order'd her to take care of him: That as he grew up, *Pharaoh*'s Daughter adopted him for her Son; and her Father (as *Joſephus* tells us) having no Son of his own, deſign'd to make him the Heir of his Kingdom; and that, purſuant to this Deſign, he [r] *was brought up in* Pharaoh's *Court*, was educated in all princely Qualities, and *ſkill'd in all the Learning of the* Egyptians.

† WHAT the [s] Learning of the *Egyptians* was, we need not here recount: If we will believe *Macrobius*, who makes *Egypt* ([t] in one Place) *the Mother of all Arts*, and the *Egyptians* ([u] in another) *the Fathers of all Philoſophick Sciences*, there was no Nation under the Sun that could compare with them. The Truth is, the *Grecian* Philoſophers, who made ſuch a Noiſe and Figure in the World, borrowed all their Diſcoveries from them, and, Age after Age, went down into *Egypt*, to pick up ſome Scraps of that Learning, which *Moſes*'s Rank and Authority in the Nation enabled him to have in what Quantity he pleaſed.

His Capacity. [x] HOW can we then imagine, that ſuch a Perſon as *Moſes*, bred up in all the polite Literature of *Egypt*, and converſant among the wiſeſt Perſons of *Pharaoh*'s Court, ſhould not be able to paſs a Judgment between an *Impoſture* and a *Truth*, nor diſtinguiſh between a familiar *Converſe* with God, and a *Deception* of his Senſes? Can we think that a Perſon, who had ſuch Opportunities of raiſing himſelf to the brighteſt Pitch of Honour, ſhould willingly forſake all his preſent Pleaſure, and future Advantages, but that he was fully perſuaded of the certain and undoubted Truth of the Matters, which he recorded? Is it poſſible, that a Man of common Senſe and Prudence ſhould ever venture himſelf upon an Affair ſo hazardous, and unlikely to ſucceed, as that which he undertook; had it not been by the Inſtigation of that God, who appeared to him, and promiſed him the Aſſiſtance of his Power to enable him to accompliſh his Deſign? And what tolerable Ground can we have to imagine, that a Perſon, who verily believed the Truth of what God had revealed to him, ſhould dare to write otherwiſe, than as it was revealed?

To

[q] *Exod.* i. 22. [r] *Exod.* ii. 10. *Acts* vii. 22.

† The *Tillage* of the Ground made the Study of *Aſtronomy* a neceſſary Part of Learning among the *Egyptians*, that, from the Stars in the *Firmament*, they might know the proper Times, and Seaſons, for ſeveral Parts of *Agriculture*. The certain *Influence*, which they ſuppos'd theſe Luminaries in Heaven had upon all earthly Bodies, and more eſpecially over the Conditions and Complexions of Mankind made them run into *Aſtrology*, from whence the Tranſition was natural into the *Art of Divination*; and, as they ſuppos'd, that theſe *Celeſtial* Bodies were *inform'd* by ſome ſuperior Being, whom they thought worthy of their *Invocation*, they thereupon betook themſelves to *Magical Incantations*, for which the *Egyptians* were famous in the Time of *Moſes*. The Nature of their Country, and the *annual* Overflowing of their River *Nile*, made it of continual Uſe to them to ſtudy *Geometry* or Land-*meaſuring*; and, as this cou'd not well be done without the help of *Numbers*, 'tis very likely, that they were not unacquainted with ſome of the moſt uſeful Rules of *Arithmetick*. The Skill of *Surgery* and *Phyſick* was of ancient Date among the *Egyptians*; we read of Men of both Profeſſions, as early as *Joſeph*, Gen. l. 2. and the Invention of *Muſick* is aſcribed to their famous *Mercury*. *Philo* ſuggeſts, that *Moſes* was not only well acquainted with all the Kind of *Hieroglyphical Learning*, but highly ſkill'd in the Knowledge of *War*, and a great *Proficient* likewiſe in the *Art of Writing*, whether in *Proſe* or *Verſe*; but, when he tells us, that *Greek* Profeſſors were ſent for into *Egypt* to inſtruct him in the *Liberal Sciences*, he certainly labours under a great Miſtake, becauſe the *Greeks* had no Learning among them 'till after the Time of *Moſes*, and what they afterwards acquir'd, they manifeſtly borrow'd from other Nations. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. II. Lib. ix. and *Whitby* on Acts vii. 22.

[s] Vid. *Stilling fleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [t] *Macrob. Saturn.* Lib. i. Cap. 15. [u] In Som. Scip. Lib. i. Cap. 19. [x] *Stilling fleet*'s Orig. Sacræ.

Integrity.

TO *extol himself, or aggrandize his Nation*, may be thought a probable Inducement: But so far is he from magnifying himself, that he omits no Opportunity of recording his own [y] *Failings* and *Miscarriages*; passes over in Silence his own personal [z] *Qualities* and [a] *Atchievements*; and opens the Account of his Ministry with the Relation of a [b] *Fact* (the Murther of an *Egyptian*) that nothing, but the Presumption of his having acted by a Divine *Authority*, can justify or excuse. Now had it been any Part of his Aim to have raised his Reputation into a superstitious Veneration among the *Jews*, or to have established his Family in any high Degree of Honour and Authority, how easily might he have done it! 'Twas but concealing what might seem to depress *the one*, and using the Power he had to advance *the other*. But, instead of that, we find him very secure and careless in both these Respects; relating his own Faults without Disguise or Extenuation; [c] conferring both the *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical* Power upon other Families, and leaving *his own* in the meanest Sort of Attendance upon the Tabernacle. And so far is he from aggrandizing his Nation, that he sets forth the lesser Faults, as well as grosser Enormities of all its first Progenitors; that he spares not the Stock of his own Family *Levi*, but records very punctually his, and *Simeon*'s Inhumanity to the *Shechemites*; and, in the whole Course of his History, [d] (which is wrote in a plain Stile, without any Disguise of Rhetorick, and in a majestick Brevity, which seems to demand Belief) looks, as if he were describing the Obstinacy, and Unbelief, and Unthankfulness, and Disobedience of a Nation towards a gracious God, rather than any Way inhancing their Reputation in the World: For in this Manner he is perpetually reminding them: [e] *The Lord did not set his Love on thee, and chuse thee, because thou art more in Number than other People*, or *because of the Righteousness and Uprightness of thine Heart*; for *thou art the fewest, and* the most rebellious. *Remember how thou provokedst him to Wrath, in the Wilderness, in Horeb*, and in several other Places: *From the Day that thou departedst out of the Land of Egypt, until ye came into this Place, ye have been disobedient against the Lord:* Words, that are far from implying any Design of flattering his Nation, or any Desire of Popularity in his own Breast.

The Excellence and Truth of his History.

HITHERTO it appears that *Moses* acted like a sincere and upright Man, free from all private Ends, and worldly Considerations; let us,

2. IN the next Place, make some Inspection into the Revelation he brings us, and see whether his Doctrines have the Marks of Divinity impress'd on them, or no.

1. As an *Historian* then, what could he deliver to the World more becoming the Majesty of God to impart, and the Necessities of Men to know, than the *Origin* of the *Universe*, and the first Beginning of all Things; than the Formation of *Man*, his State of *Innocence* at first, his *Fall*, and the consequential Evils of it, his Redemption, and the glorious Hopes and Expectances of the new Covenant; than the *Propagation* of Mankind, the general *Defection*, the universal *Deluge*, the *Confusion of Tongues*, and thereupon the *Plantation of Families*, and *Origin* of *Kingdoms*; than the *Selection* of one particular Family (of which *Christ* was to come in the Flesh) from the rest of Mankind, and the many wonderful Works, God did to redeem them from Bondage, and conduct them through the *Wilderness*, until he had settled them in the *promised* Land, and given them Laws and Ordinances, whereby they were to live? These are some of the great Subjects, that *Moses* had treated of in the *Pentateuch:* And 'tis no small Confirmation of their Truth and Reality, that we find the same Things related, much in the same Manner, by the antientest Authors.

[f] WHAT *Moses* has said of the Origin of the World is recorded in the old Histories of the *Phœnicians* and *Egyptians*. The Formation of Man according to the *Image* of God, and his *Dominion* over other Creatures are described by *Ovid*, who had them from the *Greeks*. That all Things were created by the *Word* of God, and enliven'd by his *Spirit*, and that Man, in particular, was made out of the Dust of the Earth, is what *Epicharmus*, *Hesiod*, *Homer*, and (from the *Greeks*) *Virgil* has related. The History of *Adam* and *Eve*, the *Tree* of Knowledge, and the tempting *Serpent*, was found formerly among the *Indians*, as *Maimonides* tells us, and is still among the *Brachmans*, and the Inhabitants of *Siam*, as later *Voyagers* report. The

[y] Exod. iv. 10, 13. Numb. xi. 10, 11. Ch. xx. 12. [z] Heb. xi. 15. Acts vii. 22. [a] *Josephus* relates, that *Moses*, for some Years, was General to *Pharaoh*, and that he obtained a very signal Victory over the *Ethiopians*.
[b] *Exod.* ii. 12. [c] Grot. de Verit. [d] Ibid. [e] Deut. vii. 7. Ch. ix. 7. [f] *Vid.* Grot. de Verit.

History of the Deluge, of the Ark, and of thoſe that were ſaved therein, is recorded by *Beroſus*, by *Plutarch*, and *Lucian*: Nay *Abydenus*, (as he is cited by *Euſebius*) makes mention of the very *Dove*, which was ſent out to explore the Waters. The Building of the Tower of *Babel*, and the *Giants* attempting to reach the Height of Heaven, is the common Tale of every Poet. The Burning of *Sodom* is related by *Diodorus Siculus*, *Pliny*, and *Tacitus*. The Uſe of Circumciſion is confirm'd by *Herodotus*, *Strabo*, and *Philo-Biblius*. The Hiſtory of *Abraham Iſaac*, *Jacob*, and *Joſeph*, (in the ſame Manner as *Moſes* relates it) was found in ſeveral antient Hiſtorians quoted by *Euſebius*, and is ſtill extant in *Juſtin* from *Trogus Pompeius*. The Actions of *Moſes* himſelf, how he led the People of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, received the two *Tables* of the Law from the Hand of God, and inſtituted ſeveral *Rites* and religious Obſervances, are to be found in moſt of the ſame Authors, but more eſpecially in the *Verſes*, that are aſcribed to *Orpheus*, and in the *Hiſtories* which treat of the Affairs of *Egypt*.

THUS conſonant to the Greatneſs and Majeſty of God, and the received Opinion in the earlieſt Ages of the World, are the *hiſtorick* Facts, which *Moſes* relates: And to conſider him,

Of his Laws. 2. As a *Legiſlator*: What can be more agreeable to the Notions we have of God, than the Prohibition of *Idolatry* and *Polytheiſm*, and the Inſtitution of his true Religion and Worſhip; than the Prohibition of Perjury and vain Swearing, of Theft, of Murder, of Adultery, of Covetouſneſs of all Kinds, and the Injunction of the contrary Virtues, of Juſtice and Mercy, of Chaſtity and Charity, together with all due Reverence to Parents, both in a natural and civil Capacity? What can be more becoming the Character of a Divine *Legiſlator*, than [g] his often inculcating upon the People (as we find almoſt in every Page *Moſes* does) the many Obligations they had to God, and the innumerable Favours, they had received from him; his frequent and *pathetick* Exhortations to Obedience, and living anſwerably to the ſingular Mercies, which were conferr'd upon them; his conſtant reminding them of their former Miſcarriages, their Murmurings and Rebellions againſt Heaven, and all their unworthy Deportment towards their matchleſs Benefactor; his compaſſionate forewarning them of the Judgment of God, and of the various *Plagues* and Puniſhments, which would certainly be the Conſequence of their perſiſting in their Sins; and, laſtly, his affectionate encouraging them to Obedience, from the Conſideration of the endearing Promiſes, which God had made to them, and which he would aſſuredly fulfil, if they did not fruſtrate his Deſigns of Mercy to them by their wilful Obſtinacy?

NAY, the very *ceremonial* Precepts, which he enjoined to diſcriminate them from other Nations, are a ſufficient Indication that he received them from God; ſince, had they been of his own Invention, he would have conſulted the People's Eaſe, and his own Popularity more; and not impoſed ſo many *laborious* and *expenſive* Ordinances, ſo many Sacrifices, both ſtated and occaſional, ſo painful an Inſtitution, as that of *Circumciſion*, and ſuch annual and weekly Ceſſations from Labour, as were apparently againſt the [h] Intereſt of a Nation, whoſe great Subſiſtence was upon Paſturage and Agriculture. Nor can we conceive how any People could have ſubmitted to ſuch *arbitrary* Injunctions, but that they were fully convinced, they came originally from God, and were only delivered to them by the Hand of his Servant *Moſes*. And for their farther Conviction in this, they had all the Evidence that could be required, the *Prediction* of *Events*, which none but God could foreknow, and the *Demonſtration* of *Miracles*, which none but God could perform.

His Predictions. 3. IT would be too much to inſtance in all the *Prophecies*, contained in the *Pentateuch*; I ſhall only make mention of two or three, that *Moſes* himſelf foretold the People of *Iſrael*, and accordingly came to paſs. [i] In the xxxivth Chapter of *Exodus* he foretold them, that, after forty Years, they ſhould take Poſſeſſion of the Land of Promiſe, prove victorious over their Enemies, and that their Country (by the divine Care and Protection) ſhould be preſerved in Safety, while they went up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip thrice every Year. Here is a Prediction many Years before the Thing happen'd, [k] *that all their Males ſhould appear before the Lord God, the God of Iſrael, thrice every Year*: And that they did accordingly go up to *Jeruſalem*, to ſolemnize their three great *Feſtivals* every Year, after their Eſtabliſhment in [l] *Canaan*, is

[g] *Edwards*'s Excellency of the Holy Scripture. [h] *Stilling fleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [i] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, Vol. I. [k] Ver. 23. [l] Joſeph. de Bell. Jud. Lib. II.

is plain from their known and undeniable Practice. In the xivth Chapter of *Numbers*, *Moſes* (by God's expreſs Command) denounces his Judgment upon the murmuring *Iſraelites*, *viz.* that all of them ſhould die in the Wilderneſs, and, except two, who had given a good Report of the promiſed Land, not one be allowed to enter into it; which accordingly came to paſs: For, at the End of forty Years, (which was the prefixt Time of their Wandering) there was not a Man of the old Generation left, [m] ſave *Caleb, the Son of Jephunneh, and Joſhua, the Son of Nun.* He foretold to them all in general, that they ſhould have miraculous Succeſs againſt the *Canaanites*, ſhould poſſeſs their Land, and ſet *Kings* over them; that they ſhould have a *peculiar Place* of Worſhip to reſort unto, divine *Oracles* in their Cuſtody, and a Succeſſion of *Prophets*, to direct them in Matters of great Importance; and *Joſhua*, in his laſt Speech, appeals to their Experience, whether all theſe Things were not punctually fulfilled, as far as his Time. [n] *Ye know, in all your Hearts, and in all your Souls*, ſaith he, *that not one Thing hath failed of all the good Things, which the Lord your God ſpake concerning you.* To mention but one Prediction more: Many Years, before the Inſtitution of *regal* Power among the *Jews*, *Moſes* foretold the Judgments, which would befal them for their obſtinate Perſeverance in Iniquity; [o] that the *King*, whom they ſhould ſet over them, ſhould be carried into Captivity; [p] that their *Cities* ſhould be laid waſte, their *Sanctuary* become a Deſolation, and themſelves be reduced to the ſad Extremity [q] *of eating the Fleſh of their Sons and of their Daughters*; which monſtrous and dreadful Thing twice happened in *Jeruſalem*; firſt, when it was beſieged by *Nebuchadnezzar*; and again, [r] when it was quite deſtroyed by the *Romans* under *Titus*. Now theſe are *Events*, attended with ſuch uncommon Circumſtances, as could never have been told ſo long before, but by a divine *Preſcience*: And if a divine Preſcience was aſſiſting to *Moſes* herein, what can be deſired more to prove his *divine Legation*, and that he acted nothing, but in Purſuance to the *Commiſſion*, which he had given him; eſpecially if he produced the other Part of his *Credentials*, which is the Performance of *Miracles*?

His Miracles.

AND here, not to inſiſt on many Particulars, the whole Method of conducting the People of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt* was, both in its Progreſs, and in its Execution, miraculous. [s] Nothing but a continued *Series* of Wonders, ſurprizing in their Nature, and dreadful in their Effects, could have prevailed with *Pharaoh* to let the People go; and nothing but a *divine Power*, which went out before the People, and viſibly conducted them, could have given them a free Paſſage, and the *Egyptians* a total Overthrow in the *Red-Sea*. The wonderful *Support* of ſo great a Multitude, in a vaſt and barren Wilderneſs, when neither their Raiment decayed, nor their Bread and Water failed, and the *Victories*, they afterwards gained in their Way to the *promiſed* Land, were both Convictions of the Almighty's Power, and Confirmations of the Truth of the *Moſaick* Revelation; ſince it would be impious to ſuppoſe, that *Providence* would, in the Sight of the *Heathen*, have favoured *Iſrael* with ſuch wonderful Succeſſes, under the Conduct of a *Leader*, who only pretended to act and make Laws by an Authority, which he was not really inveſted with.

THE Whole therefore turns upon the *Veracity* of God: And the conſtant Apprehenſions, which both Reaſon and Religion give us of him, forbid us to imagine, that he will employ his Power to deceive his Creatures. [t] Of all the divine Attributes, we know none ſhine brighter, or more amiable to our Eyes, than *Truth* and *Goodneſs*; the *former* cannot atteſt to a Lye, nor the *latter* ſeduce Men into dangerous and deſtructive Miſtakes; and yet, if God ſhould communicate any Part of his Power to an *Impoſtor*, to enable him to work *Miracles* in Confirmation of his Pretences, what would become of theſe two ſacred Attributes? To ſuſpect, I ſay, that Almighty God is capable of employing his infinite Power, and of diſturbing the Courſe of Nature, with a Deſign to miſlead and delude Mankind, in what relates to their eternal Concerns, is to deſtroy and ſubvert his *Attributes*, and leave ourſelves no Notion at all of ſuch a Being. Nay, for him to permit the ſame Evidences to be produced for Errors, as for Truth, is, in effect, to cancel his own *Credentials*, and make Miracles of no Significance at all.

" BUT may not Miracles be done by thoſe, who have no *Commiſſion* and Autho-
" rity from God? Nay, by thoſe, who are themſelves *Impoſtors*, and pretend to a
" Commiſſion, which they have not? Did not the *Egyptian* Magicians work Mi-
" racles,

[m] Numb. xxvi. 65. [n] Joſh. xxiii. 14. [o] Deut. xxviii. [p] Lev. xxvi. [q] Deut. xxviii. 53. [r] Joſeph. de Bell. Jud. Lib. VII. [s] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [t] *Stanhope* on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II.

" racles, when they turned their Rods into Serpents, the Rivers into Blood, and when " they brought Frogs upon the Face of the Earth, as well as *Moſes?* And yet this " was done directly in Oppoſition to a divine Teſtimony. How then ſhall we judge " in this Caſe? And by what Tokens ſhall we diſtinguiſh the *Finger* of God, from " the *Deception* of the Devil?"

How to diſtinguiſh falſe from true Miracles.

How far God may permit the *Devil*, or his Agents, to proceed in Matters of this Nature, we cannot comprehend: We have his divine *Attributes* however engaged for our Security, [u] that he will not ſuffer us to be deluded by *falſe* Miracles, wrought under a Pretence of his own Authority, without any Poſſibility of diſcovering the Impoſture. And though, for wiſe Ends, he may ſuffer wicked Men to perform ſome Things, that ſeem very *wonderful*, yet he always takes care to put a *Note of Diſtinction* between what is done for the Atteſtation of a *Lye*, and the Confirmation of *Truth*. Thus, in the Caſe that is now before us, [x] the Magicians of *Egypt* were allowed to proceed to the utmoſt of their Art, and held on with *Moſes*, as long as poſſibly they could, which made the Victory of *Moſes* (confirmed by their own Confeſſion,) much more *illuſtrious*, than if they had never entered into Competition with him.

THE great Difference between them ſeem'd to have conſiſted in this——That the Miracles of *Moſes* were done *immediately*, and with great Facility; thoſe of the Magicians, by the Intervention of certain *Charms* and *Incantations:* [y] Had not *Moſes* however been preſent to over-rule them by a ſuperior Power, 'tis very reaſonable to believe, that (whatever they might have done by Virtue of any *magical* or *diabolical* Arts) God would not have permitted them to perform ſuch Things, as had, at leaſt, the Appearance of true Miracles, and were ſufficient to deceive all indifferent Standers-by.

[z] IF *there ariſe among you a Prophet, or a Dreamer of Dreams,* (as *Moſes* himſelf gives the Caution) *that giveth thee a Sign, or a Wonder, ſaying, Let us go after other Gods, ye ſhall not hearken to the Words of that Prophet, but ſhall walk after the Lord, and keep his Commandments, and obey his Voice:* So that, if Miracles be wrought to introduce the Worſhip of *other* Gods, beſides him, whom Reaſon, as well as Scripture, aſſures us to be the only true God; if they be done to ſeduce Men to *immoral* Doctrines and Practices; if they be performed to contradict a Religion, already eſtabliſhed by ſuch Miracles, as are inconteſtably true: If never ſuch aſtoniſhing Miracles, I ſay, be wrought for ſuch ill Deſigns as theſe, they are not to be regarded, but rejected with that Conſtancy, which becomes a Man, acting according to the Principles of natural Reaſon and Religion. There are therefore certain Notes of Diſtinction, either reſpecting, *firſt*, the Works themſelves, and their Manner of being done; or, *ſecondly*, the *Perſons* themſelves, and the Ends for which they do them, which make an eſſential Difference between *real* Miracles, and *lying Wonders*.

FIRST, [a] in relation to the Works themſelves, it is required that they be *poſſible*, becauſe no Power whatever can effect that which is ſtrictly impoſſible; that they be *probable*, becauſe the Divine Power will hardly concern itſelf with what ſavours of *Fable* and *Romance*; that they be not *below the Majeſty of God*, as he is the Ruler and Governor of the World; nor inconſiſtent with his *Character*, as he is a good and gracious Being; that they be done *openly*, before a ſufficient Number of competent Witneſſes; *readily*, without any previous Forms or Ceremonies, which may make them look like *Incantation*; and upon all *proper and important Occaſions*, to denote that *Permanency* of the divine Power by which they are done.

SECONDLY, In relation to the Perſon, pretending to a divine Miſſion, it is requiſite, that he be a Man *of good Report* for his unblamable Converſation; in the perfect Exerciſe of his *Reaſon* and *Senſes*; *conſtant* and *uniform* in the Meſſage, he delivers; and that the *Doctrine*, which he endeavours to eſtabliſh by his Miracles, be conſiſtent with the Principles of true *Reaſon* and *Natural Religion*; conſiſtent with right *Notions* and *Worſhip* of God; conſiſtent with the *former Revelations*, he hath made of his Will; of a Tendency to *deſtroy* the Devil's Power in the World, to *recover* Men from their Ignorance, to *reform* them from their Vices, to *lead* them into the Practice of Virtue and true Godlineſs by proper Motives and Arguments; and, in ſhort, to *advance* the general Welfare of *Societies*, as well as *every* Man's *particular* Happineſs in this Life, and in his Preparation for a better. By theſe Rules any Man of ſober Conſideration may be able to diſcern between true and falſe Miracles,

[u] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. I. [x] *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons. [y] *Fiddes*'s ibid.
[z] Deut. xiii. 1, 2, &c. [a] Vid. *Chandler* on Miracles.

racles, becauſe we are ſure (ſo far as God's Attributes avail, we are ſure) that he will not ſuffer the ſame Degree of Evidence to concur to the Confirmation of both, without the Poſſibility of diſtinguiſhing them.

UPON a Review then of what has been ſaid in relation to *Moſes*, that he was a Perſon of great Wiſdom and Integrity, unlikely to be impos'd upon himſelf, and unwilling to impoſe upon others, upon any private Deſigns of Popularity, or Self-Exaltation, in what he did; that, as an *Hiſtorian*, he related Facts, neceſſary for Man to know, and becoming the Nature and Majeſty of God to reveal; as a *Legiſlator*, gave Laws and Ordinances, that had a manifeſt Stamp of divine Authority; as a *Prophet*, foretold ſuch Things, as none but God, who has all *Events* under his Intuition, could know; and, as a *Worker of Miracles*, did ſuch Things, as had all imaginable Evidence of an Almighty Power's aſſiſting him; it will follow, that, as ſure as God is true, and cannot be an *Abettor* of Falſhood, what he *did*, was by the Order and Appointment; what he *delivered*, was expreſly the Will; and what he *wrote* (for the Books that go under his Name, we ſhall hereafter prove to be his) was infallibly the *Word of God*.

SECT. II.

The PROPHETICK REVELATION.

THAT there was to be a *Succeſſion* of Prophets after *Moſes* is very plain, not only from the *Rules*, which God has [b] preſcribed for the *Trial* of them, whether they were divinely inſpir'd or no; but from that expreſs Promiſe, which *Moſes* made to the People, *a Prophet will the Lord God raiſe up to thee of thy Brethren, like unto me, unto him ſhalt thou hearken:* [c] For, though the Words, in their full and compleat Senſe, relate unto *Chriſt*, who is the great Prophet of the Church; yet, whoever attends to the main Scope of them, will eaſily perceive, that their immediate Aſpect is towards an *Order* of Prophets, which ſhould ſucceed *Moſes*, to *explain* the ſpiritual Senſe, and enforce the true Obligation of the Law; to *comfort* the People in their Calamities with a Proſpect of Deliverance; to *deter* them from their Impieties by the Denunciation of Judgments; and to make ſuch farther Declarations of the Almighty's Will, as he, from Time to Time, ſhould give them *Commiſſion* and *Authority* to do. *The Inſtitution of Prophets.*

How well qualified the Prophets were for the Diſcharge of their Function, will beſt appear by a ſhort View of the Method of their Education. To this Purpoſe we may obſerve, that God, having eſtabliſhed a Religion *by Signs and mighty Wonders*, appointed an *Order* of Men for the *Interpretation* of it, and out of this Order moſt commonly made choice of ſuch, as he employed in the *prophetick* Office. [d] † The firſt *Schools* of the Prophets, among the *Jews*, were in the Cities of the *Levites*, which, for the Conveniency of inſtructing the People, were diſperſed up and down in the ſeveral Tribes of *Iſrael*; God having thereby turned that into a Bleſſing, which was pronounced as a Curſe upon *Levi* by his Father, [e] *that he ſhould be divided in* Jacob, *and ſcattered in* Iſrael. The firſt Inſtitution of theſe Schools ſeems to have been about *Samuel*'s Time, when the Prieſthood was become very *degenerate*, and Men thereby eſtranged from the Worſhip of God; ſo that there ſeemed to be a Neceſſity for appointing ſuch publick Places, for the better Education of thoſe, who were deſigned for the ſacred *Miniſtry:* And 'tis not improbable, that, over one of theſe Colleges, *Samuel* himſelf was ordained [f] *Preſident*, and had the Care of the Education of ſuch, as were to be trained up to the prophetick Office. *Their Education.*

H Now

[b] *Deut.* xviii. 21, 22. [c] *Stilling fleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [d] Ibid.

† Some modern *Jews* pretend to carry the firſt Inſtitution of theſe *Schools* to an immoderate Degree of *Antiquity*, to the Days of *Abraham*, of *Noah*, of *Seth*, and even as high as *Adam* himſelf: But the firſt Place, that we meet with any Mention of them, is in the tenth Chapter of the firſt Book of *Samuel*, where *Saul* is ſaid to have met, and join'd himſelf with *a Company of Prophets, at the Hill of God, as they came down from the high Place* with Muſick before them, *ver.* 5. where by the *Hill of God* is moſt probably meant ſome *Eminence* near *Gibeah* of *Benjamin*, the Place were *Saul*'s Father dwelt, and might be ſo call'd, upon Account of the Sacrifices, which the People, at that Time, were wont to offer in ſuch *high Places*. The next Notice that we have of them is in the nineteenth Chapter of the ſame Book, where we read of a like *Company of Prophets at* Naioh *in* Ramah, *propheſying with* Samuel, *who ſtood as appointed over them*, ver. 20. After this, in the ſecond Book of *Kings*, we read of ſeveral ſuch Schools, in the Days of *Elijah*, and his Succeſſor *Eliſha*, viz. of one at *Bethel*; and another at *Jericho*, chap. ii. 3, 5. of one at *Gilgal*, chap. iv. 38. and another on Mount *Ephraim*, chap. v. 22. nor does it ſeem impoſſible, that there might be one in *Jeruſalem*, where the *Propheteſs* is ſaid to have dwelt, *chap.* xxii. 14. though it muſt be own'd, that the greateſt Part of theſe Colleges were ſet up in the Land of *Iſrael*, where Providence ſeems to have placed them, in order to preſerve the *Purity* of God's Worſhip during the *Defection* of the ten Tribes. *Wheatly*'s School of the Prophets.

[e] *Gen.* xlix. 7. [f] *Stilling fleet*, ibid.

Their Office and Employment.

NOW the proper Exercise and Employment of such, as were admitted into these *Colleges* were their constant Study of the Law, their Celebration of the Praises of God, their Composition of divine Hymns for that Purpose, and whatever else had a Tendency to advance Piety, to suppress all irregular Motions and Appetites, and so fit and prepare them for any Part of the *prophetick Office*. The *Jews* have a *Proverb*, that the *Spirit of God seldom rests upon a gloomy and melancholy Temper*, and therefore we find the *Sons of the Prophets* devoting themselves so much to *Psalmody* and *Musick*, and, while they chanted out the Praises of God, playing upon [g] *the Psaltery, and Tabret, and Pipe, and Harp*; because by this Means they kept themselves in such a Temper of Mind, as might qualify them for the divine Breathings of the *prophetick Spirit*, which being of a mild and gentle Nature, would associate with melancholy and turbulent Passions, but chose always the calm and chearful Disposition to reside in. But the chief Business, without Doubt, of these junior Prophets, was, to study the Law, and to exercise themselves therein both Day and Night, in order to teach and explain it to others. For, because that after *Jeroboam* had expelled the Priests, and set up his Calves at *Bethel* and *Dan*, the only *Ministers of God's Word*, whom such Persons, as chose to adhere to their antient Religion, had to resort to in *Israel*, were the Prophets. Nor were they only employed in the Study and Exposition of the Law, but very frequently dispatch'd upon the most momentous Messages, as we find one of them sent to [h] *anoint* Jehu, *the Son of* Jehoshaphat, *to be King over* Israel, and another to declare the Judgments of God against *Ahab*, for his untimely Releasement of [i] *Benhadad*. The short is, when any momentous Admonitions were to be given, any publick Blessings promised, any fearful Comminations denounc'd, or any extraordinary Events foretold, the Messenger was usually chosen from these Schools, and *a certain Man of the Sons of the Prophets*, either immediately by God himself, or by the *Principal* and *Governor* of the College, was deputed to that Office.

OUT of these *Seminaries* God usually made choice of Persons to be employ'd in the *prophetick* Office, though he did not absolutely tye himself up to this Method, but sometimes called one from the *Court*, as he did *Isaiah*, and sometimes one from the *Herds*, as he did *Amos*, and *bade them go, and prophesy to the House of* Israel: And whenever he made choice of any one, he gave him such a full Conviction both of the Reality of his own Inspiration, and the Importance of the Message, he sent him about, as made it impossible for him to resist the Impulse; for so *Ezekiel* tells us of [k] himself: *The Spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in Bitterness, and in the Heat of my Spirit, for the Hand of the Lord was strong upon me.*

[l] HOW the Prophets behaved, when they were sent upon such Errands, is evident from the bold and undaunted *Freedom* and Authority, wherewith they reprov'd Vice and Iniquity, even in Persons of the highest Character and Distinction: And this Plain-Dealing, (such as became Men, who spake and acted by a divine Impulse) sometimes commanded the Reverence of *Princes*, and such too, as were not the easiest to be persuaded, as might be proved by [m] several Instances. The Truth is, Prophets, in those Days, were far from being a Company of mad *Enthusiasts*, strolling about the Country: They were Persons of a *sober* Education, of a *strict* Course of Life, and of such Honour and Estimation among the People, that even the Tombs of those, that suffer'd *Martyrdom* for the Attestation of the Truth, were held in a Kind of religious Veneration. Their Office was not to be invaded by every *pragmatical* Genius; [n] nay, the greatest Kings, and the most learned Sages durst not assume that Honour to themselves, without a particular Designation: [o] *For the Prophet, that shall presume to speak a Word in my Name, saith the Lord, which I have not commanded him to speak, even that Prophet shall surely die.*

[p] 'TIS hardly to be supposed, therefore, that the Prophets, Men of sober Sense, and most of them of very liberal Education, would have ventured upon so hazardous an Employ, where Persecution was sure to be their Lot, and where the Laws were so very severe, in case of an *Imposture*, had they not been urged to it by an immediate and irresistible Call from Heaven. The Apostle has given us a very dolorous Description of the many Calamities, which their Profession brought upon them. [q] *They had Trial of cruel Mockings and Scourgings, yea, moreover of Bonds and Imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the*

[g] 1 *Sam.* x. 5. [h] 2 *Kings* ix. 2, 3. [i] 1 *Kings* xx. 28, &c. [k] *Ezek.* iii. 14.
[l] *Jenkins*'s Reasonableness. [m] Vid. 1 *Kings*, chap. xii, xx, xxi. [n] Grot. de Veritate.
[o] *Deut.* xviii. 20. [p] *Stilling fleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [q] *Heb.* xi. 36, 37.

the Sword; they wandered about in Sheep-Skins and Goat-Skins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented; they wandered in Deſarts, and in Mountains, and in Dens, and Caves of the Earth. And what Men in their Senſes would have expoſed themſelves to all theſe Hazards, and Difficulties, in the Execution of an *Office*, had they not been perſuaded of the Truth of their *Vocation*, and laid under an indiſpenſable Neceſſity to purſue it, whatever Penalties ſtood in their Way?

Their Doctrine.

NOTHING then can be more evident, than that the Prophets (if we will allow them to be Men of common Senſe) were Men of Integrity likewiſe, far from pretending to a Commiſſion, which they had not; ſince, in Acceſſion to all that has been ſaid, the *Doctrines* they taught, the *Predictions* they gave, and the *Miracles* they did, loudly proclaimed them to be ſent from God. For, what can be more ſuitable to the Nature of God, than thoſe *Exprobrations* of *Superſtition* and *Idolatry*, and thoſe many *Exhortations* to inward Purity and real Holineſs, ſo frequently, ſo kindly occurring in the Prophets? *Wherewithal ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow myſelf before the moſt High God? Shall I give my Firſt-born for my Tranſgreſſion, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul? No; God requireth nothing of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with him.* What can be more agreeable to the Divine Mercy and Goodneſs, than thoſe earneſt *Calls* and *Invitations* to Repentance? *Turn ye, turn ye from your evil Ways, for why will ye die, O Houſe of* Iſrael? *For as I live ſaith the Lord, I have no Pleaſure in the Death of the Wicked.* What is more conducive to the Honour and Glory of God, than thoſe rapturous *Songs of Praiſe*, wherewith the Royal *Pſalmiſt* tunes his Harp; and thoſe tender *Strains* of Grief, wherewith the mournful *Prophet* wets his Bed? *Oh that my Head were Waters, and mine Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might weep Day and Night for the Slain of the Daughter of my People!* Theſe, and many more Inſtances, that might be produced, were it not endleſs to proceed, where every Line, we meet with, has ſome Divine *Signature* in it, ſeem to be above the Reach of human Invention, and, by the very Elegance and Tenderneſs of their Compoſition, do manifeſtly diſcover the infinite Wiſdom and Loving-Kindneſs, from whence they were derived.

Their Prophecies.

THAT the Prophets ſhould be able to foretel Things ſo many Ages before they came to paſs; [u] that he, who went from *Judah* to denounce God's Judgments againſt the *Altar* of *Bethel*, and againſt *Jeroboam*, for ſetting it up, ſhould make mention of the very Name of *Joſiah* (who was to be God's *Inſtrument* in executing them) *Three hundred and ſixty-one Years* before the *Event* happened: [x] That *Elijah* ſhould denounce all the Puniſhments, which God would bring upon *Ahab* for his great Impiety; how his Family ſhould be totally extirpated, and the *Dogs* ſhould eat his Wife *Jezebel* by the Wall of *Jezreel*, ſome Years before the Things came to paſs: That *Iſaiah* ſhould propheſy of *Cyrus* by Name, [y] *Two hundred and ten Years* before the Accompliſhment of his Prophecy; [z] foretel his rebuilding the Temple, *One hundred and forty Years* before it was demoliſhed, and deſcribe his Conqueſts, in ſuch full and expreſſive Terms, that the Hiſtory of *Cyrus* by *Xenophon* has hardly done it better: And (to mention but one Prophet more) [a] that *Daniel* ſhould ſpeak of the *Profanation* of the Temple, and *Sanctuary* by *Antiochus Epiphanes*, declare the Manner of his Death, and delineate the very Temper and Countenance of the Man, [b] *Four hundred and Eighty Years* before the Accompliſhment: Theſe and many more Prophecies, that might be nam'd, can be aſcribed to nothing elſe, but the Inſpiration of God, which made the ſame ſtrong *Impreſſions* upon the Minds of the Prophets, and guided their Tongues to the ſame Words and *Expreſſions*, as if they had been actually preſented before their Eyes. Nay, the Fates of the *four Monarchies* are ſo exactly ſet down by *Daniel*, that ſome are of Opinion, it gave Encouragement to *Alexander* the *Great* to undertake his *Expedition*, and made *Porphyry*, (after he had compared the *Greek* Hiſtorians and the Prophecies together) flee at laſt to this *Evaſion*, that the Book of *Daniel* was certainly written after the Events: [c] A Propoſition as abſurd, as if any one ſhould deny that the Works of *Virgil* were wrote in the Reign of *Auguſtus*, ſince the Writings of the *Prophets* were as well known, and as univerſally received among the *Jews*, as thoſe of the *Poet* were among the *Romans*.

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[r] *Mic.* vi. 6. [s] *Ezek.* xxxiii. 11. [t] *Jer.* ix. 1. [u] 1 *Kings* xiii. 2.
[x] 1 *Kings*, chap. xxi. [y] *Joſeph.* Antiq. Lib. II. Chap. 1. [z] *Iſa.* chap. xliv, xlv. [a] Vid. *Jenkins's* Reaſonableneſs, & Grot. de Veritate.
[b] *Joſeph.* Antiq. Lib. XII. Cap. 11. [c] Grot. de Veritate.

Their Miracles. THE Prophets indeed wrought not many wondrous Works, becauſe there was not that Occaſion for them: The Law of *Moſes*, which they were ſent to enforce, and not invalidate, had been ſufficiently confirmed by Miracles before: And, as they were a ſtanding Order of Men, whom the People were well accuſtomed to, the People were inclinable enough to believe them without a Divine Atteſtation. When they were employed however upon great and important Meſſages, to People, that either believed not in the God of *Iſrael*, or had revolted from his Service; God was never wanting to accompany them with a Power of working Miracles, to be the *Credentials* of their Commiſſion. Thus upon the Defection of the ten Tribes, and when Calves were ſet up in *Dan* and *Bethel*, in Oppoſition to the Worſhip at *Jeruſalem*, the Prophet, who was ſent to denounce God's Anger againſt ſuch Procedure, was enabled, by a Word's ſpeaking, [d] *to rend the Altar, and both to wither, and reſtore again* Jeroboam's *Hand:* In the famous Controverſy between the Prieſts of *Baal*, and *Elijah*, the Prophet was [e] impowered *to call Fire down from Heaven, which conſumed his Sacrifice*, and gained him a Victory over his Adverſaries; and, to convince *Naaman*, the *Syrian*, of the *true God's being in* Iſrael, *Eliſha* was directed to cure him of his [f] Leproſy by the ſimple Preſcription of dipping himſelf in the River *Jordan*. Upon theſe and the like Occaſions, when the Honour of God, or the Truth of the Prophet ſeemed to be called in Queſtion, a Power of working Miracles was communicated to him, as an evident Demonſtration of God's abetting him, and atteſting the Truth of what he pretended to reveal.

PUTTING all this together, then, that the Prophets were Men of *Sobriety* and good Senſe, brought up in all *Knowledge* and Underſtanding, but void of all *Craft* and Diſſimulation; that they expoſed themſelves to infinite *Hazards* and Difficulties in the Execution of their Office; that they taught *Doctrines* conformable to the divine Nature, and the ſtricteſt Virtue; foretold *Events*, which none but God could know; and performed *Works*, which none but God could do; gave all imaginable Evidence of the Truth of their Commiſſion, and *ſealed* it, very often, with the Teſtimony of their Blood; it will follow, that we have all the Reaſon, we can deſire (all indeed, that the Nature of the Thing will bear) to believe, that they were Meſſengers ſent from God, to ſupply the intermediate Space between *Moſes* and Chriſt; and conſequently, that the Revelation of God's Will in the *Old Teſtament*, (ſo far as they were concerned in declaring it) is indubitably true.

SECT. III.

The CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

THAT, in the Reign of *Tiberius*, there lived ſuch a Perſon as *Jeſus Chriſt*, and ſuffered Death under *Pontius Pilate*, the *Roman* Governor in *Judea*, is what *Chriſtians* in all Countries profeſs; what *Jews* of all Ages have acknowledged; and what even *Heathen* Authors (ſuch as [g] *Suetonius*, *Tacitus*, and *Pliny* Junior) have recorded.

That Jeſus was a good Man. THAT this *Jeſus* was a very good Man, and conſequently could be no *Impoſtor*, appears from the whole Tenor of his Actions, as they are recorded by the *Evangeliſts*, whom we ſhall prove hereafter to be true *Hiſtorians*. Now, can any one believe, that ſo good a Perſon, as he is repreſented, who all his Life long made it his Buſineſs to do good, to inform Men of their Duty, and to teach them the exacteſt Rules of Virtue; who executed his miraculous Power, not for Oſtentation, and the aggrandizing his Fame, but for the Relief both of Mens Souls and Bodies; who deſpiſed all proffer'd Honours, and ſhew'd a wonderful Contempt of the World; who was ſo kind and obliging, ſo meek and patient in his Converſation; who prayed for his Perſecutors, and laid down his Life for his Enemies: Can any one believe, I ſay, that a Perſon of ſuch wonderful Goodneſs ſhould uſurp a *Character*, which belonged not to him, and falſely pretend to a Commiſſion from Heaven? Or, admit he did pretend to ſuch a Commiſſion, can we imagine, that Heaven would have abetted him in it, and God given *Sanction*, in the Manner that we find he did, to an abominable Lye?

1. IT

[d] 1 *Kings* xiii. 3, &c. [e] 1 *Kings* xviii. [f] 2 *Kings* v. 10. [g] Vid. Grot. de Veritate, & *Nicholl's* Conference, Vol. I.

1. IT muſt be granted, that, whoever has the Power of *Prophecy*, or Knowledge to predict future Events, muſt have the Power of God; becauſe none, but God, can foretel Things of a *contingent* Nature: So that when a Perſon pretends to found a new Religion, and predicts future Events in Confirmation of it, God muſt be ſuppoſed to aſſiſt him in his *Predictions*, and conſequently to bear Teſtimony to the Truth of his Pretenſions.

THE firſt Thing therefore that we have to do, in order to ſatisfy ourſelves of the Truth of the *Chriſtian Revelation*, is to enquire whether *Chriſt*, the firſt *Founder* of it, did really *predict* any ſuch future Events, as were out of the Power of Mankind to foretel: And of this the *Evangeliſts* have furniſhed us with ſeveral Inſtances.

His Predictions.

HE foretold the *Treachery* of *Judas*, and knew, from the Beginning, *who it was that ſhould betray him.* He foretold the *Denial* of St. *Peter*, juſt before it happened, and when the Apoſtle thought it impoſſible for him to be guilty of ſo much Baſeneſs. He foretold the Nature of his own Sufferings, and that the Manner of his Death ſhould be *Crucifixion.* He foretold his Reſurrection from the Dead, the *third* Day after his Sufferings; that immediately after his Departure, the *Holy Ghoſt* ſhould be ſent from Heaven; that his Religion ſhould extend itſelf over the Face of the Earth, and be preached to *every Nation*; that falſe *Prophets* ſhould ariſe, and *Hereſies*, in the very Beginning of Chriſtianity, infeſt the Church; that dreadful *Perſecutions* ſhould befal his Followers; but that they ſhould be inſpired with divine Knowledge, to enable them to make Anſwer to their Adverſaries, and, upon all Occaſions, have it put in their Minds what they were to ſay. Theſe are ſome of his *Predictions*, which occur in the Courſe of his Hiſtory; and when we have certain Information that theſe things were foretold, and are ſure, at the ſame Time, that they did certainly come to paſs, we cannot but acknowledge the Power of God co-operating with him, both in predicting theſe Events, and procuring their Completion.

Of the Deſtruction of Jeruſalem *particularly.*

BUT, of all Events, the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* by the *Romans* is ſo minutely foretold, even to the leaſt Circumſtance, that it deſerves a particular Conſideration. [h] The Evangeliſt has thus recorded it: *The Day ſhall come* (as he brings in our Lord ſpeaking with Tears in his Eyes) *the Day ſhall come, that thine Enemies ſhall caſt a Trench about thee, and compaſs thee round on every Side. They ſhall lay thee even with the Ground, and thy Children within thee, and they ſhall not leave in thee one Stone upon another*; (the [i] ſame that is predicted of the Temple likewiſe) *becauſe thou knoweſt not the Time of thy Viſitation.* Now how ſhould any one, without the divine Foreknowledge, come to think of ſuch an Improbability as this? The *Jews*, at that Time, under the *Roman* Protection, enjoyed perfect Peace and Tranquillity; and were ſo far from fearing the Deſtruction of their City, that they beheld it every Day enlarged, and beautified by the Munificence of the *Herodian* Family. No one could think, that that City could be deſtroyed by any other Power, whilſt it was under the Protection of the *Romans*, or that the *Romans* themſelves would deſtroy it without a *Rebellion*, which was incredible to imagine, ſuch an *Handful* of Men (as the *Jews*) ſhould ever dare to enterprize againſt the prodigious Force of that mighty *Empire*; and yet [k] the Writer of their own Story tells us at large, That all theſe Things were punctually accompliſhed; and that, when the *Romans* had taken the City, (which they did by a formal *Siege*) *Cæſar* gave Orders to lay it waſte to the Ground, except three of the ſtrongeſt Towers, which were left for a Monument of the *Roman* Courage; but all the reſt was ſo levelled, that no one could believe it had ever been inhabited.

THE Magnificence, if not the Sanctity of the Place, ſhould have ſaved the Temple, one would think, from the Victor's Violence; and it muſt be owned, that *Titus* uſed his beſt Endeavours to preſerve it [l]. But ſuch was the Fury of the Action, or rather the Force of our Saviour's Prediction, that his Orders were diſobeyed, and (as the *Roman* Hiſtorian tells us) [m] *Turnus Rufus*, with a *Plowſhare*, tore up the *Foundations* of that ſtately Pile, and left not the very Part of it that was under Ground undemoliſh'd.

I MIGHT inſtance in ſeveral Circumſtances, both preceding, and ſubſequent to this ſad *Cataſtrophe* of the *Jewiſh* Nation; the Prodigies, and Signs, and Wonders, both in Heaven and Earth; the many Calamities both of Peſtilence, Famine, and

[h] Luke xix. 43, 44.
[i] Matth. xxiv. 2.
[k] *Joſeph.* de Bell. Jud. Lib. VII.
[l] *Joſeph.* ibid. Lib. XVII. cap. 26.
[m] Vid. *Tillotſon*'s Serm. Vol. III.

the Sword; and the Eſcape of the Chriſtians to *Pella*, upon the ſudden Subduction of the *Roman* Army by *Ceſtius Gallus*: But the bare Suggeſtion of theſe, together with what has been ſaid, is enough to convince us, that a Prediction of this Kind, about Things ſo various, ſo diſtant, and ſo improbable, is far beyond the Power of *Chance* or *Conjecture*; intirely owing to the divine *Preſcience*; and conſequently, that the Perſon, who partook of that Preſcience, had the Doctrines, which he taught the World, confirmed by God.

His Miracles. 2. IT cannot be denied, but that the Power of working *Miracles* is from God, and that no Man can do Things, above the Reach of *natural* Cauſes, without Aſſiſtance from Heaven. In our bleſſed Saviour then, what leſs than a divine Power could cure all Kind of Diſeaſes, in an Inſtant, at a Diſtance, with a Touch, with a Word's ſpeaking; could ſtill the Raging of the Winds and Waves with a Rebuke; could raiſe the Dead, and caſt out Devils, and compel them to acknowledge him to be the *Son of God?* And therefore, it is with good Reaſon that he appeals to his Miracles, as Evidences of his divine Commiſſion: *If I had not done the Works among them, which no Man elſe did, they had not had Sin*, nor had they been ſo culpable in diſbelieving me. *Moſes* fed them indeed with Bread from Heaven, but he, upon Earth, multiplied ſome few Loaves and Fiſhes, to the Suſtenance of many [n] Thouſands. *Elias* raiſed one from the Dead; but he raiſed three, the Widow's Son of *Naim*, the Daughter of *Jairus*, and *Lazarus*, who had been four Days in the Grave. *The Nature of them.* [o] The antient Prophets prov'd their Commiſſion by Acts of divine *Vengeance*; but (what was a peculiar Character in our Saviour's Miracles) they were all *beneficial* to Mankind; inſomuch that, in the whole Courſe of his Miniſtry, we have not one Inſtance, where he manifeſted his Power in doing the leaſt Harm to his bittereſt Enemies. The Law was enacted with great Terror and Pomp, ſuitable to a Diſpenſation of *Servitude* and great *Severity*; but the Goſpel is a Covenant of *Reconciliation* and *Peace*, and intended not ſo much to ſtrike an Awe upon Men's Minds, as to charm and win them over with all the endearing Methods of Gentleneſs and Love; and therefore the Wonders, which bore Teſtimony to its Truth, were Works of Mercy and Pity; and the kind Relief, they brought to the Bodies, reſembled the infinite Compaſſion, which the great Worker of them expreſs'd for the Souls of Men. [p] *The Eyes of the Blind ſhall be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf ſhall be unſtopped; the Lame ſhall leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb ſhall ſing*, is a Prophecy concerning the Nature of the Miracles, which the *Meſſiah* was to work; and when *John* ſent his Diſciples to ſatisfy themſelves about Chriſt, our Saviour bids them tell him, [q] *the Blind receive their Sight, the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleanſed, and the Dead are raiſed up*, as though the mentioning of theſe Miracles was enough to convince the World who he was, and by whoſe Commiſſion he acted.

A Proof of his Divine Miſſion. THESE *Miracles* then, being wrought in the Manner, that the Evangeliſts relate, are the Atteſtation of God himſelf, deſign'd to evidence the Truth, and authorize the Doctrine of Chriſt. [r] For, as well may we ſuppoſe, that a Prince would permit an *Uſurper*, in his own Preſence, to make Uſe of his *Royal Seal*, to invite his Subjects to rebel againſt him, as that God ſhould ſuffer a *Deceiver* to work Miracles, and thereby obtain Divine Honour from Men, which is the incommunicable Right of the Deity. 'Tis inconſiſtent with his Verity, to give Sanction to a Lye: His Wiſdom and Goodneſs will not permit him to ſuffer ſo many well-meaning Men to be deluded; much leſs will it allow himſelf to make the Deluſion ſo *ſtrong*, by the Concurrence of his Power, that the moſt ſincere *Enquirer* would be in great Danger to be overcome by it. And therefore the Apoſtle urges it, as an uncontroulable Argument of our Saviour's Divine Miſſion, [s] *that he was a Man approved of God by Miracles, and Wonders, and Signs, which God did by him*; for theſe were Proofs of the greateſt Force to induce the World to believe that he came from God, to make known his Counſel, for the Recovery of loſt undone Mankind.

His Doctrine, its Excellency. 3. IT muſt be allowed farther, that the Excellency of any *Doctrine* is an Argument of a Divine *Miſſion*, when the Perſon, who publiſhes it, has produced his *Credentials*, and exhibited other Qualities comporting therewith. Now, were we deſtitute of the foregoing *Proofs* of our Saviour's Divine Authority, yet this one Conſideration, that he has delivered to us the beſt *Religion*, that ever appeared in the World, is enough to engage us to give both him, and it, a favourable Reception. For

[n] *Stilling fleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [o] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels. [p] Iſaiah xxxv. 5, 6.
[q] Matth. xi. 5. [r] *Bates*'s Chriſtian Religion. [s] Acts ii. 22.

For if the *Truths*, which he has taught, and the *Rules*, that he has given us, were nothing elſe but the Reſult of natural Reaſoning, why ſhould not other Religions in the World, and other Syſtems of Morality, be as good as this? How came the Doctrines of Jeſus Chriſt to excel thoſe of all the famous *Philoſophers* and *Legiſlators* in the World? How came an obſcure Perſon in *Judea* to draw up ſuch an admirable *Scheme* of Morality, as far ſurpaſſes all that ever the *Lycurgus*'s, the *Numas*, the *Platos*, and the *Ariſtotles* have laid down? How ſhould he, in one or two Years Preaching, nay, in one ſhort Sermon on the Mount, advance the *Ethick* Doctrines to a greater Height and Perfection, than ever they were brought to by any Sect of Philoſophers, though they had made it their Buſineſs to ſtudy them for many Ages? Moſt certainly, unleſs God had been aſſiſting in the Contrivance of this new *Model* of Morality, it is impoſſible that it ſhould ever have equalled, much leſs exceeded, that of the *Grecian* Schools, which had all the human Advantages, that were wanting in our bleſſed Saviour. Some Reaſon muſt be aſſigned, why his Doctrine ſhould be better than that of any other *Philoſopher* or *Legiſlator*. Now no natural Reaſon can be given for it; and therefore we muſt ſay, that it is owing to the ſupreme Wiſdom of God, which aſſiſted in drawing up the Rules of the *Chriſtian*, while the *Heathen* Philoſophy was only the Product of *human* Reaſoning. This Conſequence is undeniable: And we have only now to ſhew, that the Doctrines and Precepts of Chriſtianity are as excellent, as is pretended.

Both in its ſpeculative

1. TAKE but a View then of the more *ſpeculative* Parts of the Chriſtian Doctrine, and you will find nothing comparable to them in any Book of *Philoſophy*, ever yet extant in the World. [t] For (to deſcend a little to Particulars) how come we, in the *Chriſtian Syſtem*, to have the *Origin* of the Univerſe delivered to us more ſatisfactorily, than is to be found elſewhere? How comes our Inſtitution ſo rationally to aſſert, that the World was created *in Time*, by the Power and Wiſdom of God, when ſo many learned Heathen Sages have run into the fooliſh and paradoxical Notions of a *blind Chance*, or *eternal Fate*? Why ſhould this Religion alone teach the great *Cataſtrophes* of the World, firſt by a *Deluge*, and at laſt by a *Conflagration*? What Reaſon can be given, why it affords ſuch demonſtrative Arguments for a Divine *Providence*, when ſo many learned Philoſophers avowed either a *ſleepy* and *unobſerving* Deity, or ſubjected all Things to a *rigid Fatality*? How comes this Revelation to aſſert the *Unity* of the Deity, when all other Religions (except the *Jewiſh*, from whence this ſprung) taught the Worſhip of a *Plurality* of Gods? How come the ſacred *Attributes* of the Godhead, his *Omnipotence*, his *Juſtice*, his *Mercy*, &c. to be taught more truly, and explained more juſtly herein, than in all the *Lectures* of the moſt thinking and ſublime Philoſophers? What Reaſon can be given, why Chriſtianity ſhould exhibit ſuch a competent Account of the *Corruption* of human Nature, by its Deſcent from a *depraved Original*, when the greateſt Part of the learned World either overlooked his Truth, or gave us very lame and pitiful Explanations of it? Is it not a wonderful Thing, that it ſhould give us ſuch a rational Scheme of the *Redemption* of a wicked and depraved World, whereby the Honour of God's *Juſtice* is ſecured by an infinite *Satisfaction*, and his *Mercy* likewiſe extended to the forfeited Souls of his offending Creatures? Had we never heard of theſe great Truths before, and ſhould only come to read them in a Book by chance, moſt certainly we ſhould conclude, that they owed their Original to the wiſeſt Philoſopher in the World, who, in Doctrines and Diſquiſitions of this Kind, had outdone all that ever went before him: But when we conſider, that theſe Truths were either firſt taught, or elſe wiſely adopted into his Religion by ſuch an obſcure Perſon, as *Jeſus Chriſt* appeared to be, and who choſe for his *Scholars* (to be inſtructed in theſe Truths, in order that they might inſtruct others) only a few *poor Fiſhermen*; we cannot but acknowledge, that all this was above the Invention of ſuch ordinary Men, and that it was the Work of a Divine *Inſpiration* alone, which enlightened their Minds, and raiſed their Thoughts above the Degree and Capacity of the greateſt Philoſophers. And, for a Confirmation of this,

And practical Points.

2. TAKE we a farther View of the *practical* Doctrines, which our Saviour hath taught us, and what an amazing Conſideration muſt it be, that a Perſon of his Obſcurity, and Want of human Learning, ſhould give us a *Syſtem* of this Kind, which exceeds all the *moral* Precepts, even of the *Stoicks* themſelves, as much as the

[t] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. II. [u] Ibid.

the Light of the Sun does the Twinkling of the Stars. [x] What ſhall we ſay, when we find him teaching (what all Philoſophy was ignorant of before) the true Method of approaching God, with pure Hearts, and chaſte Deſires, and all the Affections of dutiful Children, through the Mediation of a divine, co-equal, and co-eternal Mediator? What can we think, when we find him the firſt *Teacher*, that ever recommended that admirable Virtue of *Humility*, which ſweetens the haughty Temper of Men, and gives them an obliging Air, while all the Writings of other Philoſophers are only calculated to inſpire Pride, and Arrogance, and a ſcornful Contempt of others? How came he to lay down ſuch excellent Rules for the Peace and Quiet of Mankind; for bearing with one another's Faults; for forgiving Injuries; for patient ſuffering of Affronts; for loving Enemies; and for imitating God in all Manner of Goodneſs? How came he to be the only Legiſlator, that ever endeavour'd to obviate the Inconveniencies of *Polygamy* and *Divorce*; and the firſt Inventor of that one Precept, which is of more Avail in the Commerce of Life, than all the Lectures of Heathen Moraliſts, *Whatſoever ye would that Men ſhould do unto you, even that ſhall ye do unto them?* Where do we find the true Uſe and Government of our Paſſions, and Deſires, and Affections ſo juſtly ſtated; where the great Leſſons of Patience and Contentedneſs ſo fully taught; where a generous Contempt of the World, and ardent Aſpirations after Heaven, ſo powerfully infus'd, as in the Chriſtian Philoſophy? In a Word, our Saviour has done more toward the Reformation of the World, the Extinction of Sin, and the Eſtabliſhment of true Holineſs; more to inſpire Mens Minds with a great and magnanimous Virtue, and to give them an abſolute Conqueſt over all their Appetites; to enlarge their Underſtandings, and emancipate their Wills, and repair in them the decayed *Image* of God, than the beſt Philoſophers have owned their Inſtructions were ever able to do. Add to this, that the *Motives*, whereby our Saviour enforces the Practice of his Laws, *viz.* the *Promiſe* of divine and ſupernatural Aſſiſtance, to help our Impotence; of *Pardon* upon true Repentance, to cure our Deſpondency; and of an everlaſting *Recompence* of Reward, to encourage our Endeavours; are ſuch, as the Wit of Man never thought on, though highly becoming the excellent Wiſdom of God, and the natural Expectations of our Conſciences: And then, let any impartial Perſon judge, whether a Revelation of this Character has not in it an intrinſick and very powerful Evidence of its being ſent from God; whether a Revelation, I ſay, that recommends to our Practice *whatſoever Things are true, whatſoever Things are honeſt, whatſoever Things are juſt, whatſoever Things are pure, whatſoever Things are lovely, whatſoever Things are of good Report, is not worthy of all Acceptation*, as exhibiting the plaineſt Marks of a Divine *Original*.

A Proof of his Divine Miſſion.

The wonderful Propagation of it.

4. IT muſt be owned farther, that the ſpeedy *Propagation* of any Doctrine, eſpecially when it is diſagreeable in itſelf, and ſupported by incompetent Means, is a great Proof of its Divine Origin. [y] Now if we conſider the apparent *Cauſes* and Inſtruments of the wonderful Succeſs of the Chriſtian Religion, which were chiefly *twelve Men*, of obſcure Birth and Parentage; of the plaineſt and ſimpleſt Underſtanding; unpoliſhed by Learning and Eloquence; unimproved by Experience and Converſe; Men of no Subtlety, no Art, no Addreſs, and who had no Manner of Authority, Intereſt, or Repute in the World: If we conſider the *Doctrine*, which they undertook to preach, the moſt unwelcome to the Fleſh and Blood that could be, the moſt repugnant to Mens natural Deſires and Inclinations, to their ſettled Habits, and inveterate Prejudices, and entirely contrary to the eſtabliſhed Rites and Religions of all Countries, and in all Ages of the World: And if we conſider that, notwithſtanding theſe Clogs and Impediments, this Religion ſprung forth, and, in one of the moſt inquiſitive and diſcerning Ages that ever was, made its Way into the World by a ſwift and incredible Progreſs; we muſt needs conclude, that a divine, inviſible Power went along with it, and that its Increaſe was *ſupernatural* and *miraculous*.

UPON the Aſcent of our bleſſed Saviour, the *little Flock*, which he had gathered, conſiſted but of an hundred and twenty Diſciples: Theſe received a mighty Addition to their Number, upon the Day of *Pentecoſt*, when *three thouſand Souls* were brought over to the Faith by a Sermon of St *Peter*'s. After this, the Number of Diſciples multiplied in *Jeruſalem*; and from thence the Doctrine was ſoon carried into all the remoter Regions of the Earth: Inſomuch that the Book of the Apoſtles Acts contains an Account of the ſpreading of the Goſpel, forwards, through many *Eaſtern* Countries,

[x] *Clarke*'s Demonſtration [y] Biſhop *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

Countries, and, backwards, through a great Part of the *Weſt*; of its piercing, on the *one Side*, into all the civilized, and ſome of the barbarous Provinces of *Aſia*; and, on the *other*, as far as the great Metropolis of *Europe*, *Rome* itſelf; [z] *ſo mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed!*

HAD the Apoſtles been the wiſeſt and moſt learned Men in the World indeed, this Succeſs had not been ſo wonderful; for then the Strength of their Parts, and the Advantages of their Studies might have borne down weaker People's Underſtandings, and managed them as they pleaſed: [a] But it amazes one to think, that ſuch mean, illiterate Perſons, as never had the Advantage of their own Country Learning, ſhould confound the *Philoſophy* of the more refined Parts of the World; and that, whereas the moſt celebrated *Sects* of Philoſophers had continued many Ages, and yet gained but a ſmall Number of Diſciples (notwithſtanding the Greatneſs of their Parts, and the Depth of their Learning) theſe poor Men ſhould proſelyte the whole World, as it were, and make Men Diſciples to the Chriſtian Philoſophy wherever they came. *The whole World.*

FOR, in leſs than forty Years after *Chriſt*, the Writers of the Church do with one Conſent agree, that *Scythia*, *India*, *Gaul*, and *Egypt*, all the moſt diſtant Parts of the World then known, had the Doctrine of the Goſpel conveyed unto them: And with what quick Succeſs it afterwards ſpread over the Face of the Earth, we may learn from the antient *Apologiſts*, who, (ere two Centuries were yet run out) pleaded for Chriſtianity, an Account of its vaſt and incredible Numbers; repreſented to the *Heathen* Emperors, that *their Camps*, *their Courts*, *their Cities*, *their Provinces*, *were all full of them*; *and that it was impoſſible to extirpate them*, *without deſtroying the far greater Part of their Subjects*.

[b] NOR was it only the weak and ignorant Sort of People that thus became Proſelytes, but even Men of the greateſt Learning and Sagacity of their Age quitted their beloved Sentiments, and heartily embraced the Evangelical Doctrine. *Luke* the Phyſician, and [c] *Lenas* an Advocate of the Civil Law, together with a great Number of learned Men in [d] *Epheſus*, who were Profeſſors of curious Arts, and, after their Converſion, burnt their Books, were ſome of the earlieſt Converts of Diſtinction. [e] *Dionyſius* the *Areopagite*, *i. e.* a learned Philoſopher, and celebrated Judge of the higheſt Court of Judicature at *Athens*, was brought to the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity by St *Paul*'s Preaching, and afterwards made the firſt Biſhop of that Place. The famous *Polycarp* bid adieu to his *Pagan* Rites, and admitted himſelf a Diſciple under St *John*, and by him was appointed Biſhop of *Smyrna*, The great *Ignatius* embraced the Doctrine of the Crucified Jeſus, and was afterwards conſtituted Biſhop of *Antioch*; and, with him, we may reckon *Clement* the *Roman*, who became a Convert to the Chriſtian Faith, and manfully undertook the Defence of it. *The moſt learned Part of it converted.*

WHO hath not heard of *Irenæus*, that moſt eminent and noted *Enquirer* after Truth? of *Ariſtides*, that eloquent *Philoſopher*, who preſented an Apology for Chriſtianity to the Emperor *Adrian*; of *Athenagoras*, that excellent *Critick* in all human Literature; of *Theophilus*, a famous *Philoſopher* of *Antioch*; of *Clement*, another of *Alexandria*, and firm *Defender* of the Chriſtian Cauſe; and of *Juſtin*, who, having run through all Sects of Philoſophy, found *Chriſtianity* the beſt at laſt, and, in Teſtimony thereof, ſuffered Death, and thereby purchaſed the Sirname of *Martyr*?

THESE, and many more, which might be mentioned in the firſt Ages of the Church, Men of great Endowments, vaſt Learning, and ſtrong Prejudices, who became *Converts* to a new Profeſſion, and, after a due Examination, left their old Principles, and yielded themſelves *Captives* to the Power of its Conviction, are an unqueſtionable Proof of the Efficacy and wonderful Virtue, and withal of the Divine Authority of the Chriſtian Diſpenſation. For if ever there was an Intervention of Divine Power in human Affairs, it was *here*, when Ignorance and Simplicity, not only had the Advantage, but triumphed over all the Wit and Learning in the World: And, if any Thing may be reckoned an authentick Proof of the Divine Miſſion of any *Lawgiver*, the ſpeedy Propagation of the Religion, which Chriſt founded, and God approved by giving it ſuch Succeſs, is certainly an Atteſtation of our Saviour's being ſent from God. *This a Proof of Chriſt's divine Miſſion.*

5. ONCE more, it muſt be owned, that a Religion, which, as ſoon as publiſhed, makes a remarkable *Alteration* in the World for the better, muſt be from Heaven, and the Author and firſt Publiſher of it a Perſon appointed by God; becauſe we cannot ſuppoſe, that any evil Power would contribute to ſo good an End. [f] At this *The Reformation it made in the World.*

[z] Acts xix. 20.
[a] *Nicholls*'s Conference.
[b] *Atterbury*'s Sermons.
[c] Acts xix. 19.
[d] Acts xvii. 34.
[e] *Edwards*'s Survey of Religion, Vol. II.
[f] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. I.

Diſtance of Time, 'tis not eaſy to conceive, how great Bleſſings the Chriſtian Religion brought to Mankind, in that Reformation, which it ſoon introduced into the World. The Chriſtians are all along repreſented, as an innocent, devout, and charitable Sort of Men, by [g] *Pliny*, *Lucian*, and *Julian* the Apoſtate; and the Apologiſts for the Chriſtian Cauſe inſiſt on this Argument with no ſmall Triumph,——that the Converts to their Inſtitution immediately became quite other Men, and practiſed all Kinds of Virtue with incredible Zeal, though they had been never ſo vicious and profligate before. "Give me a Man, ſays *Lactantius* [h], as paſſionate and abuſive, "as lewd and laſcivious, as can be imagined; and, with a few Inſtructions of God, "I'll make him as meek and innocent as a Lamb: Could ever any of the Philoſo-"phers do this?" 'Tis Chriſtianity alone, that makes the Righteous ſhine like ſo many Lights in the World, to guide and direct others in the Ways of Virtue, and makes the Vicious neither ſo bad, nor ſo numerous, as they were in the Ages that preceded it.

[i] WHERE, but in the Chriſtian Religion, do we find any true *Devotion*, excluſive of Superſtition and idolatrous Ceremonies? Where, any Acts of real Charity, ſuch as cloathing the Naked, and feeding the Hungry, and founding Hoſpitals for the Poor? Where, Perſons of the higheſt Rank condeſcending to the loweſt Acts of *Humility*; Kings and Emperors, with their own Hands, feeding the Needy; and Queens and Empreſſes adminiſtring to the Sick? In what other Inſtitution, I ſay, can we find ſuch a generous *Contempt* of the World, as to under-value Riches, and Honours, amidſt an Affluence of them? Where, ſuch *Abſtinence* and *Moderation* in the moſt lawful Enjoyments, as was univerſal in the primitive Times? Where, that undaunted *Courage* and *Patience* under Sufferings, as could be diſmayed at no Terrors, but ran with Eagerneſs to *Racks* and *Lyons*, rejoiced upon *Gridirons*, and ſung in the midſt of the *Flames*?

THESE Virtues were diſplayed in a conſpicuous Manner, in the earlieſt Ages of the Church: Nor were its Profeſſors the only Perſons, whom this heavenly Religion reformed, and raiſed to ſuch a ſublime Pitch of Virtue and Godlineſs; but even the *Heathen* World (though obſtinate and unconverted) received ſeveral Advantages from the Force and Influence of its Doctrine. [k] *Morality* was taught by the Philoſophers, in much greater Perfection, than ever it had been before: Their *idolatrous* Worſhip became ſuch a Reproach to them, that they ſought out all Arts to refine and excuſe it: The *Vices*, which made up ſo great a Part of their ſacred Myſteries, appeared too abominable to paſs any longer for Religion: The *Oracles* ceaſed; and the ſeducing Spirits confeſſed, that they were hindered from giving out their Anſwers by the Power of Chriſt: And (what was as groſs an Abuſe as any) the *Adoration* of Beaſts, and the *Oblation* of human Sacrifices were intermitted, when once Chriſtianity began to appear in its full Power and Efficacy in the World. So true, ſo literally true, is that comfortable Expreſſion of the beloved [l] Apoſtle, that *for this Purpoſe, the Son of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the Works of the Devil.*

UPON a Review of what has been ſaid then, with Relation to our bleſſed Saviour, *viz.* that he was a Perſon of apparent *Simplicity* and *Integrity* of Life, devoid of Self-intereſt, and averſe to every Method of Ambition and Popularity: That he *declined* all Overtures of Power, when offer'd him, and was far from making his Religion a Step to raiſe him to Honour and Dominion: That he had all the *Tokens* of a true *Ambaſſador* ſent from Heaven; *predicted* ſuch *Events*, as nothing but God's Omniſcience could communicate to him; and *performed* ſuch *Wonders*, as nothing but his Omnipotence could enable him to do: That the *Doctrine*, he taught, was worthy of God, and, both in its *ſpeculative* and *practical* View, far exceeding the Rules of all the Philoſophers, and wiſe Lawgivers that ever went before him; and that God publickly teſtified his Approbation of it, by giving it ſuch miraculous *Succeſs* and *Effects* in the World: It muſt be allowed, that we have all the Evidence we can deſire, or the Nature of the Thing will bear, that *Jeſus Chriſt* was an extraordinary Perſon, ſent from God, to make the *Light of his glorious Goſpel ſhine into the Hearts of* its Believers, and to bring *good Tidings of Salvation to ſuch*, as *ſat in Darkneſs, and in the Shadow of Death.*

[g] Plin. Epiſt. ad Trajan. Lib. X. Epiſt. 97. Lucian. de Morte Perigrini. Jul. Epiſt. 42. [h] Lib. II.
[i] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [k] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. I. [l] 1 John iii. 8.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

The APOSTOLICK REVELATION.

THAT our Bleſſed Saviour had, from the firſt, a *Succeſſion* of Men to publiſh his Doctrines, and to teſtify to the World the Hiſtory of his Life and Actions, is evident, not only from many ſacred and profane Records, but from the preſent Eſtabliſhment of his Religion among us, which could not have deſcended to us without a Succeſſion of proper Perſons to tranſmit it: And that theſe Perſons, *viz.* his *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts*, were credible and authentick Relaters, both of their own and his Tranſactions, will appear from an Examination of their *Character* and *Conduct*; wherein we ought to be more *ſcrupulous* and *inquiſitive*, becauſe the Confirmation of *all*, we have ſaid in Relation to him, and indeed the whole Truth of the *Chriſtian Syſtem* depends upon it.

The Requiſites in a valid Evidence.

Now, if a Man were to lay his Thoughts together, and conſider what he would deſire in order to his Satisfaction, *that the Witneſſes of Matters of Facts, ſo long ago tranſacted, ſpake Truth*, we can hardly conceive, how he could well require more than this;—— [m] That the Men, who reported theſe Things, were Perſons of ſuch *Honour* and Honeſty, that they would not tell a ſolemn Untruth; that they were Men of ſufficient *Underſtanding* to know the full Purport of what they related; that they had not *Cunning* or Policy enough to frame an intricate *Impoſture*; that they were too *many* in Number to be deceived themſelves, and too *punctual* and uniform in their Account to deceive others; that they could receive no *Advantage*, but expoſe themſelves to manifeſt Danger by their Relation; and, laſtly, that they ſhould conſtantly *perſiſt* in what they ſaid, ſo as to be willing to ſuffer, and die for the Truth of it. A Man would be very unreaſonable, that ſhould deſire half theſe *Qualifications* for every Teſtimony that he aſſents to; but where they all concur, he muſt be a *Sceptick* indeed, that does not give his Aſſent to a Matter thus fully atteſted. Now the Apoſtles have all theſe Qualifications, and more, in the Teſtimony, they give us of our Saviour's Doctrine and Tranſactions.

The Apoſtles were honeſt and impartial Men.

THEY appear to be Men of too much *Honour* and Honeſty willingly to teſtify a Lye: Their main Deſign ſeems to be to teach Men to live good and holy Lives; to perſwade them to ſerve the only true God in Spirit and in Truth; and not to place their Holineſs ſo much in Ceremonies, as in Acts of Charity and Piety. In the whole Courſe of their Lives, they were never taxed with any remarkable Wickedneſs, but, on the contrary, were noted for their Devotion, Meekneſs, and Self-denial. All Lying, they held, in their *Writings*, to be an abominable Sin, inconſiſtent with the Terms of Salvation, and, in the *Hiſtory* they have given us, ſeem to have all imaginable Tokens of Impartiality. [n] For, as they tell us the Wonderfulneſs of Chriſt's Birth, the many Miracles that he wrought, the Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon him, the Voice from Heaven declaring him the Son of God, the Splendor of his Transfiguration, the Glories of his Reſurrection, and the Triumph of his Aſcenſion; ſo they ſtick not to relate the Obſcurity of his Birth and Parentage, the low Condition of his Life, and the Shame and Ignominy of his Death: Nay (what is a ſingular Inſtance of their Truth and Ingenuity) their own mean Extraction and Employments, their Ignorance and Miſtakes, their ambitious Contentions, cowardly Deſertions, and baſe Denials of their Maſter, in the Time of greateſt Exigence, they themſelves have left upon Record, for all ſucceeding Ages to peruſe and cenſure.

Now when Perſons are ſo forward to lay open their own Faults and Failings, merely for the Sake of Truth, 'tis a ſtrong Preſumption that they have no Diſpoſition to relate Falſhoods; if ſo be, they are but *competent* Judges of what they report, and capable to form right Apprehenſions of it. And herein the Apoſtles could not poſſibly be *defective*, becauſe every one, that has his Senſes, is as good a Judge of what he hears, and ſees, and feels, as the greateſt Philoſopher living [o]. They ſaw dead Men raiſed to Life, blind Men have their Eyes, and lame Men their Limbs reſtored to them; they, ſeveral times, ſaw and handled Chriſt after his Reſurrection, had familiar Converſations with him, and beheld him with fixed Eyes, when he was caught up into Heaven. Now in theſe Things there could be no Deception, unleſs

[m] *Nicholls*'s Conference, & Grotius de Veritate. [n] *Blackhall*'s Standing Revelation. [o] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I.

unleſs we can ſuppoſe that the Men were in a Dream for the whole three Years and upwards, *that the Lord Jeſus went in and out among them.*

Uniform in their Story.

TWO or three might poſſibly be deceived indeed, or lay their Heads together to atteſt a Falſhood: With a little Thought and Conſultation, they might contrive it ſo, as to make its Parts pretty well hang together, and, with ſome good Management, make it paſs upon the World; but, in the preſent Caſe, the Suppoſition is abſurd. For, beſides our Saviour's twelve choſen Diſciples, who preached the Goſpel through all the World in the ſame uniform Manner, [p] delivering their Doctrine with the greateſt Plainneſs and Simplicity of Speech, with the greateſt Openneſs and Freedom of Spirit, and giving their Account of Things with the greateſt Particularity, as to all Circumſtances, on Purpoſe, as it were, to invite Enquirers to examine into the Truth: Beſides theſe, I ſay, there were five Hundred Men at once, who ſaw him after his Crucifixion, and many Thouſands more, that had both heard him preach, and ſeen his Miracles when alive, who were converted afterwards, and became Witneſſes of the Truth of the Goſpel. And how can we conceive [q] that ſuch Numbers of Perſons ſhould either be deceived themſelves, or combine in a Cheat to impoſe upon the World? Or if they did ſo combine, how can it be poſſible, but that they ſhould be detected?

Unable to frame an Impoſture.

MEN of *Parts* and Learning indeed, may invent ſeveral Things to deceive the Vulgar, and may make a *Fiction* of their own Brains paſs for a *Reality:* But the Apoſtles ſeem to be a Set of plain, honeſt Men, that had neither *Ingenuity* enough to contrive, nor *Art* and *Dexterity* enough to carry on ſuch an intricate Impoſture. To frame ſuch an excellent Syſtem of Morality, as is contained in the Doctrine of Chriſt; to give ſuch an extraordinary Account of the Satisfaction for Sin, and of the Nature and Office of a Mediator; to feign the Life and Actions of a *Meſſiah*, which ſhould agree ſo exactly with the *Predictions* of the Prophets, and the *Types* and Prefigurations of the *Moſaick* Law; and to make the Rewards and Puniſhments of another Life ſo agreeable to Reaſon, and ſo worthy of God; this was a *Scheme*, which theſe poor, illiterate Men were no more able to invent, than they were to create a World. The Actions of our bleſſed Lord, in particular, are ſo various, and ſo depending one upon another; there is ſuch a Correſpondence between his *Prophetick*, *Royal*, and *Sacerdotal* Office; and the Operations of his *Divine* and *humane* Nature, whether *ſeparate* or *conjunct*, are ſo wonderful and ſublime; that it is not in the Power of the Wit and Learning of Man, to draw up ſuch a rational Syſtem of a *Mediatorſhip*, much leſs could it be done by thoſe ignorant, and undeſigning Men, who firſt *divulged* it, how ſtrenuouſly ſoever they might preach and atteſt it.

Void of Intereſt,

INTEREST, we know, indeed, will make Men do much, and a Proſpect of Honour and worldly Advantages carries them on to bold Undertakings; but what Profit could they promiſe themſelves by preaching a crucified Saviour, *who to the* Jews *was a Stumbling-block, and to the* Greeks *Fooliſhneſs?* On the contrary, [r] they foreſaw, and knew, and perſwaded themſelves of this before-hand, that their Teſtimony would expoſe them to great Dangers and Hazards, to Poverty and Want; and that *Bonds*, and *Impriſonment*, and Death itſelf awaited them; and yet (notwithſtanding this) they reſolved to preach the Goſpel, and to follow their Maſter, whatever befel them.

And Ambition.

[s] AMBITION, and a Deſire of Fame, ſeldom happen to Men of obſcure Birth, and mean Education; but that it ſhould befal ſo many at once, without any Ground or Reaſon to expect it, when, in all human Conſideration, they had a Proſpect of nothing (had their Teſtimony been falſe) but Infamy after Death, as well as Diſgrace and Want, and Torments, during their Lives, is a Thing incredible. [t] Vanity perhaps might prompt them to tell a ſtrange Tale of a Man, that roſe from the Dead, and aſcended into Heaven; and, as they ſaw the People pleaſed with it, might make them humour the Story, as much as they could; but this would not laſt long: The firſt Time they were called before the *Sanhedrim* (where all religious *Impoſtures* were puniſhable with Death) the Banter would be ſpoiled, and the Cheat diſcovered; [u] whereas the Apoſtles Behaviour before that Council is the ſureſt Argument of the Truth, and Reality of what they atteſted. [x] *Whether it be right, in the Sight of God,* ſay they, *to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye: For we cannot but ſpeak the Things, which we have ſeen, and heard:* And though they were ſtraitly [y] *charged not*

Conſtant in their Teſtimony.

[p] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [q] Grotius, de Veritate. [r] *Edwards*'s Survey. [s] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs. [t] *Nicholls*'s Conference. [u] *Blackhall*'s Sufficiency, and Grotius, de Veritate. [x] Acts iv. 19. 20. [y] Ibid. ver. 18.

not to ſpeak, or teach any more in the Name of Jeſus, and heavily threatened in caſe of Diſobedience, [z] *yet* none *of theſe Things moved them, neither did they count their Lives dear unto themſelves, ſo that they might finiſh their Courſe with Joy, and the Miniſtry, which they had received of the Lord Jeſus, to teſtify the Goſpel of the Grace of God.*

THESE are ſome Proofs of the Truth and Fidelity of the Apoſtles, and firſt Relaters of our Saviour's Doctrine and Tranſactions: *And if we receive the Teſtimony of Men* (as who can refuſe receiving it, when it comes thus circumſtantiated?) *the Teſtimony of God is greater*, and the viſible Declaration he made in their Favour, [a] *by Signs and Wonders, and by diverſe Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt*, puts their Probity beyond all Queſtion. For, who could poſſibly doubt of it [b], when, at the ſame Time, that they witneſſed the Miracles, which their Maſter had done, they gave the World Aſſurance of the Truth of their Teſtimony, by doing the like Miracles themſelves; and, at the ſame Time, that they preached the Goſpel to all Nations and Languages, according to their Commiſſion, they plainly demonſtrated, both that they had ſuch a Commiſſion from God, and that it was the Truth of God which they preached, by ſpeaking to every Man, of every Nation, in his own Tongue. *Wrought Miracles themſelves.*

NAY, what (if poſſible) is ſtill a greater Proof of their *Veracity*, the Apoſtles not only wrought the like Miracles, that their Maſter had done, but conveyed to others the ſame Power of working them, which Power continued to them, and their Succeſſors, for ſome Ages, in the Church. Thus when St *Peter* was ſent for to *Cornelius*, [c] *the Holy Ghoſt fell on all thoſe, that heard him, who ſpeaking with Tongues, magnified God*; and when St. *Paul*, at *Epheſus*, *laid his Hands on ſeveral, they ſpake likewiſe with Tongues, and propheſied.* And as theſe Gifts were neceſſary, not only for the Atteſtation of the Apoſtles Truth, but for the ſpeedier Propagation of the Goſpel; ſo they continued in the Church, until it had ſpread itſelf over the Face of the then known World. The Gift of *Tongues*, ſo fit an Inſtrument in ſo difficult a Work, remained for above a whole Century, as ſeveral of the primitive Writers witneſs [d]: The Gift of *Propheſy* was in the Time of *Juſtin Martyr*, of *Iræneus*, of *Origen*, and of St *Cyprian*, as they themſelves relate: And [e] that the Power of *working Miracles*, and caſting out Devils, was of equal, if no longer Continuance, is manifeſt from the publick Challenge, which *Tertullian* (among other *Apologiſts*) makes the Heathens: "Let any Man, that is apparently acted by any "one of your *Gods*, *ſays he*, be brought before your own Tribunals, and, if that "ſuppoſed God, being commanded by any Chriſtian to ſpeak, do not own the "Power of *Chriſt*, and confeſs himſelf to be a *Devil*, then ſhall that Chriſtian be "content to be ſacrificed upon the Spot." *Empowered others to do the ſame.*

AFTER the Teſtimony of God, (if any farther Arguments were allowable in Confirmation of the Apoſtles Truth) I might produce the profeſſed Enemies of Chriſtianity, both *Jews* and *Pagans*, that have, in a great Meaſure, aſſerted the very ſame Things, which are recorded in the *Evangelical* Writings. [f] The Coming of a *King* out of the *Eaſt*, who ſhould do great and mighty Actions, was a conſtant Report, (founded upon the *Sibylline* Propheſies) which prevailed about the Time of our Saviour's Birth, and *Tacitus* (as a great Politician and Stateſman) will needs have it fulfilled in *Veſpaſian* and *Titus*, becauſe they were called, out of *Judea*, to the Empire of *Rome*. The Appearance of a wonderful Star, at the Time of his Nativity, is mentioned by *Pliny*, in his [g] *Natural Hiſtory*, under the Name of a *Bright Comet*. The Murther of the Babes of *Bethlehem* is mentioned by *Dion*, in the Life of *Octavius Cæſar*; and [h] *Macrobius* (who relates the Thing more at large) tells us, that *Herod*, upon the Account of the ſame Jealouſy, ordered his own Son to be ſlain. The *Miracles* that *Jeſus* did, when he entered upon his Miniſtry; the *Title* he laid claim to of being *Meſſias*, or a divine Perſon ſent from Heaven to redeem Mankind; and the *Doctrines* he preached, as they are recorded in the Goſpels, are acknowledged and confeſſed by *Celſus*, *Julian*, and *Porphyry*, as ſeveral of the [i] *antient* Fathers aſſure us. The *Death* of our bleſſed Saviour, and the Manner of his Sufferings, under *Pontius Pilate*, and in the Reign of *Tiberius*, is mentioned both by *Tacitus* and *Lucian*. The univerſal *Eclipſe*, which *Their Truth confirmed by the Teſtimony of Enemies.*

[z] Acts xx. 24. [a] Heb. ii. 4. [b] *Blackhall*'s Sufficiency. [c] Acts x. 44. [d] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs. [e] *Scot*'s Mediator. [f] *Edwards*'s Truth and Authority of the Holy Scriptures. [g] Lib. II. Cap. xxv. [h] *Saturnal.* Lib. II. Cap. iv. [i] Origen. cont. Celſum. Cyril. cont. Julianum. Auguſt. Civ. Dei, Lib. XXII. Cap. viii.

happened at the Time of his Paſſion, is mentioned by [k] *Dionyſius*, before he was converted to the Faith; and proved by [l] *Origen*, out of *Phlegon Trallianus*, whoſe Words are theſe, *That, in the fourth Year of the 202d Olympiad, there happened a great Defection of the Sun, ſuch as was never known before*, &c. The terrible *Earthquake*, which was at the ſame Time, is related by *Pliny*, *Dion*, and *Suetonius*; and the Rending of the *Veil* of the Temple, mentioned by three *Evangeliſts*, is teſtified by the [m] *Jewiſh Hiſtorian*, who (among other Paſſages) has given us this memorable one, concerning our bleſſed Saviour. "At this Time, *ſays he*, there was one "*Jeſus*, a wiſe Man, (if I may call him a *Man*) for he did moſt wonderful Works, "and was a Teacher of thoſe, that received the Truth with Delight. He brought "many to his Perſuaſion, both of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*. This was *Chriſt*: And "though he was, by the Inſtigation of ſome of our Nation, and by *Pilate*'s Sen-"tence, hung on the Croſs; yet thoſe, who loved him at firſt, did not ceaſe to "do ſo; for he came to Life again the third Day, and appeared to them; the "Divine Prophets having foretold theſe, and infinite other Wonders of him: And "to this Day remains that Sort of Men, who have from him the Name of *Chri-"ſtians*." A Paſſage, which (as a [n] *French* Author has proved) is far from being an Interpolation.

UPON Conſideration of what has been ſaid then, with Relation to the Apoſtles, *viz.* that they were honeſt and impartial Men, competent Judges of what they related, and no Way qualified to contrive an Impoſture; that they delivered Things plainly, and without artificial Inſinuations; that they all agreed in their Teſtimony, and were conſtant to themſelves in what they reported; that there was no viſible Intereſt, in the leaſt, to ſway them againſt their Knowledge; that they were ſo far from gaining any Thing by their Teſtimony, that they ran themſelves upon the greateſt Hazards and Diſadvantages; (and what is the higheſt Evidence, that this World can give of any Man's Sincerity) ventured their Lives for it, and ſealed it at laſt with their own Blood; that God himſelf confirmed their Teſtimony, by enabling them to work Miracles, and to confer the ſame Power upon their Succeſſors, for ſome conſiderable Time; and that their greateſt Enemies have, (in their own Writings) as to the moſt *material* Points of their Narration, either aſſerted, or acknowledged the ſame: It muſt needs follow, that we have the greateſt Security imaginable of their Veracity; and conſequently, that the Commiſſion, given them to teach all Nations, was of divine Authority, and that *their Speech, and their Preaching* (as [o] the Apoſtle words it) *was not with enticing Words of Man's Wiſdom, but in the Demonſtration of the Spirit, and of Power, that our Faith might not ſtand in the Wiſdom of Men, but in the Power of God.*

The Reſult of the whole is Thankfulneſs, and Obedience to God.

AND now to obſerve from the whole. Since God was pleaſed, by *Moſes* and the Prophets, and by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, to make a Revelation of his Will to Mankind, when the Light of Nature and the Improvements of Reaſon were found defective; we are certainly bound to expreſs all the Duty, and all the Thankfulneſs imaginable, for ſuch his ineſtimable Benefit. It may be pretended indeed, that there is no *Neceſſity* for ſuch a Revelation, and that *Philoſophy* and right Reaſon are ſufficient to inſtruct Men in the Knowledge and Practice of their Duty. [p] But, beſides what has been ſaid before concerning the Ignorance and Corruption of the Heathen World, and the Confeſſion of the wiſeſt Philoſophers about their Inſufficiency to reform Mankind; we may fairly appeal to the Men of theſe Sentiments, whether in Countries, bleſſed with a divine Revelation, the Generality, even of the *meaner Sort* of People, have not truer and more *worthy Notions* of God and his Attributes, a *deeper Senſe* of moral Good and Evil, a *greater Regard* to all divine and ſocial Duties, and a more *certain Expectation* of future Rewards and Puniſhments, than ever was known in any *Heathen* Country, among any conſiderable Number of Men.

NOW indeed, when Religion has made our Duty obvious to us, 'tis no Wonder, that the Clearneſs of moral Reaſonings ſhould be improved; but had we lived in thoſe Days of Ignorance, our finding out our Duty, and all the great Motives of it, had been like groping for an unknown Way in an obſcure Twilight. Had we been deſtitute of the *glorious Light* of the Goſpel, I ſay, what Preſumption have we to think, that we ſhould have been wiſer, than thoſe learned Names in Antiquity, *Socrates*, and *Plato*, and *Cicero*? Had our Lot been among the *Vulgar*, how can

[k] Annal. Lib. XV. Cap. xliv. [l] Ad Polycarp. Epiſt. VII. [m] Cont. Celſum, Lib. II.
[n] Mr *Martin*. [o] 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. [p] *Clarke*'s Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion.

can we be ſure, that we ſhould not have been involved in that *Idolatry* and *Superſtition*, that over-ſpread the whole World? Had we adjoined ourſelves to the *Philoſophers*, what *Sect* could we have followed, or what Book could we have reſolved upon, for the adequate Rule of our Lives, which is not palpably faulty? Or had we ſet up for ourſelves, how can we be certain, that we ſhould have been ſkilful enough to deduce the ſeveral Branches of our Duty, and to apply them to the ſeveral Caſes of Life, by the Strength of our Reaſon and Argumentation? 'Tis one Thing to ſee our Duty, when it is plainly laid down to our Hands, and another, to find it out of ourſelves; and we build too much upon our own *Confidence*, if we ſhould promiſe ourſelves better Succeſs in the *Enquiry*, than thoſe, who went before us, ever yet met with.

INSTEAD of boaſting of our Abilities therefore, it would much better become us to be thankful to God, the *Fountain of all Wiſdom*, that he has been pleaſed to communicate his Will, and the Knowledge of our Duty to us; that he has reſerved us to the beſt of Diſpenſations, and vouchſafed us the cleareſt Evidences of the moſt excellent Religion, that ever yet appeared in the World[q]: A Religion, that is in itſelf reaſonable, and every Way adapted to our rectified Faculties, and enlightened Mind; a Religion, that has the moſt lively *Principles* to actuate and inform us; the moſt perfect *Rules* to guide and direct us; and the moſt powerful *Helps* to advance us to all Virtue and Godlineſs of Living; a Religion, that holds forth the moſt dreadful *Puniſhments*, to deter us from Wickedneſs, and aſſures us of the higheſt *Rewards*, to animate us in the Courſe of Righteouſneſs: In ſhort, a Religion, that comprehends in it all the excellent Things, which the moſt improved Philoſophers talked of, and innumerable more, which all their *Diſquiſitions* could never reach, ſo much as in Thought, or Imagination; always remembering, that our Obligation to Holineſs riſes in Proportion to the Revelation we live under; that our *Manners* ſhould ſpeak the Tranſcendency of the Goſpel above Philoſophy; our Righteouſneſs exceed the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; *and that, if the Word ſpoken by Angels was ſtedfaſt, and every Tranſgreſſion and Diſobedience received a juſt Recompence of Reward; how ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great Salvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?*

[q] *Edwards's* Survey, Vol. II. [r] Heb. ii. 2, 3.

CHAP. IV.

Of the HOLY SCRIPTURES.

BEFORE we proceed to an Examination of the *Truth* and *Authority*, the *Perfection* and *Excellency*, the *Stile*, *Method*, *Perſpicuity*, and other *Attributes* of the Holy Scriptures, ſufficient to make them an *adequate Rule* of our Faith and Practice; it will not be improper to inquire a little, for what *Reaſons*, by what *Means*, and by what *Perſons*, the ſeveral Revelations above ſpecified came to be recorded in Writing.

Why the Word of God was committed to Writing.

I. 'TIS the Opinion of ſome [a] learned Men, that *Writing* was an Art, co-eval with Mankind, and the Invention of *Adam* himſelf. *Joſephus* indeed informs us, That it was in Uſe before the Flood: And from thence ſome have conjectured, that the Hiſtory of the Creation, and the reſt of the Book of *Geneſis* was, for the Subſtance of it, delivered down to *Moſes* in *Verſe*, (which was the moſt *ancient* Way of Writing) and that from thence he compiled his Book. This however can hardly be a probable Conjecture, becauſe it is ſcarce conceivable, how Men could have loſt the Senſe of Religion ſo totally, (as we find they did) had there been any ſtanding Records of it at that Time. The more probable Opinion is, that it was the long experienced Inſufficiency of *oral Tradition* (the only Way of Conveyance then in Uſe) that gave Occaſion to the general Corruption; while ſome forgot, and others perverted the Doctrines delivered to them by their Anceſtors; and, in Compliance to their Luſts, brought themſelves, by Degrees, firſt to *believe a Lye*, and then to propagate it, having no written Rule of Truth, wherewith to confront their Error.

[a] *Jenkins's* Reaſonableneſs, Vol. I.

[b] IT

[b] IT can hardly be doubted, but that God vouchſafed frequent Revelations to the Patriarchs, before the Law, and ſufficiently inſtructed them in his Will; nor can we queſtion, but that theſe holy Men uſed their beſt Endeavours to propagate the Doctrine they received, and to reform the Manners of thoſe, at leaſt, that depended on them: And (what was a great Advantage to them in that Reſpect) both their Lives were very long, and the Principles of their Religion extremely few. [c] Two Perſons might have conveyed it down from *Adam* to *Abraham: Methuſelah* (as we took Notice before) lived above three hundred Years, while *Adam* was yet alive; *Shem* was almoſt an hundred, when *Methuſelah* died; and when *Shem* died, *Abraham* was above an hundred, according to the *Hebrew* Computation. Here is a great Period of Time filled up by two or three Perſons: And yet, in this Time, the Tradition of thoſe very few Things (wherein Religion was then comprehended) was ſo totally corrupted, that *Idolatry* was generally practiſed, and God was obliged to make a *new* and immediate Revelation to the Patriarch *Abraham*.

The Old Teſtament.

THE Promulgation of the Law on Mount *Sinai* was one of the moſt amazing Things that ever happened: And, as the Circumſtances of the whole Solemnity were very ſurpriſing, the Commandments, then delivered, but few, the People all of one Language, ſeparate from the reſt of Mankind, and obliged to a conſtant Commerce among themſelves; ſo there ſeems to be, in this Caſe, all imaginable Advantages in Favour of *Tradition:* And yet notwithſtanding theſe, God would not truſt his Precepts to this uncertain Way of Conveyance, but [d] himſelf, with *his own Finger*, twice wrote them upon two Tables of Stone. Nay, even the *ceremonial* Part of the Law (though not intended to be of perpetual Obligation) was not referred to this *traditionary* Method, but was wrote by *Moſes* in a Book, as God commanded, and repoſited with the Prieſts. And therefore we have leſs Reaſon to wonder, that, in Things, which were to come to paſs in future Ages, (ſuch as the *Predictions* of the Prophets were) and whereon the *Fate* of Nations, as well as Divine *Veracity*, did depend, we always find God giving them Injunctions of this Kind, [e] *to write* their Inſpirations *before the People in a Table, and to note them in a Book, that they might be for the Time to come, for ever and ever.*

The New.

[f] FOR what Reaſon the holy *Evangeliſts* committed their Goſpels to Writing, St *Chryſoſtome* tells us in theſe Words: [g] "Becauſe, in Proceſs of Time, Men were "in Danger of ſtumbling, ſome in their *Opinions*, and others in their *Lives* and "Actions, 'twas neceſſary to have them admoniſhed by Writing: So that the "Goſpel, which had been preached, ſays [h] *Irenæus*, was, by the Will of God, put "in Writing, that it might be the Foundation and Pillar of our Faith." St *Matthew* (as [i] *Euſebius* tells us) being about to leave the *Hebrews*, among whom he had preached, gave them his Goſpel in Writing, to ſupply the Want of his Preſence. St *Mark*, upon the earneſt Requeſt of the *Romans*, who were not ſatisfied with hearing the Word only, left them his Goſpel in Writing, to be a *Monument* (as *Clement* of *Alexandria* ſays) of that *Doctrine*, which St *Peter* had delivered to them by Word of Mouth. St *Luke* acquaints us, that the [k] Reaſon, inducing him to write his Goſpel, was, to give *Theophilus*, and every one that anſwers his Name, *a greater Certainty of thoſe Things, wherein they had been inſtructed:* And as for St *John*'s Goſpel, he himſelf has likewiſe given us an Account of the Reaſon, that induced him to write it: [l] *Theſe Things are written, that ye might believe, that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have Life through his Name.*

[m] St JOHN lived the longeſt of all the Apoſtles, and therefore ſaw how little Tradition was to be truſted, ſince it was already corrupted by *Cerinthus* and his Followers, in ſo weighty a Point, as the Divinity of Chriſt; and therefore he took Occaſion from hence to write his Divine Goſpel, in order to clear this fundamental Article of the Chriſtian Faith. And obſerving withal, that the other *Evangeliſts* inſiſted chiefly on the Actions of Chriſt for one Year, *viz.* after *John*'s Impriſonment to our Lord's Crucifixion, he re-aſſumes the whole Matter, and adds thoſe Things, which were omitted by the reſt; that ſo the Church might be furniſhed with a full *Relation* of all, that was neceſſary to compleat, and eſtabliſh the Faith of Chriſtians.

THE firſt Epiſtle that we read of in the Chriſtian Church (and probably the firſt Writing in the *New Teſtament*) was the *decretal Epiſtle* of the Council of *Jeruſalem*,

[b] *Bennet* againſt Popery. [c] *Burnet* on the Articles. [d] Exod. xxxi. 18. [e] Iſa. xxx. 8.
[f] *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons. [g] *Chryſ.* Hom. I. in *Matth.* [h] *Iren.* Lib. III. Cap. 1. [i] *Euſebius*, Hiſt. Lib. III. Cap. 24. [k] Luke i. 3. [l] John xx. 31. [m] *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons.

Jeruſalem, [n] to ſettle the Minds of the *Gentiles*, and to releaſe them from the Obligation of *Circumciſion*. The Epiſtle to the *Romans* was written by St *Paul*, on Purpoſe to clear ſome main Points of the Chriſtian Doctrine, which were then warmly diſputed, about *Juſtification*, *Rejection* of the *Jews*, and the *Difference of Meats*. Thoſe to the *Corinthians* were written, not only to reprove their Factions and Diſorders, but, among other weighty Matters, to direct and eſtabliſh the Belief of the *Reſurrection*, which was then conteſted among them. That to the *Galatians* was occaſioned by one of the greateſt Points of Controverſy then on Foot, *viz.* the *Uſe* and *Obligation* of the Law of *Moſes*; and That to the *Epheſians* (among other Subjects) was intended to evince the *Call* and *Salvation* of the *Gentiles*, which, not long before, had been a Matter of ſome Doubt and Diſputation.

THE *Philippians* were aſſaulted by a violent and headſtrong Faction of *Judaizers*; and therefore the Apoſtle writes this Epiſtle, to warn them againſt their Practices, and to exhort them to [o] *ſtand faſt in one Spirit, with one Mind, ſtriving together for the Faith of the Goſpel.* The *Theſſalonians* were threatened with a great Defection from the Chriſtian Faith, and, upon this Occaſion, St *Paul* adviſes them, in his ſecond Epiſtle [p], *to ſtand faſt, and to retain what they had been taught, whether by Word, or his Epiſtle.* In both his Epiſtles, he advertiſes *Timothy* [q] of the perilous Times, which were coming upon the Church, and thereupon admoniſhes him, to *continue in the Things, which he had learned,* and to *attend to the Scriptures, which were able to make him wiſe unto Salvation.* And (to name no more) the *Coloſſians* had ſome among them, who were for refining the Chriſtian Syſtem, at leaſt for making it more paſſable in the World, by the Introduction of ſome *Jewiſh Rites*, and ſome *Auſterities* of the *Gentiles*; and therefore he writes them this Epiſtle, to convince them, that the Doctrines of Chriſtianity alone were far beyond any Mixtures of the Fancies or Traditions of Men; and thereupon gives them this wholeſome Advice: [r] *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and ſtabliſhed in the Faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with Thankſgiving.*

THUS you ſee, that the whole Revelation of God's Will (for we might run through it all, if there wanted any farther Illuſtration) was committed to Writing, that we might not be left to the Dubiouſneſs and Uncertainties of *Tradition*, which all the World had found to be ſo liable to Corruptions; but might be provided, through all the Ages, with a ſtanding Rule of Faith and Manners, whereunto we might, on all Occaſions, reſort. And ſo we proceed to

II. OUR next general Enquiry, by what Means and Aſſiſtance the Holy Scriptures were wrote. 'Twas the received Opinion of the *Jews*, [s] that the Books, which conſtituted their Canon of Scripture, were compoſed by Prophets divinely inſpired. The Law of *Moſes* was accounted the Law of God himſelf, and the *Pentateuch* eſteemed the *Foundation* of their Religion. The familiar Converſe he had with God, the Wonders and Miracles which he wrought, and the Divine Wiſdom, and Gift of Propheſy, which reſided in him, put it beyond all Diſpute, that the Books, which he left behind him, were penned by the *Inſpiration* of the Spirit of God, whereof he was full. *Wrote by the Aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt.*

THE other canonical Books, which were collected into a Body, in the Time of *Ezra*, they held in the like Veneration, as being *prophetical*, and inſpired by God; inſomuch that (as *Joſephus* tells us) they were accuſtomed, from their Infancy, to call them the *Doctrines of God*, and were ready, at any Time, to lay down their Lives in Vindication of them.

THAT theſe Books were of Divine Inſpiration, no Chriſtian can doubt, that believes the Teſtimony of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, who frequently quote them as ſuch, under the Name of *the Holy Scripture*, which comprehends the *Law*, the *Prophets*, and the *Pſalms*. 'Tis upon the Evidence of theſe Books, that our Bleſſed Saviour proves himſelf to be the Meſſiah; 'tis by them that he confutes the *Jews*; and to them that he appeals, both in the Proof of his own Doctrine, and in all his Diſputations with them: And therefore we need not wonder that we find both the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles* aſſuring us, [t] *that all Scripture is given by the Inſpiration of God*; and the Apoſtle of the *Jews* aſſerting the ſame Thing, *viz.* [u] *that no Propheſy of the Scripture is of any private Interpretation; for the Propheſy came not in old*

Time,

[n] Acts xv. 23. [o] Phil. i. 27. [p] Chap. iv. 1. [q] 2 Tim. iii. 14, 15. [r] Col. ii. 6, 7.
[s] *Du Pin*'s Canon of Scripture. [t] 2 Tim. iii. 16. [u] 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.

Time, by the Will of Man, but holy Men of God ſpake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.

* THE primitive Church, inſtructed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, had not only the ſame Reſpect for the Writings of *Moſes* and the Prophets, that the *Jews* themſelves had; but received likewiſe, by univerſal Conſent, the *Goſpels*, and *Epiſtles* of the Apoſtles, as compoſed, in like Manner, by the Direction and Inſpi rtion of God's bleſſed Spirit. That the Holy Ghoſt, in theſe firſt Times of Chriſtianity, did aſſiſt, in an extraordinary Manner, the Apoſtles of our Saviour Chriſt, both in their Preaching, and in their Vindications of themſelves, is in a Manner demonſtrable from the Promiſe he makes them; [y] *When they bring you into the Synagogues*, ſays he, *and unto Magiſtrates, and Powers, take ye no Thought how, and what Thing ye ſhall anſwer; for the Holy Ghoſt ſhall teach you, in the ſame Hour, what ye ſhall ſay.* Now if the *Preaching* of the Apoſtles was inſpired, we have the ſame, and much greater Reaſon to perſuade ourſelves, that their *Writings* were ſo too; becauſe their Writings were to remain, as the perpetual *Monuments* of the Doctrines of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and as a ſtanding Rule of Faith to all Chriſtians. But now, upon a Suppoſition, that their Writings are *fallible*, and of no better Authority, than Compoſitions purely human, what ſhall Chriſtians do, when any Controverſies, either in Doctrine or Practice, happen to ariſe among them? *Tradition* on both Sides may be pretended; but Tradition at beſt is but an uncertain Guide: The *Infallibility* of *Popes* and Councils is not allowed of by all Parties, and yet that very Infallibility (were it admitted) always ſuppoſes an inſpired Scripture for them to interpret. So that, upon a Contingency of this Nature, if the Scriptures were defective in this Particular, we ſhould have nothing elſe to do, but to wrangle on to the World's End, without any Poſſibility of coming to an Agreement. It ſeems highly conſiſtent with the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God therefore, that the Writings, which he foreſaw all Poſterity would appeal to, as the *Touchſtone* of their *Orthodoxy*, ſhould be ſecured from Error, and that his Holy Spirit ſhould, in their Compoſition, aſſiſt with ſuch an infallible *Veracity*, as would be of ſufficient Authority to ſilence all Differences that might ariſe.

THE primitive Chriſtians therefore always looked upon them as *Oracles*, to decide all Differences in Matters of Religion, and every Sentence in them was thought a Divine *Axiom*, beyond which there could be no Appeal, and no Diſpute. Nay, not only the *Orthodox*, but even the rankeſt *Hereticks*, who deny the moſt conſiderable Articles of the *Chriſtian* Faith, never queſtion the *Divinity* of the Scriptures: And though they cavil now and then with the Authority of ſome particular Texts, yet they freely own the Inſpiration of the reſt; argue from it in the ſame Manner, as the *Orthodox* do, and are not a little proud, when they think they have got it on their Side.

FROM theſe Reaſons then it appears, that the Holy Scripture is, in Reality, what it is called, *the Word of God*, as being of Divine Inſpiration; and that the ſacred Writers (as [z] an antient Author elegantly expreſſes it) "had not need of any Art to "compoſe their Works; all that was required on their Part was, that they ſhould "have a *purified* Mind, wherein to receive the Operation of the Holy Ghoſt, who "deſcending from Heaven, as a *muſical Bow*, all divine, made uſe of upright Men, "as of a muſical Inſtrument, to reveal to us the Knowledge of celeſtial and divine "Things:" Which carries us on to a farther Enquiry, *viz.* how far the Operation of the Holy Ghoſt, in the Compoſition of the Scripture, did extend, and whether it directed the Writers to the very Words and Expreſſions, or only directed the Senſe, and Subject-Matter of what they wrote.

How far it was inſpired.

NOW, though it be certain, that the ordinary Operation of the Spirit of God upon Men's Minds, which uſually leaves them to the free Exerciſe of their Faculties, be no Rule to direct our Judgment in this Caſe; yet it muſt be acknowledged, that the great Diverſity of the *Stile* and *Diction*, in the ſeveral Books of Scripture, according to the different *Tempers* and *Education* of its Writers, is a Sort of Indication, that they themſelves had ſome *Share* in the Compoſition, and that the Holy Ghoſt was not the Author of every Word and Expreſſion. For, if this had been the Caſe, the Stile of every Book had been alike and uniform; at leaſt there had not been that apparent Difference in it, which we now ſee, and which (taking in the holy Penmen for a Share in the Compoſition) may not unfitly be aſcribed to natural Cauſes. [a] If the Holy Ghoſt had dictated every Word, I ſay, why

[x] *Du Pin*'s Canon. [y] Luke xii. 11, 12. [z] Juſtin Martyr. [a] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. II.

why ſhould *Iſaiah*, who was bred in a *Court*, be more *florid*, and *magnificent* in his Expreſſion, than *Amos*, who had his Education among the *Herds?* Why ſhould St *Luke*, who had a polite Education, write his Books in better Language, and more agreeable to the *Greek* and *Latin* Hiſtories, than St *John?* Why ſhould St *Paul*, who was *brought up at the Feet of Gamaliel*, ſhew more of *Jewiſh* Learning, and *Rabbinical* Reaſoning, than the other Apoſtles? Why ſhould St *John*, above all the others, diſcover, in his Writings, ſo much Sweetneſs and Humanity, ſo much Love and Tenderneſs, if it was not, in ſome Meaſure, owing to his natural Temper? Theſe ſeem to be plain Proofs, that the holy Penmen were not *entirely* excluded; that their Temper and Education (as other Men's do) entered, in ſome Meaſure, into their Compoſitions; and that they were uſually left at Liberty to vary their Expreſſions, if not model their Thoughts, according to theſe Qualifications.

THEIR Thoughts indeed, as to the Subſtance of them, were under the more immediate Direction of God: And though it be an impoſſible, as well as needleſs Thing, for us to define, how far his bleſſed Spirit was engaged in the Inſpiration of theſe holy Men; yet we have abundant Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that he afforded them ſufficient Aſſiſtance to make their Writings *infallible*, and that the Meaſure of this Aſſiſtance was, in Proportion to the Nature of the Subject, which they treated. Thus, when the holy Apoſtles, for inſtance, wrote *hiſtorically* of Matters of Fact, which either they themſelves knew, or had been reported to them by credible Witneſſes, there was no Reaſon that the *Subſtance* of their Hiſtory ſhould be revealed to them again; all that ſeems requiſite is, that their *Memories* ſhould be refreſhed, (as our Saviour promiſed them) and that the Holy Ghoſt ſhould ſo far inſpect them, as to prevent any Error in the Relation. In like Manner, when they delivered any *moral* Precepts, or argued from any *revealed* Truths, he ſuffered them to uſe their reaſoning Faculties, as far as the Arguments were ſuitable and ſolid; and at the ſame Time quickened their Invention, cleared their Underſtanding, and hindered them from writing any Thing impertinent. But when they were to *predict* any future Events, or to declare any Divine *Truths*, which were not taught them by Chriſt while he was upon Earth, there it is neceſſary to aſſert, that the Whole of *theſe* was immediately inſpired into their Minds by the Holy Ghoſt; becauſe they could be the Reſult neither of their Underſtanding, nor Memory, and conſequently could come into their Minds no other Way, but by immediate Inſpiration. And, on Occaſions like theſe, when ſome great and fundamental *Articles* of the Chriſtian Faith came to be propounded or explained, 'tis not to be doubted, but that the Holy Spirit dictated the very Words and Forms of Expreſſion; as might be proved from ſome ſeemingly-accidental *Hints* in Scripture, now of great Uſe for the Confutation of Error, which could not have been put in by human Foreſight, and ſome Paſſages, of a ſingular Significance, which could not have carried all that Strength and *Emphaſis*, had they been of human Compoſition.

FROM the whole then it is reaſonable to think, that the Meaſure of Divine Inſpiration varied, according to the *Dignity* of the *Subject*, and the *Exigencies* of the *Penmen* that did record it: That, for the main, they purſued their own Method and Manner of Expreſſion, but, on ſome important Occaſions, had the very *Words* dictated to them; that in ſome Subjects they had their Memory refreſhed, in others their Underſtandings enlightened, and in all their Wills directed to the Diſcovery and Declaration of the Truth; and, even in the leaſt Matter they wrote, were never ſo far left to their own Diſcretion, as not to have the Holy Spirit *preſiding* over them, and keeping them from expreſſing any Thing contrary to the Divine Mind, or the Dignity of the Sacred Subject. And ſo we go on to.

III. OUR laſt general Enquiry, *who the Perſons were, by whom theſe inſpired Records were wrote:* And the Anſwer to this is ſhort and obvious; † they were wrote *By what Perſons it was wrote.*

† Mr *Le Clerc* makes great Exceptions to the common received Authors of the *Canon* of the *Old Teſtament*, and, from the Names of ſome Perſons and Places, as well as ſome Events and Tranſactions, that were later than the Time, wherein the Authors lived, endeavours to bring down the Date of moſt of them, as low as the Captivity; but for this there is no Occaſion. Since moſt of the Learned agree, that, upon his Return from Captivity, *Ezra* compiled all the Books of the *Old Teſtament*, that were then extant, and, having changed the *antient* for more *modern* Names, and here and there inſerted ſome Paſſages to make the Hiſtory more intelligible to the common Readers, he publiſhed a new Edition of it in that Form; and by this Suppoſition, all the ſeeming Incongruities in the Text may be reconciled. *Sentimens de quelques Theologiens*, and *Huetii Demonſt. Evangel.*

wrote by the Perſons, whoſe Names they bear, at leaſt by Perſons divinely aſſiſted in their Compoſitions. For we have the ſame moral Evidence (and moral Evidence is all we can have in this Caſe) for aſcertaining the Books of the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, that we have for aſcribing any other Books to their reſpective Authors; inſomuch that if we believe that *Homer* and *Herodotus*, *Virgil* and *Livy* were the Authors of the Writings that go under their Names, we have the ſame Reaſon to ſuppoſe the ſame Thing of the inſpired Penmen, becauſe univerſal Conſent (which is the Claim they both make) is equally ſtrong on their Side.

[b] THAT *Moſes* was the Author of the *Pentateuch* is plain from many Paſſages in the Holy Scriptures, from the Authority of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and the Teſtimony of ſeveral *Heathen* Authors. The Book of *Joſhua* (as well as ſome others) is ſo called, not ſo much to denote its Author, as to ſhew its *Subject-Matter*; becauſe it contains the Hiſtory of the Wars, and other Affairs, which happened under the Adminiſtration of that great *Captain:* But ſince the Author of the Book of *Eccleſiaſticus* gives him this Character, [c] *that he was the Succeſſor of* Moſes *in the Propheſies*, i. e. (in the Language of the *Jews*) the next Writer of inſpired Scripture after *Moſes*, we have no Reaſon to oppoſe the Judgment of the *Jewiſh* Church, which always aſcribed it to him.

THE Book of *Judges* is very antient, as appears from a Paſſage in a Pſalm of *David*, made upon a Removal of the Ark: *When thou wenteſt forth before the People, when thou marchedſt through the Wilderneſs, the Earth ſhook, the Heavens alſo dropped at the Preſence of God*; which Words are an exact Imitation of theſe in *Judges:* [d] *Lord, when thou wenteſt out of* Seir, *when thou marchedſt out of the Field of* Edom, *the Earth trembled, the Heavens dropped, the Clouds alſo dropped Water*; and that it was wrote by *Samuel*, as well as the Book of *Ruth*, (which is an Hiſtory of ſome *particular* Tranſactions, which happened in the Time of the *Judges*) the Doctors of the *Talmud* agree; though others attribute it to *Hezekiah*, and many to *Ezra*. The Books of *Samuel* have likewiſe evident Marks of their Antiquity: And though it be not abſolutely certain who their Author was, yet the Generality of the *Jews* do, with Probability, aſſert, that the four and twenty firſt Chapters were written by *Samuel* himſelf, and the reſt by the Prophets *Nathan* and *Gad*; which Aſſertion they found upon this Paſſage in the *Chronicles:* [e] *Now the Acts of* David *the King, firſt and laſt, behold they are written in the Book of* Samuel *the Seer, and in the Book of* Nathan *the Prophet, and in the Book of* Gad *the Seer.*

THE Books of *Kings* and the *Chronicles*, which contain the Hiſtory of the *Jewiſh Monarchy*, down to the Deſtruction of *Iſrael* and the Captivity of *Judah*, were compiled out of antient *Records*, which Records were wrote by Men of a *prophetick* Spirit; and all that *Ezra*, or whoever their Compiler was, added of his own, was ſome *genealogical* Obſervations, at the Beginning of the *Chronicles*, and ſome other Paſſages of ſmall Moment, relating to the Times after the Captivity.

THE Book of *Ezra* (all but the ſix firſt Chapters) was compoſed by him; for theſe ſix Chapters contain an Account of the firſt Return of the *Jews* from *Babylon*, upon the Decree of *Cyrus*; whereas *Ezra* did not return until the Time of *Artaxerxes*. 'Tis of this ſecond Return therefore that he writes the Account; and, adding it to the other, which he found ready compoſed to his Hand, he made it a complete Hiſtory of the *Jewiſh Reſtoration.*

NEHEMIAH, who was the Son of *Hilkiah*, of the Tribe of *Levi*, was advanced, in *Babylon*, to be Cup-bearer, or Page, to King *Artaxerxes*; and from him he obtained Leave to return to *Judea*, for twelve Years, in order to rebuild the City of *Jeruſalem*. He continues the Hiſtory of *Ezra*, from the twentieth Year of *Artaxerxes*, to the Reign of *Darius Nothus*, and is, by the Writer of the Books of [f] *Maccabees*, atteſted to be the Author of that Work.

[g] THE Hiſtory of *Eſther*, which contains an Account of the *Jews* wonderful Deliverance from *Haman*'s intended *Maſſacre*, by ſome is ſuppoſed to have been written by *Ezra*; but the more probable Opinion of the *Talmudiſts* is, that the *great Synagogue* (to perpetuate the Memory of that remarkable Event, and to account for the Original of the Feaſt of *Purim*) ordered this Book to be compoſed, and afterwards approved, and admitted it into the ſacred *Canon*.

WHO

[b] *Du Pin*'s Canon, Vol. I. [c] Ecclus. xlvi. 1. [d] Judges v. 4. [e] 1 Chron. xxix. 29.
[f] 2 Mac. ii. 13. [g] *Du Pin*, ibid.

WHO the Author of the Book of *Job* was, is indeed uncertain; 'tis very probable however, † that he was a Perſon of great Antiquity, and lived before the Promulgation of the *Jewiſh* Law, becauſe there are no Traces of it to be found in the whole Compaſs of the Book. The moſt general Opinion is, that it was written by *Moſes*, during his Abode in *Egypt*, or in his Flight into the Land of *Midian*, with an Intent to encourage the *Jews*, under the Severities of the *Egyptian* Bondage, by ſhewing the gracious Deſigns of God's Providence, and that he often lays the ſharpeſt Afflictions upon his moſt faithful Servants.

'TIS certain, that, in antient Times, both before and after the Flood, holy Men were accuſtomed to ſing the Praiſes of God, for his manifold Mercies unto them, in *Hymns*; that theſe Hymns were compoſed by Men of a *prophetic* Spirit, and not only learnt by pious People, as Helps to their Devotion, but committed to the Cuſtody of the *Levites*, who laid them up among the Archives of the Temple, and uſed to chuſe out of them whatever they thought proper to have ſung, upon any ſolemn Occaſion. This Form of Worſhip, during the *Captivity*, had been almoſt totally neglected; but when *Ezra* was returned Home, and made a Reviſe of the *Canon* of Scripture, he collected the hundred and fifty Pſalms, which we have at preſent, being all he could find, I ſuppoſe, of undoubted Authority. Thoſe, that go under the Name of *David*, are agreed on all Hands to be of divine Inſpiration; and the whole Collection, indeed, is ſo far from being any modern Compoſition, that it is juſtly thought to contain ſome of the moſt valuable, and moſt unqueſtionable Pieces of Antiquity.

THAT the Books of *Proverbs*, *Eccleſiaſtes* and *Canticles*, were written by King *Solomon*, is the general Opinion of the *Jewiſh* Doctors, who pretend to tell us, that he wrote the *Canticles* in his Youth, the *Proverbs* in his Manhood, and *Eccleſiaſtes* at the latter End of his Life. [h] There are, however, but twenty-four Chapters in the Beginning of the firſt, which are reputed the *original* Collection of *Solomon*, and Part of a great Work, which was deſtroyed, with the Temple, at the Captivity. The reſt were collected by other Hands, only the laſt Chapter (which bears the Name of *Lemuel*) is ſuppoſed to have been wrote by him under a *borrowed* Title; and ſeems to be made up of ſome wiſe Inſtructions, which his Mother *Bathſheba* had taught him, when he was a Child.

THE *Song of Songs*, though it may relate to *Solomon*'s Marriage with the Daughter of the King of *Egypt*, and is ſo far *hiſtorical*; yet the Pious, in all Ages, have ever eſteemed it as an *allegorical* Dialogue between Chriſt and his Church: And though in *Eccleſiaſtes* ſome Paſſages ſeem to carry an *Epicurean* Notion of Providence; yet it is to be remembered, that the Author (in an *academick* Way) diſputes indeed on both Sides, but, in the Concluſion, determines for that, which is right, *viz. to fear God, and keep his Commandments, for that is the whole Duty of Man; for God*, ſays he, *will bring every Work to Judgment, and every ſecret Thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

THAT the Books both of the *greater* and *leſſer* Prophets (for we have no need to conſider them ſeparately) have been always thought to belong to the Perſons, whoſe Names and Inſcriptions they bear, we have the univerſal Conſent of the *Jewiſh* Church, ſeveral Paſſages from *Joſephus*, and a very remarkable Teſtimony in the Book of *Eccleſiaſticus*, to convince us; where, after many Praiſes beſtowed upon *Ezekiel*, and other Prophets and Worthies of *Iſrael*, there are theſe Words: [i] *And*

† The Author of the *Divine Legation of* Moſes (Part II. Lib. vi.) endeavours to prove, from its Stile, Sentiments, and Manner of Compoſition, that the Book of *Job* is wholly *Dramatical*; that, from the Cuſtoms and hiſtorical Paſſages alluded to in it, it was wrote under the *Moſaick Oeconomy*, and not long after the People's Return from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity; that under the Perſon of *Job* is repreſented the Body of the *Jews* reſtored indeed to their native Country, but ſadly harraſs'd and annoy'd by their Enemies round about them; by *Job*'s *Wife*, thoſe *idolatrous* Women, whom they had married, but were now enjoined to put away; by his *three pretended Friends*, the three profeſſed Enemies of the *Jews*, *Sanballet*, *Tobiah*, and *Geſhem*, who ſo much obſtructed their rebuilding of *Jeruſalem* and the Temple; by *Satan*, that malicious Tempter, which inſtigated them to be ſo inveterate againſt the People of God; by *Elihu*, the Prophets, that were then alive, *viz. Haggai*, *Zechariah*, and *Malachi*, who reproved the People in a friendly Manner, and exhorted them not to be diſcouraged: And that, in ſhort, the Author of this Book was no other than *Ezra* himſelf, that *ready Scribe of the Law of the Lord*, who *prepared his Heart to teach* Iſrael *Statutes and Judgments*, and wrote this Book in this *poetical* and entertaining Way, to encourage the *Jews*, labouring under Difficulties from their malicious Enemies, to a Perſeverance in their Duty, by the aſſured Care and Protection of Providence. Whether this fine-laid Scheme will abide the Teſt or no, we will not pretend to determine; but ſhall only take Notice, that *Grotius* was of the ſame Opinion, *viz.* That the Author of the Book of *Job* lived after the Time of *David* and *Solomon*, becauſe there are ſeveral Paſſages in their Writings, which he ſeems to imitate, and that the *Phraſeology* in *Job* is not unlike what we meet with in *Ezra*, *Daniel*, and the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe. *Sentimens de quelques Theologiens ſur l'Hiſtoire Critique*, Page 183.

[h] *Du Pin*'s Canon, Vol. I.

[i] Eccluſ. xlix. 10.

of the twelve Prophets, let the Memorial be bleſſed, let their Bones flouriſh again out of their Place, for they comforted Jacob, *and delivered them by aſſured Hope.*

THUS it appears, that the Books of the *Old Teſtament* were either the Works of the Men, whoſe Names they bear, or at leaſt the Compoſitions of Perſons, aſſiſted by the Holy Ghoſt: [k] And it is no ſmall Satisfaction to us in our Belief, *that the Books of the* New Teſtament *are the genuine Works of the Authors, to whom they are aſcribed*; to find, that they were received not by a ſmall Party of Men, or ſome particular Churches, but by all Chriſtians, diſperſed in all Parts of the World; to find, that the Chriſtian Writers in all Ages cite them, as the genuine Works of the *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts*, and that, as well before the *Canon* of the *New Teſtament* was ſettled and declared in Councils, as ſince; to find, that they were never excepted againſt as *ſpurious* and *counterfeit*, in the earlieſt Ages, or by the bittereſt Enemies of the Chriſtian Faith, though they wanted neither Wit nor Malice to have made the Exception, had they deſerved it: On the contrary, that they were admitted as genuine, even by *Julian* himſelf, who expreſſly owns, that the Books received by Chriſtians, as the Books of *Peter* and *Paul*, *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke*, were indiſputably theirs, when, (had it been poſſible to prove them otherwiſe) what a glorious Triumph had it been!

Books doubted of.

[l] SOME Books indeed were *controverted* by ſome particular Churches, and not immediately admitted into the *Canon* of the Scripture. The Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* and the Second of St *Peter* were at firſt ſcrupled, upon the Account of their Stile; the former being thought different from St *Paul*'s, and the latter from St *Peter*'s Manner of Writing. The Epiſtle of St *Jude* was likewiſe doubted of for this Reaſon, becauſe the *Apocryphal* Book of *Enoch* is cited in it: And, becauſe the *Apocalypſe* was wrote in a *loftier* Stile than ordinary, 'twas, ſome Time, a Queſtion whether St *John* was the Author of it, 'till Examination was made, and the Proofs appeared evident in Favour of *this*, as well as the other controverted Books. Now the Caution, that the Church uſed in theſe Inſtances, makes it manifeſt, that the Chriſtians of the firſt Ages were not ſo eaſy and credulous, (as ſome have repreſented them) nor did they *ſwallow any Book for Divine Revelation, that contained a great many Miracles, mixed with ſome few Morals*, without making due Enquiry concerning the Author, and Authority of it; which is a corroborating Proof to us, that the like Care was taken about the reſt, and that the Teſtimonies of their Genuineneſs were unexceptionable, otherwiſe they had met with the ſame Stop and Scrutiny, that the others did.

THE Truth is, it nearly concerned the *Primitive* Chriſtians to prevent their being impoſed upon in an Affair of this Nature. As they were the beſt able to judge of the Books, aſcribed to the *Evangelical* Writers, eſpecially if what [m] *Tertullian* reports be true, that, in his Time, there were *Original* Manuſcripts to be ſeen in ſeveral Churches; ſo they could not but apprehend it as a Matter of the laſt Conſequence to the Credit of their Religion, to make a right Judgment concerning them. Perſons, that were willing to ſuffer every Thing for the Truth of Chriſtianity, muſt needs be ſuppoſed jealous of being impoſed upon, and careful to preſerve, in every Reſpect, thoſe Monuments uncorrupt, whereby the Facts, upon which the Proofs of it depended, and the Doctrines, which it contained, might be atteſted, and tranſmitted to future Ages. And of this we ſhall have a farther Conviction, if we enquire, in the next Place, into the Number and Catalogue of Books, which, both in the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Church, were received into the ſacred Canon.

SECT. I.

Of the CANON *of* SCRIPTURE.

Of the Old Teſtament.

THE firſt Account we have of the Canon of the *Jews* is from *Joſephus*, in his Book againſt *Appion*. [n] "We have only *two and twenty* Books, *ſays he*, "which comprehend the Hiſtory of all Ages, and merit our Belief. Five belong "to *Moſes*, which contain what relates to the Original of Man, and the Tradi- "tion of the ſeveral Succeſſions and Generations down to his Death: This takes up "the Compaſs of about three thouſand Years. From the Death of *Moſes* to the "Reign

[k] *Blackhall*'s Sufficiency. [l] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. [m] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.
[n] *Vid. Du Pin*'s Hiſtory of the Canon of Scripture.

" Reign of *Artaxerxes*, who was King of *Perſia* after *Xerxes*, the Prophets, who ſuc-
" ceeded him, have in their Books written what happened in their Time. The other
" four Books contain Hymns to the Praiſe of God, and Precepts for the Conduct of
" human Life. What happened ſince the Time of *Artaxerxes*, down to our Days,
" has likewiſe been recorded by the Writers thereof, but they have not met with
" the like Credit, becauſe there has not been any certain Succeſſion of Prophets
" during that Time. And from hence it is manifeſt, what Reſpect and Eſtimation
" have been paid to the Books, that complete our Canon; ſince, in ſo long a Tract
" of Time, no Man has ventured to add any Thing to them, or diminiſh, or alter
" any Thing in them."

ST *Jerome* has given us another Account of the *Canonical* Writings owned by the *Jews*, wherein the Number of Books is the ſame, though there be ſome Difference in the Diſtribution of them. " All the Books of the *Old Teſtament*, among the *Jews*,
" ſays he, *are two and twenty*; whereof five belong to *Moſes*, eight to the Prophets,
" and nine to the other holy Penmen; though ſome reckon four and twenty, by
" ſeparating *Ruth* from *Judges*, and the *Lamentations* from the Prophecy of *Jere-*
" *miah*, and placing them in the Number of Sacred Writings. And from hence it
" follows, that the Book of *Wiſdom*, (commonly aſcribed to *Solomon*) *Eccleſiaſticus*,
" (ſaid to be compoſed by *Jeſus* the Son of *Sirach*) *Judith*, *Tobit*, and the *Paſtor*, do
" not belong to the Canon, any more than the two Books of the *Maccabees*, whereof
" the one was in *Hebrew*, and the other (as appears plainly by the Stile) was wrote
" in *Greek*." Thus accurately has St *Jerome* explained the *Canon* of Scripture received by the *Jews*, and differs from *Joſephus* in nothing but this, that he reckons, among the *Canonical* Books, That of *Eſther*, which *Joſephus* excludes, and places only *eight* in the ſecond, but *nine* in the third Claſs.

THE antient Catalogues of Canonical Books of the *Old Teſtament*, which are to be met with in Chriſtian Writers, are conformable to this Account of the *Jews*, and contain no other Books. [o] *Mileto*, Biſhop of *Sardis*, being deſired by *Oneſimus* to give him a perfect Catalogue of the Books of the *Old Teſtament*, took a Journey to the Eaſt, on Purpoſe to examine this Matter at the Fountain-Head; and having (as he ſaid) made an exact Enquiry, he ſent him the Names of them, juſt as we receive them, which, *Euſebius* tells us, he preſerved, as containing all the Books, that the Church at that Time owned.

ORIGEN, St *Cyril*, and St *Athanaſius*, have all given us the ſame Catalogue, according to the Tradition of the *Jews*, who divided the *Old Teſtament* into two and twenty Books, anſwerable to the Letters of their Alphabet; and, what is a farther Confirmation, the Council of *Laodicea*, which was afterwards confirmed by other General Councils, in an expreſs *Canon*, declares the Number of authentick Books, juſt as we do, and decrees, that they only ſhould be read in the Church. 'Tis true, this Part of the Canon came afterwards to be neglected, and ſeveral *Apocryphal* Books (as containing Matters of *Jewiſh* Hiſtory, and many *moral* and *doctrinal* Truths) were by Degrees admitted into the Service of the Church, and read for the Edification of the People; yet it were no hard Matter to ſhew, that ſeveral Writers, and thoſe the moſt learned of their Time, always denied their Canonical Authority. *The Church indeed allowed them to be read*, as St *Jerome* tells us, *but ſhe did not receive them into the Canon of Scripture*. [p] And, in like Manner, our Church declares concerning them, that ſhe doth *read them for Example of Life, and Inſtruction of Manners, but does not apply them to eſtabliſh any Doctrine*. For though they contain many excellent Rules of Life, and are very ſerviceable to inform us in our Duty, as to ſeveral weighty Things; yet being not dictated by the Holy Ghoſt, (as other Books of Scripture are) they are not the infallible Standard of Divine Doctrine, and therefore not to be applied, and made uſe of for that Purpoſe.

THE Canon of the *New Teſtament*, as compoſed of Books all written by Divine *Inſpiration*, is ſufficiently proved from the Teſtimony of Authors, who were neareſt the Times of the Apoſtles. [q] *Papias*, who converſed with the Diſciples of the Apoſtles, is cited by *Euſebius*, in Confirmation of St *Matthew*'s Goſpel, which, he ſays, was wrote by him in *Hebrew*. *Juſtin*, *Irenæus*, and *Clement* of *Alexandria* quote ſeveral Places out of St *Mark*'s Goſpel, and prove that he wrote it from St *Peter*'s Preaching. St *Ignatius*, in his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, makes mention of St *Luke*'s Goſpel, and applies unto him that Paſſage of St *Paul*, [r] *we have alſo ſent with him* Luke, *Of the New.*

[o] *Burnet* on the Articles. [p] *Edwards*'s Truth and Authority of the Holy Scriptures. [q] *Burnet* on the Articles. [r] 2 Cor. viii. 18.

Luke, *whoſe Praiſe is in the Goſpel.* *Irenæus* was acquainted with *Polycarp*, who was a Diſciple of St *John*, and he, among many others, has, with great Accuracy, proved the *Authentickneſs* of the Goſpel of that *beloved* Apoſtle.

THE Acts of the Apoſtles, compared with St *Luke*'s Goſpel, ſhew, that they are the Work of one and the ſame Author; and accordingly are quoted by *Juſtin Martyr*, and *Clement* of *Alexandria*. Thirteen of St *Paul*'s Epiſtles were never queſtioned, becauſe there were particular Churches and Perſons, to whom the Original was directed. That to the *Hebrews* was, for ſome Time, doubted of; but *Clement* of *Alexandria* ſuppoſes that St *Paul* wrote it originally in *Hebrew*, and ſome *Apoſtolick* Hand afterwards tranſlated it into *Greek*; and St *Jerome* aſſures us, that all the Churches in the *Eaſt*, and moſt of thoſe in the *Weſt*, did always receive it as Canonical. The Epiſtle of St *James* was likewiſe queſtioned; but *Clement* of *Rome*, *Ignatius*, and many others quote it, and *Euſebius* tells us, that it was read in moſt Chriſtian Churches. The Second of St *Peter* was, for ſome Time, excepted againſt; but *Juſtin*, *Origen*, and *Clement* of *Alexandria*, find ſo many Characters of Genuineneſs in it, as are an evident Proof of its being wrote by him. The two laſt Epiſtles of St *John* (about which there was ſome Diſpute) are cited by *Irenæus*, by *Origen*, and *Tertullian*: That of St *Jude* is mentioned by *Clement* of *Alexandria*, St *Cyprian*, and divers others; and St *Jerome* tells us, that, though ſeveral had rejected it, becauſe of the Quotation of the Book of *Enoch*, yet it was received, in his Time, by *univerſal* Conſent. There remains nothing more but the *Apocalypſe*, which, for its Stile and Matter, as well as the Title of *Divine* given to its Author, occaſioned ſome Queſtions; but *Clement* of *Rome* quotes it as a *prophetick* Book: *Juſtin Martyr* ſays it was wrote by St *John*: *Irenæus* calls it the *Revelation* of St *John*, the Diſciple of our Lord, wrote in the latter End of *Domitian*'s Reign; ſo that, after ſome Diſputation, it was put in the Number of Canonical Books by the Council of *Carthage*, and, by the fourth Council of *Toledo*, decided to be written by St *John*.

THUS the Canon of the *New Teſtament* ſeems to be fully made out by the concurrent Evidence of ſeveral Authors, writing immediately after the *Apoſtolick* Age; And, if we conſider farther, that theſe Teſtimonies were ſo near the Fountain, that the *original* Copies themſelves were doubtleſs preſerved ſo long; that the Books were read in all Churches and Aſſemblies, ſo that this was a Point, wherein it was not eaſy for Men to be miſtaken; that both the *Jews* (as appears from *Juſtin Martyr*) and the *Gentiles* (as appears from *Celſus*) knew that theſe were the Books, in which the Faith of *Chriſtians* was comprized; and that St *John* himſelf (as a learned Author [u] earneſtly contends) lived to finiſh and ſettle the Canon of Scripture, as a Thing beſt becoming his *Patriarchal* Care; we muſt believe that the Number of Books, which our Church has received as *Canonical*, is all that was judged to be wrote by the Holy Ghoſt, at a Time, when it was moſt proper to make the Enquiry; and conſequently, that the Scriptures, in the Manner we now have them, are the very ſame, which the primitive Church received from the Apoſtles.

"BUT though we have received no more, than what are ſtrictly Canonical, yet, "how ſhall we ſatisfy ourſelves, that we have them all, or that we have them perfect "and entire; ſince ſo many are ſaid to be loſt, ſo many changed and altered, and "ſo many corrupted and depraved by the Management of thoſe, who had them in "their Cuſtody?"

SECT. II.

Of the PERFECTION *of* SCRIPTURE.

No Books loſt, that were Canonical.

SEVERAL Books, indeed, are cited in the *Old*, and ſome in the *New Teſtament*, which were never known to be either in the *Jewiſh* or *Chriſtian* Canon; but whether theſe Books were at any Time loſt, or are the ſame with what we ſtill have, only under different Denominations, (as *the Book of the Covenant*, mentioned in [x] *Exodus*, is ſuppoſed to be Part of [y] *Deuteronomy*, and that of [z] *the Wars of the Lord* the ſame with the Book of *Judges*, &c.) or, if ſuch Books were loſt, [a] whether they

[t] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. 24th Chapter. [u] Ibid. Lib. II. [x] Ch. xxiv. 7. [y] From the 20th to the [z] Numb. xxi. 14. [a] *Edwards*'s Excellency of the Holy Scriptures.

they were wrote by Divine Inſpiration, or were of human Compoſition only, has been a Queſtion of no ſmall Debate, both among *Jews* and *Chriſtians*.

St *CHRYSOSTOME* is clearly of Opinion, that ſeveral Monuments of the old Prophets are loſt, and gives us three [b] probable Reaſons for it; *viz.* the Negligence of the *Jews* in not preſerving them; their Impiety and Profaneneſs in deſtroying them themſelves; and the Incurſions of their Enemies, the Ruin of their City, and their long Captivity under *Pagan* Princes, which might be a farther Means to deſtroy them: "[c] For *Judea*, having been ravaged by the *Chaldeans*, (as *Eucherius* " tells us) and by them the antient Library burnt, we have only now a ſmall Num- " ber of Books, which at preſent makes up the Scriptures, and were collected and " re-eſtabliſhed by the Care of *Ezra*.

IT would be an invidious Taſk, ſays [d] *Origen*, to make an Enquiry about thoſe Books, which are mentioned in the Holy Scriptures, but are not at preſent extant; whether the Holy Ghoſt thought fit to ſuppreſs them, becauſe they contained Matters, that were above *vulgar* Capacities, or whether they were of the Number of *Apochryphal* Books, containing ſeveral *Interpolations*, and Things contrary to Faith, and were therefore not admitted into the Canon, nor allowed to be authentick. And if not for him, it is certainly not for us to determine any Thing in ſo nice a Point; though there ſeems to be a great Probability in [e] St *Auſtin*'s Opinion, " that " the Prophets did not, at all Times, write by the Inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt; " and though, in the Fundamentals of Religion, they were divinely aſſiſted, yet, " in other Matters, they only wrote as faithful Hiſtorians; that there was always " therefore a Diſtinction made between theſe two Kinds of Writing, by attributing " the one to them, as their own Work, and the other to God, as dictated by him, " and by accounting the one ſerviceable for the Illuſtration of Matters of Fact, and " the other neceſſary for the Eſtabliſhment of Religion."

ACCORDING to this Hypotheſis, the Maintainers of the Integrity of Scripture are of Opinion, that God Almighty muſt needs have ſo great a Concern for the Revelation of his Will, eſpecially in Things relating to our *eternal* Intereſt, as not to ſuffer any Books, containing ſuch Things, to periſh, and that, if any were loſt, in the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, or other ſad Calamities attending the *Jewiſh* Nation, they were ſuch *hiſtorical Tracts*, as did not concern the great Articles of Religion, were not indited by the Spirit of God, nor preſerved with the ſame Care, that others of an inſpired Character were: And thereupon they conclude, that, if any Books are wanting in the preſent Catalogue, they are either ſuch, as never had the Title of being *Canonical*; or ſuch as contained no Points eſſential to Man's Salvation; and ſuch, conſequently, as we may live ſafely ignorant of, without any Default in our Duty, and ſhall never be reſponſible for, in Point of Knowledge, at the Day of Judgment.

" BUT though we have all the Books in Poſſeſſion of the Church, that were " ever deemed *Canonical*, yet how ſhall we be ſatisfied, that they all along have " been preſerved free from impure Mixtures? 'Tis ſo long ago ſince the *Originals* " were wrote; they have paſſed through ſo many different Hands, and been ſub- " jected to ſo many Mens Deſigns and Tempers, that it is a thouſand to one, but " that they have been ſadly altered and corrupted." [g] 'Tis a long while indeed ſince the Holy Scriptures were publiſhed; and the Preſervation of Books of ſo great Antiquity, through ſo many Changes and Revolutions, againſt all the Injuries of Time and Ignorance, againſt the Violence of War, and the Malice of Adverſaries, muſt be thought a certain Indication (if the Thing be true) of a wonderful Providence concerning them: And to make it thought true, [h] we are to conſider, that in theſe Books is contained the Charter of Man's Salvation, and that, ſince it pleaſed God, of his infinite Goodneſs, to make a publick Declaration thereof, and by Perſons of his own Appointment to have it recorded in Writing; it ſeems to be left upon the ſame *Attribute*, to conſult the Preſervation of it, ſo as not to ſuffer any wicked Men, or malignant Spirits to corrupt, or alter any of thoſe eſſential Points, whereon our eternal Salvation depends.

Not corrupted in the Old.

AND to this Purpoſe we may obſerve, that, beſides his *providential* Care, which we may well ſuppoſe to go along with his *Charter* of Grace, we find God making all proper Proviſion for the Preſervation of it againſt all dangerous Corruptions, in

[b] Ninth *Hom.* in St *Matth.* [c] *Du Pin*'s Hiſtory of the Canon. [d] Preface to his Commentary on the *Canticles.* [e] De Civitate Dei, Lib. XVIII. Cap. 38. [f] *Blackhall*'s Sufficiency. [g] *Jenkin*'s Reaſonableneſs, Lib. II. [h] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ.

the *Old Teſtament*; by inſerting a particular and ſtrict Prohibition in the Law itſelf, [i] *that no one ſhould preſume to add unto, or diminiſh ought from it*; by enjoining the People to make it their conſtant Study, [k] *to bind it*, as it were, *for a Sign upon their Hands, and as Frontlets between their Eyes, and to write it upon the Poſts and Gates of their Houſes*; by requiring them to read it diligently, both in private to their Families, and, after a more ſolemn Manner, in the publick Congregations: All which could not but make them competent Judges of the Law, and enable them to deſcry any Change or bold Innovation, that ſhould, at any Time, attempt to creep into it.

[l] TO ſecure the other inſpired Writings, a continued Succeſſion of Prophets was of great Service: And it ſeems next to impoſſible for any dangerous Alterations to have been made without Detection and Cenſure, ſo long as that *Order* of Men (whoſe Office and Zeal led them to correct any Error in Faith, as well as Corruption in Practice) was in being. Nor can we ſuppoſe it probable, that any Perſon would ever attempt ſuch *Adulterations*, where the Copies were in ſo many Hands, and ſo openly read and conſulted, that there was ſcarce any private Perſon, who might not have known (if any ſuch Thing had happened) when, and wherein, they had been corrupted.

[m] NAY, ſo far were the *Jews* from ſuffering Corruptions to creep into the Holy Scriptures, that, if but one Word happened to be altered in any Copy, it was to be laid aſide, as utterly uſeleſs, unleſs it was ſometimes given to a very poor Man to read to his Family, upon Condition, that he brought it not with him to the Synagogue, nor made any other Uſe it: And though the religious Factions among the *Jews* were many Times very violent, yet we no where find them accuſing one another of corrupting or falſifying Scripture. Nay, our Saviour himſelf (who ſo frequently reproves the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* for their Traditions and falſe Gloſſes) is never known to charge them with adulterating the Text itſelf; which he certainly would have done, had they been culpable in this Reſpect. On the contrary, both he and his Apoſtles appeal to it as true and authentick, and borrow their Proofs from it, in Confirmation of the Chriſtian Faith and Doctrine.

Or New Teſtament.

WE have an equal, at leaſt, if not a greater Aſſurance, that the Writings of the *New Teſtament* could never, in any dangerous Inſtances, be corrupted. For beſides that the Books of it were *kept*, from the Beginning, as a ſacred Treaſure, with great Care and Reverence; were conſtantly *read* in Chriſtian Aſſemblies, and ſoon *tranſlated* into moſt Languages: Beſides, that the primitive *Chriſtians* choſe to undergo all Manner of Torments, rather than deliver up theſe Books to be deſtroyed by their *Perſecutors*; and were no leſs ſollicitous to ſecure them againſt any Attempts of *Hereticks*: Beſides, that great Numbers of learned and inquiſitive Men ſoon ſprung up in the Church, whoſe greateſt Care it was to explain and vindicate theſe ſacred Writings, and to watch the Enemy, when he came to *ſow Tares among the Wheat*: Beſides all this, I ſay, there ſeems to be a providential Deſign in ſuffering ſo many Controverſies to ariſe in the very Infancy of Chriſtianity, which, however they might embroil the Peace of the Church, had certainly an happy Tendency to ſecure the Purity of thoſe Records, which compoſe the Canon of the *New Teſtament*.

THE *Orthodox* were Spies, as it were, upon the *Hereticks*, leſt they ſhould add or mutilate any Thing, to ſerve their Purpoſe, and countenance their Errors; and the *Hereticks*, on the other Hand, had a watchful Eye upon the *Orthodox*, leſt any of them, out of a miſtaken Zeal, ſhould make Uſe of a pious *Fraud* towards ſtrengthening their Cauſe. And thus, while both Parties were vigilant and attentive to each others Proceeding, it was impoſſible to make any *material* Alterations in the Word of God, without being detected and expoſed to the Cenſure of the World. Accordingly we may obſerve, that the Alterations, which have crept into the Holy Scriptures, are comparatively very few, and no more than what might be expected from the Negligence, and, in ſome Caſes, the Ignorance, and common Infirmities of *Tranſcribers*; and (which is a Matter of great Comfort to us *Chriſtians*) many of [n] the various *Readings* of the *New Teſtament* are either of no Moment, as lying in *ſynonymous* Words, and *expletive* Particles, or elſe are ſuch apparent *Errata*, as any common Reader may diſcern and correct. Nay, there is hardly one Text, which

[i] Deut. iv. 2. [k] Ibid. vi. 8, 9. [l] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity. Lib. II. [m] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, [n] Vid. *Mills*'s Prolegomena.

which concerns an *Article* of Faith, that has ſuch a different *Reading*, as is contrary to ſound Doctrine; or, if it be thought contrary, has not the ſame Doctrine taught in ſo many ſeveral Places of Scripture, that the different Reading of one or two Texts can be no Prejudice to the conſtant Tenor, and undoubted Reading of the other.

AMONG the many other Arguments then of the Truth and Authority of the Holy Scriptures, I can hardly account this the leaſt conſiderable, *viz.* that, whereas the Laws of the wiſeſt Legiſlators of the moſt powerful and flouriſhing Nations have ſeldom out-lived the Fate of the particular Kingdoms and States, for which they were contrived; the *Holy Bible* has continued ſo entire, under all Accidents and Revolutions of Affairs, and eſcaped with ſo inconſiderable Variations, in the many Copies and Verſions extant of it, in different Ages, and different Countries, in Compariſon of the Corruptions ſo frequent in human Writings, that it muſt be acknowledged a remarkable Inſtance of a ſignal Providence in the Preſervation of it, whereby it has plainly aſſerted its Authority, and declared it to be the genuine Word of God.

SECT. III.

Of the EXCELLENCY *of* SCRIPTURE.

As to its Matter in doctrinal Points.

HITHERTO we have only taken an *outward* View, as it were, of the Book of God; we come now to open it, and conſider its *inward* Excellencies, both as to the *Matter*, which it contains, and *Manner*, wherein it is compoſed.

° THAT there is one only living and true God, an immortal, independent, all-ſufficient, ſelf-ſubſiſtent Spirit; of infinite Power, Knowledge, and Wiſdom; of infinite Goodneſs, Juſtice, and Truth, and all other poſſible Perfections: That, though this Being was infinitely happy in his own immenſe and tranſcendent Excellencies, yet, to communicate of his Goodneſs to others, he was pleaſed to frame the World, with all the excellent Furniture, we behold in it: That the ſame Being, who created all Things by the Word of his Power, and upholds and preſerves them by his continual *Concourſe*, does, by his all-wiſe Providence, perpetually rule and direct the ſame, from the Beginning of the World, to its final Period: That, after the Formation of the Earth, he created Man, at firſt upright and innocent, and placed him in an happy State of *Paradiſe*, where he enjoyed Plenty of all good Things, without Labour or Sorrow: That Man, thus created, ſoon fell from his *Rectitude*, and miſerably defaced the Image of God upon his Soul, by liſtening to the Temptation of *Satan*, and wilfully diſobeying the divine Command: That, after the firſt Entrance of Sin into the World, Men by Degrees corrupted themſelves, 'till, in Puniſhment for their Incorrigibleneſs, God brought upon them a general *Flood*, which deſtroyed them all, except eight Perſons, left to repleniſh the World: That, after the Flood, God made particular Revelations of his Will to the *Patriarchs*, and gave expreſs Laws to the Nation of the *Jews*, conſiſting, in a great Meaſure, of Rites and Ceremonies, which were *typical* of a better *Covenant*, and pointed out the Tranſactions of the *Meſſias*: That, in the Fulneſs of Time, which his infinite Wiſdom had determined, God ſent his only begotten Son, to be this Meſſias and Saviour of the World, to take upon him our human Nature, in order to make a full Revelation of his Will, and offer a perfect Satisfaction for Sin, and ſo become a conſtant *Mediator* between God and Man: That, in Purſuance to this Miſſion, Chriſt preached this divine Doctrine for our Inſtruction, and wrought many Miracles in Atteſtation of it; lived for ſome Time a Life of Innocence for our Example, ſuffered a Death of Pain and Ignominy for our Redemption; and, after a ſhort Time, returned to Life again for our Juſtification; converſed forty Days upon Earth, for the Confirmation of our Faith; then viſibly aſcended into Heaven, for the Advancement of our Intereſt; and, not long after, ſent down his bleſſed Spirit, for the Comfort and Sanctification of his Servants in all Ages of the Church: That God has determined a Day, wherein he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by his Son our Saviour Chriſt, whom he hath appointed to that Office, in order to reward every Man according to his Works: That, previous to his Judgment, the Soul ſhall not only ſurvive the Body, and exiſt in a State of *Separation*; but even the

° *Clarke*'s Evidence.

the Body itſelf ſhall be raiſed again, and have all its Parts, however diſperſed, reſtored to their proper Texture: And laſtly, that after the Reſurrection and general Judgment, every one ſhall receive a Sentence, according to his paſt Behaviour; *they that have done well, to go into everlaſting Happineſs, and they that have done Evil, into everlaſting Burning:* That the Righteous ſhall be caught up into the Clouds, and return *triumphant* with Chriſt into Heaven, while the Wicked are left behind to ſink into the general *Conflagration*, which immediately enſues, and which, as ſome imagine, is to be their Hell.

THESE are ſome of the great Principles of our Faith, and the fundamental Verities of our Religion; which are originally fetched from the Holy Bible, are eſtabliſhed and confirmed there by unanſwerable Arguments, and (what is not the leaſt Commendation of them) are Encouragements to all Virtue and Godlineſs of Living, being not deſigned to gratify Mens idle *Curioſities*, but to reſtore them to their *primitive* State, and to eſtabliſh, upon Earth, the Practice of univerſal Righteouſneſs, which would have been the Religion of Men (had they continued innocent) in *Paradiſe*; which now is the Religion of Angels, and hereafter will be the Religion of Saints in Heaven.

And practical. THE three great Things of more particular Concern for us to know, are the Nature of God, as it ſtands related to us; the Nature of our Duty in our ſeveral Capacities; and the Nature of the World, wherein we are to ſojourn: And of all theſe the Scripture has made a full Diſcovery, in order to teach us the Method of pleaſing him, the Method of comporting ourſelves dutifully, and of paſſing through our preſent State with Comfort and Delight.

The Knowledge of God. 1. THE *Nature of God* is certainly a Subject of vaſt Conſequence for us to know: And herein the Holy Scriptures have excelled all that was ever wrote, by giving us the cleareſt Manifeſtations of his Divine *Attributes*; by diſplaying his *Juſtice* in his ſevere Denunciations againſt Sin, and remarkable Judgments upon obſtinate Offenders; by declaring his *Holineſs* in the Rules of godly Living, and the exact Precepts of Morality that he has ſet us; and by magnifying his *Mercy* and *Goodneſs* in many Places, wherein he ſhews us, [p] with what *Condeſcenſion* he intreats, and with what *Importunity* he wooes Mens Souls to be reconciled to him; with what *Favour* he embraces, with what *Tenderneſs* he chaſtiſes, with what *Bowels* he pities thoſe, that have choſen him to be their God; with what *Power* he ſupports, with what *Wiſdom* he directs, with what *Cordials* he refreſhes the Souls of ſuch, as are dejected under a Senſe of his Diſpleaſure, and the Conſideration of their Sins: Above all, where he declares unto us that Miracle of Divine *Philanthrophy*, the ſending his Son into the World to ſave Sinners, and to procure their Pardon, their Peace, their Sanctification, Adoption, and Admiſſion into an *Inheritance that fadeth not away, reſerved for them in the higheſt Heavens.*

[q] NAY, the Holy Scriptures not only deſcribe theſe Attributes of God, but they exemplify them likewiſe by Inſtances of all Kinds. They give us abundant Proofs of his Severity and Vengeance againſt profligate Offenders, and as frequent Tokens and Aſſurances of his great Love and Kindneſs towards thoſe, that lead an holy and religious Life. They ſet before us the moſt conſpicuous Acts of his Providence, in Reference both to bad and good Men, that by the one we may be deterred from the Ways of Vice, and by the other encouraged to proceed in Virtue: And 'tis by them that we may obſerve and admire his wonderful Preſervation of his Servants in all Ages of the World, and take Notice, at the ſame Time, of the Variety of thoſe Evils and Calamities, which he inflicts upon ſuch as are contumacious and diſobedient to his Will: And therefore, if Acquaintance with God and his Dealings with Men, be a Thing deſireable to human Nature, we have all the Reaſon in the World to admire the Excellency, and adore the Fulneſs of the Scriptures, which give us ſo large and ſo compleat an Account of his Nature and Perfections.

Of ourſelves. 2. THE *Knowledge of ourſelves*, and of our Duty, is another Point of ſingular Importance for us to be acquainted with; and in this the Word of God is far from being defective. For it not only teaches us how vile we are in our original Duſt, but how much viler we made ourſelves by our Defection. [r] It diſcovers the true Cauſe of all that Diſorder and Diſcompoſure, which is in our Minds; the Nature and Working of that Corruption, which is in our Members; the Folly of our Imaginations, the Unrulineſs of our Paſſions, the Diſtempers of our Wills, and the Deceitfulneſs of our Hearts; and for each of theſe it preſcribes proper Duties, as Medicines

[p] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [q] *Edwards*'s Excellency of the Holy Scriptures. [r] *Stillingfleet*'s ibid.

dicines to recover us from the Bruiſes, we contracted by our Fall. For its Injunctions relate not only to our outward Actions, requiring us to be holy in all Manner of Converſation; ſober and temperate in the Conduct of ourſelves; and juſt and charitable; meek and affable in our Intercourſe with others; but they lay hold on our Tongue, expecting that our Words be *not idle and vain*, much leſs impious and profane, but *ſeaſoned with Salt*, and ſavouring of Piety, *that they may miniſter Grace unto the Hearers*. Nay, they extend themſelves to the very Heart, and, by the *Evangelical* Precepts of Love, Patience, and Self-denial, of Purity, Poverty, and Reſignation of Spirit, not only reſtrain the ſecret Thoughts and Purpoſes, but curb the Wiſhes and Deſires, and temper the inordinate Paſſions and Affections of our Minds.

NOR is it only in a private Capacity that the Scripture conſiders us, but, in what Relation ſoever we ſtand towards one another, whether as Huſbands and Wives, as Maſters and Servants, as Parents and Children, as Superiors, Equals, or Inferiors, it furniſhes us with Leſſons of Behaviour, and Inſtructions proper for our reſpective Conditions; "Inſomuch, that if Men would but apply their Minds to ſtudy the "Scripture, (as a Reverend Divine[t] expreſſes himſelf) and obſerve their own and "other Mens Courſe of Life, Experience would teach them, that there is no "Eſtate on Earth, or human Buſineſs in *Chriſtendom*, this Day on Foot, but what "has a ruled Caſe in Scripture for their Iſſue and Succeſs."

3. ONCE more, *the Knowledge of the World*, and the various Incidents we meet with in it, is another Subject of vaſt Importance for us to be well acquainted with, in order to make our Paſſage through it eaſy and delightful; and of this the Scriptures gives us a true Landſkip and Diſcovery. For they teach us, that many of the gay Things, which it preſents us with, are but empty Bubbles, and mere Conceits, and Caſtles in the Air: They teach us, that Proſperity is not always good; that Plenty of Riches, and worldly Abundance, is a Clog to a virtuous Mind, and Exceſs of Pleaſures a grievous Deſtruction to ſpiritual Joys. They inform us, that Croſſes and Afflictions are not evil in themſelves, but oftentimes medicinal to us, and conducive to our ſpiritual Health; that they are not the Puniſhments of an angry Judge, but the Chaſtiſements of a tender Father, which, patiently ſubmitted to, will be of ſingular Service to promote Holineſs in us now, and to prepare us for Happineſs hereafter. *Of the World.*

THUS the Holy Scriptures reconcile our Minds to the Miſeries and Calamities, which are our common Allotment in Life, and allay the Spirit of Diſcontent, which they are too apt to engender, by aſſuring us, that the Afflictions, which Heaven ſends upon us, are intended for our Good; are indeed Tokens of God's Favour, and (if rightly improved) of our Deſignation to eternal Bliſs: And thus moderating our Paſſions and peeviſh Reſentments, they make our Paſſage through this World quiet and eaſy; and preſenting us with the delightful Proſpect of another, make our Exit out of it full of Comfort and Immortality: Upon which Account the Word of God is not badly characterized by the Apoſtle, when he tells us, that [u] *all Scripture is given by Inſpiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs, that the Man of God*, or the Man that deſigns to live godly, *may be perfect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all good Works*.

NAY farther, had I Leiſure to gratify the Curious, I might ſhew, that in theſe Sacred Volumes, we have not only the true *Origin* of the World, the Riſe of the ſeveral Nations upon the Earth, and the firſt Inſtitution of Civil Government; not only the earlieſt Account of all uſeful Callings and Employments; ſuch as Gardening, Huſbandry, Paſturage of Cattle, *&c.* But that all the politer Arts and Sciences likewiſe, ſuch as Poetry and Muſick, Hiſtory and Geography, Phyſick, Anatomy, and Philoſophy of all Kinds, the Arts of War, and Ornaments of Peace, are primarily to be found in this Book: That it is, in ſhort, not only a Record of all the moſt antient Learning, but a Magazine of all Learning whatever; and that he, who affects to appear in the Capacity of a *Scholar*, either as a *Critick*, a *Chronologer*, an *Hiſtorian*, a *Poet*, an *Orator*, a *Diſputant*, a *Lawyer*, a *Stateſman*, a *Pleader*, or a *Preacher*, muſt not be unacquainted with this inexhauſtible Fund. *Of all other Parts of Learning.*

BUT though the Scriptures be full and plenteous enough in the *Matter*, which they contain; yet do they deſerve the ſame Commendation for the *Manner*, where- *As to its Manner of Compoſition.*

[s] *Edwards*'s Excellency of the Holy Scriptures. [t] Dr *Jackſon*, Vol. I. Lib. I. [u] 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

in they are wrote. "A Divine Compoſition, one would think, ſhould have every "Thing, that is great and noble in it; and yet the *Bible* (if we compare them) is "far from coming up to what the Eloquence of *Rome* and *Athens* has formerly pro- "duced. Where is that ready Flow and Copiouſneſs of Words, that Sublimity of "Thought, that Elegance of Figures, that Exactneſs of Method, that Propriety "and Perſpicuity of Expreſſion, ſo remarkable in the beſt *Heathen* Writers? No "Signs of theſe, but, on the contrary, ſomething flat, and low, and dark, and im- "methodical, ſeems to run through the Whole, which cannot give half that Plea- "ſure to a ſpirituous Reader, as thoſe exquiſite Compoſitions of *Tully* or *Demoſthenes*."

THIS is an Objection made by ſome, who ſeem not to deny the Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures, yet are not ſo well acquainted with the *Manner* of their Compoſition: And therefore, to give a ſatisfactory Anſwer to it, we ſhall conſider it in the ſeveral Branches, wherein it ſeems to affect them.

SECT. IV.

Of the STILE *and* ELOQUENCE *of the* HOLY SCRIPTURES.

Miſtaken Notion of Eloquence.

1. WHATEVER Opinion we may have of *Eloquence*, or how entertaining ſoever its Charms may be, yet we widely miſtake the Matter, if we think it any Way *eſſential* in Divine Compoſitions. The Deſign of God, in recording his Laws, is to inform our Underſtandings, and cure our Paſſions, and rectify our Wills; and if this End be but attained, 'tis no great Matter in what Form of Language the *Preſcription* be given. [x] We never expect that a Phyſician's *Recipe* ſhould be wrote in a *Ciceronian* Stile; and, if a Lawyer has made us a firm Conveyance of an Eſtate, we never enquire what *Elegancies* there are in the Writing. When God intends therefore to do for us far greater Things than theſe; when he is delivering the Terms of our Salvation, and preſcribing the Rules of our Duty, why ſhould we expect him to inſiſt on the *Niceties* of Stile and Diction, and rather not account it a *Diminution* of his Authority to be elaborate in Trifles, when he has the *momentous* Iſſues of another Life, the Joys of Heaven, and the Torments of Hell, to command our Attention, and affect our Paſſions? Theſe are Matters wherein every one is concerned: And, as the Word of God was recorded for the general Benefit of Mankind, the greateſt Part of which is perfectly ignorant of *Rhetorick*; ſo, had it been dreſſed up with all the Embelliſhments of that *Art*, a few *oratorical* Ears muſt only have been gratified, while the Ignorant and Unlearned (which make up the Generality) had been quite rejected; and yet God himſelf has told us, [y] *that not many wiſe after the Fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; that he hath choſen the fooliſh and weak Things of the World to confound the ſtrong and mighty; and the baſe Things, and Things that are deſpiſed, has he choſen, yea, and Things that are not; to bring to nought Things that are, that no Fleſh ſhould glory in his Preſence.*

2. WE run into another Miſtake, when we judge of the Compoſition of the Holy Scripture, from the *Tranſlation* we read it in, and not from its *Original*. For, beſides that in every Language there are certain peculiar Graces in the Contexture of the Words, and the Cadence of Periods, which are all loſt in the Tranſlation, like the Spirit of *Eſſences* by being poured out of one Veſſel into another: Beſides that, in antient Writings, ſuch as the Bible is, there are *Alluſions* to many Rites and Cuſtoms, which are now obſolete; and for this Reaſon muſt needs ſeem flat and jejune, though when they were in uſe, had a great deal of *Spirit* and Brightneſs in them: [z] Beſides that the *Hebrew* (wherein a great Part of the *Old Teſtament*, and ſome of the *New* was written) is a Language of a particular Caſt, and contains Expreſſions, whoſe Strength and Beauty can no more be tranſlated into another Language, than the Water of a Diamond can be painted, without detracting from the Original: Beſides all this, I ſay, the Tranſlators themſelves have not a little contributed to make the Stile of the ſacred Writings appear leſs *advantageous*, ſometimes by *miſtaking* the Senſe of a Word, that is of various Significations, and, at all Times,

[x] *Nicholls's* Conference, Lib. II. [y] 1 Cor. i. 26, &c. [z] *Boyle* of the Stile of Scripture.

Times, by *adhering* too religiouſly to the *Letter* of the Text. For, whereas other Tranſlators have taken a Liberty to accommodate the Beauties of the Languages, whereinto they tranſlate, to the *Idioms* of that, wherein their Author wrote, theſe have thought themſelves reſtrained from uſing ſuch Freedom in a Divine Compoſition, and have therefore left ſeveral *Hebraick*, and other Foreigh Phraſes in their *Verſion*, which ſeem very uncouth, and give the Reader, who can look no farther, a very odd Notion of the *Original*: And yet we may obſerve, that the moſt elegant Piece of *Oratory*, that ever yet was framed, if we render it literally, and not give it the true Caſt of the Language, whereinto we are admitting it, will loſe all its Luſtre, and appear with the ſame Diſadvantage.

3. WE run into a farther Miſtake ſtill, when we confine Eloquence to any Nation, and make the *Specimens*, which *Rome* and *Athens* have given us, the *Standard* of it. [a] For, as every Nation is Miſtreſs of its own Words, to uſe or diſuſe them at Pleaſure; ſo may it, in Compoſition, diſpoſe of thoſe Words, and mould them into what *Contexture* it thinks proper; which Contexture, when uſed by Men of the beſt Parts and Learning, muſt certainly be accounted the current Eloquence of the Nation. We indeed, in theſe *European* Countries, whoſe Languages, in a great Meaſure, are derived from *Greek* and *Latin*, make them the *Pattern* for our Imitation, and account them the Standard of Perfection: But there is no Reaſon why the *Eaſtern* Nations, whoſe Languages have no Affinity with theirs, ſhould do the ſame; much leſs is it reaſonable, to expect it in Writers, who liv'd long before theſe *Greek* and *Latin* Authors, we ſo much admire, were born. 'Tis ſufficient for them, that they wrote according to the *faſhionable*, and eſteemed Eloquence of their own Times; but that the Holy Ghoſt ſhould inſpire them with Forms of Expreſſion, adapted to the *modern* Taſte, and ſuch as were utterly unknown in the Countries, where they lived, is a Thing that can never enter into any ſober Man's Conſideration. The Truth is, [b] ſince *Moſes* was bred up in all the refined Learning and Wiſdom of the *Egyptians*; ſince *Solomon* was excellent in all Kind of Knowledge, and, in a Manner, *idolized* by the *Eaſtern* World; and ſince *Daniel*'s promiſing Youth was improved by the Learning of the *Chaldean* Sages; we have all the Reaſon imaginable to believe, that they wrote according to the Perfection of Stile, which was then in Uſe; that, though their Eloquence differs from ours, yet it is excellent in its Kind; and if we have other Notions of it, 'tis only becauſe we are unacquainted with thoſe bold Allegories, and figurative Ways of Diſcourſe, thoſe dark *Sentences*, ſurprizing *Brevities*, and inconnected Tranſitions, wherein the Nature of their true *Sublime* did conſiſt.

THESE Obſervations being premiſed, if we ſhould now conſider the Nature of Eloquence in general, (as [c] *Ariſtotle* has defined it, to be a *Faculty of Perſuaſion*, which *Cicero* makes to conſiſt in three Things, *inſtructing*, *delighting*, and *moving* our Reader or Hearer's Mind) we ſhall find the Holy Scriptures laying as fair a Claim to this Perfection, as any *Heathen* Compoſition whatever. For,

1. AS to the Matter of *Inſtruction*, where can we meet with ſuch a *plain* Repreſentation of Things, in Point of *Hiſtory*, and ſuch *cogent* Arguments in Point of *Precept*, as the Holy Scriptures furniſh us with? [d] Where is there an *Hiſtory* written more ſimply and naturally (unleſs it be the Goſpels) and at the ſame Time more nobly and loftily, than that of the Creation of the World? Where are the great Leſſons of *Morality* inculcated with ſuch Earneſtneſs and Perſpicuity, (except in the Sermons of *Chriſt*, and the Writings of his Apoſtles) as in the whole Book of *Deuteronomy*? [e] Where is the whole Myſtery of *Devotion*, in the ſeveral Forms of Confeſſion, Petition, Supplication, Thankſgiving, Vows, and Praiſes, ſo practically taught us as in the Book of the *Pſalms*? Where are the Rules of *Wiſdom* and *Prudence* ſo convincingly laid down, as in the *Proverbs* of *Solomon*, and the choice Sentences of his *Eccleſiaſtes*? Where is Vice and Impiety of all Kinds more juſtly diſplayed, and more fully confuted, than in the Threats and Admonitions of the *Prophets*? What Arguments, for Inſtance, can be urg'd more powerful againſt *Idolatry*, than thoſe, we meet with in their Writings; by ſhewing the Unity of God from his Creation of the Univerſe; by ſhewing his Jealouſy, and the Abhorrence he has to admit any a Partner in his Worſhip; and by ſhewing the Cruelty of Idol-Worſhip, which required them to give *their Sons and their Daughters unto Devils*? And where can we find a more lively Repreſentation

The Stile of Scripture inſtructive.

[a] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. II.
[b] *Boyle*, of the Stile of Scripture.
[c] Rhet. Lib. I. C. 2.
[d] *Du Pin*'s Hiſtory of the Canon of Scripture.
[e] Eſſays on Natural and Revealed Religion.

tation of the Sottiſhneſs of Idol-Worſhip, than in that famous Paſſage of *Iſaiah* [f], where the ſame Carpenter, that hewed the Log, is ſo ſtupid as to worſhip it: *He burneth Part of it in the Fire; with Part of it he eateth Fleſh; yea, he warmeth himſelf, and ſaith, Aha! I am warm, I have ſeen the Fire; and the Reſidue thereof he maketh a God, he falleth down, and prayeth unto it, ſaying, Deliver me, for thou art my God.*

Entertaining. [g] 2. As to the Matter of *pleaſing*, this may be done, either by real Beauties, or by falſe Charms. A Diſcourſe pleaſes by its true Beauty, when every Thing is ſuitable to Perſons and Things; when there is nothing in it ſuperfluous, nothing defective, the Expreſſion high and noble, and the Deſign juſt and great. It pleaſes by falſe Charms, when it is accompanied with vain Flouriſhes, a borrow'd Luſtre, and Compariſons and Metaphors very much affected. The Holy Scripture indeed pretends not to theſe *painted* Ornaments, nor can we think it a Defect in Eloquence that it wants them, ſince it has a ſufficient Stock of native Beauty to recommend it. Its *Hiſtory* pleaſes by its Exactneſs; its Inſtructions delight, by reaſon of the lively Manner wherein they are propos'd; its *Deſcriptions* hit Nature, and are genuine; its *Compariſons* are ſometimes bold, (ſuch as *Eaſtern* Nations are accuſtom'd to) but always juſt and noble; and its whole *Stile* ſo beautified, and ſet off with eaſy and ſignificant *Metaphors*, as both give a *Luſtre* to the Expreſſion, and accommodate the *Loftineſs* of the Sentiment to the loweſt Capacity. [h] The Truth is, if to talk great and noble Things in plain familiar Language, be the Heighth of the Art of Eloquence, our Saviour's Skill, as well as Condeſcenſion, can never be ſufficiently admir'd, [i] who choſe to cloathe his divine Doctrines in *Parables*, and borrow'd moſt of his *Alluſions* from very vulgar Things, ſuch as were well known to his Hearers, that thereby he might work the more powerfully on them, and, by diſcourſing on obvious Matters, bring them to an affectionate Liking of the Things of God, and the great Concerns of Eternity.

Affecting. 3. As to the Matter of *moving the Paſſions*, if this be a Sign of true Eloquence, what Book in the World is better fitted to do it, than the Scriptures? For what do the little *Warmths*, which may be rais'd in the Fancy, by an *artificial* Compoſure and Vehemence of Stile, ſignify, to thoſe ſtrong Impulſes and Movements, which the Holy Scriptures make upon good Mens Souls, when they repreſent the frightful Juſtice of an angry God to ſtubborn Offenders, and the Bowels of his Compaſſion, and unſpeakable Kindneſs to true Penitents, and faithful Servants? What are thoſe ordinary *Incitements*, which profane Orators us'd, to compare with the Scripture-Motives of Heaven and Hell, which preſs ſo hard upon our Faculties, that, when duly attended to, there's no withſtanding them. *Cicero*, with all his Eloquence, would ſcarce have made ſo harden'd a Sinner as *Felix* tremble: And indeed there is ſomething of that *maſculine* Force and Energy in all St *Paul*'s Speeches, and ſome of his Epiſtles, as tranſcends the common Rules of Art, and is inimitable; inſomuch, could Men be perſuaded to peruſe theſe, and other Portions of the Word of God, with the ſame *critical* Obſervation, that they do ſome profane Authors, I am apt to think, that moſt of the applauded Beauties would be found, the Juſtneſs of *Expreſſion*, and Cadence of *Period*, and Magnificence of *Stile*, equall'd, if not excell'd, in that ſacred Volume. And for a Proof of this, let us look a little into ſome of thoſe *Figures* and *Deſcriptions*, and other Ornaments of Speech, which (notwithſtanding the Diſadvantage of a *Tranſlation)* are obſervable almoſt in every Page.

Figurative. [k] It is look'd upon as a very florid Figure in *Rhetorick*, when all Members of a Period begin with the ſame Word. The Figure is called *Anaphora:* And yet, if I miſtake not, the *fifteenth* Pſalm affords us a very beautiful Paſſage of this Kind: *Lord, who ſhall abide in thy Tabernacle? Who ſhall dwell in thy holy Hill? He that walketh uprightly; he that backbiteth not with his Tongue; he that honoureth them that fear the Lord,; he that ſweareth to his own Hurt, and changeth not; he that putteth not out his Money to Uſury, nor taketh Reward againſt the Innocent; he that does theſe Things, ſhall never be moved.* The regular Gradation from one Thing to another, and the gradual Increaſe of the Senſe through every Member of the Period, which the *Rhetoricians* term their *Climax*, and *Auxeſis*, are juſtly eſteemed very beautiful Figures; and yet [l] *knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience, and Patience Experience, and Experience Hope, and Hope maketh us not aſhamed*, is no bad

[f] Iſa. xliv. 16, 17. [g] *Du Pin*'s Hiſtory of the Canon of Scripture. [h] *Nichols*'s Conference. [i] *Edwards* of the Stile of Scripture. [k] *Nichols*, ibid. [l] Rom. v. 3, 4, 5.

bad *Specimen* of the one; and that remarkable Paſſage in the Front of St *John*'s firſt Epiſtle; *That, which was from the Beginning, which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled of the Word of Life*, is a compleat Example of the other. Here is an exact Gradation thro' all the Degrees of Certainty; *hearing, ſeeing, looking upon, and handling*; and had this Sentence occurr'd in *Cicero*, it would not have paſſed without a curious *Comment*, tho' now it is overlooked, becauſe it is found in the Apoſtle.

THE old Orators take a great Pride in ranging finely their *Antitheta:* And I cannot ſee but that the ſacred Writers have manag'd theirs as well. [m] *He that killeth an Ox, is, as if he ſlew a Man; he that ſacrificeth a Lamb, as if he cut off a Dog's Neck; he that offereth an Oblation, as if he offered Swine's Blood*, &c. But, of all Figures, that, whereon the Poets and Orators love to dwell, and are luxuriant in, is the *Hypotypoſis*, or lively Deſcription; and yet we ſhall hardly find, in the beſt Claſſical Author, any Thing comparable, in this Regard, to the *Egyptians* Deſtruction in the *Red-Sea*, related in [n] the Song of *Moſes* and *Miriam*; to the Deſcription of the *Leviathan* in [o] *Job*; to the Deſcent of God, and a Storm at Sea in the [p] Pſalmiſt; to the Intreagues of an adulterous Woman in [q] *Proverbs*; to the Pride of the *Jewiſh* Ladies in [r] *Iſaiah*; and the Plague of Locuſts in [s] *Joel*, which are repreſented like the Ravaging of a Country, and ſtorming of a City by an Army: *A Fire devoureth before them, and behind them a Flame burneth; the Land is as the Garden of* Eden *before them, and behind them a deſolate Wilderneſs, and nothing ſhall eſcape them. Before their Face People ſhall be pain'd, all Faces ſhall gather Blackneſs: They ſhall run like mighty Men; they ſhall climb the Wall like Men of War; they ſhall march every one in his Way, and they ſhall not break their Ranks. They ſhall run to and fro in the City; they ſhall run upon the Wall; they ſhall climb up upon the Houſes; they ſhall enter into the Windows like a Thief*, &c. The Deſcription is more remarkable, becauſe the *Analogy* is carried quite through without ſtraining, and the whole Proceſs of a conquering Army, in the Manner of their March, deſtroying the Proviſion, and burning the Country; in the Horror of the People, the Scaling the Walls, breaking into Houſes, and running about the vanquiſh'd City, is ſet, as it were, before our Eyes.

THERE is nothing, wherein the Profeſſors of Stile endeavour to exert themſelves, and to ſhew the full Force of their Eloquence ſo much, as in the Repreſentation of a Battle or Combat: [t] And yet what Strains of Wit or Eloquence can draw ſuch an Idea of a glorious Combatant, as what we find in [u] *Iſaiah*, in the Deſcription he gives us of our Saviour's bloody, but victorious Conflict upon the Croſs? *Who is he, who cometh from* Edom, *with dy'd Garments from* Bozrah? *This, that is glorious in his Apparel, travelling in the Greatneſs of his Strength?* (Anſw.) *I, that ſpeak in Righteouſneſs, mighty to ſave.* (Queſt.) *Wherefore art thou red in thy Apparel, and thy Garments like him, that treadeth in the Wine-Preſs?* (Anſw.) *I have trodden the Wine-Preſs alone, and of the People there was none with me: For I will tread them in mine Anger, and trample them in my Fury, and their Blood ſhall be ſprinkled upon my Garments, and I will ſtain all my Raiment. I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold: Therefore mine own Arm wrought Salvation unto me, and my Fury it upheld me: And I will tread down the People in mine Anger, and make them drunk in my Fury, and I will bring down their Strength to the Earth.* A nobler Image can hardly be formed of a Conqueror, beſmear'd with Blood, glutted with Revenge, and panting, and beſtriding his proſtrate Enemy, in the Sight of two Armies: The Character of *Æneas* (as it is drawn by *Virgil)* in his Combat with *Turnus*, is nothing comparable to the Life and Juſtneſs of this. *Lofty.*

TRANSLATIONS, as we ſaid before, are a great Detriment to the Turn of a Period, or the Majeſty of Stile; and yet we may venture to maintain, that, in St *Paul*'s Writings (even according to our vulgar Tranſlation) there are ſeveral Paſſages, that have as much *Magnificence* and *Sublimity* of Expreſſion, and as true a *Cadence* of *Period*, even according to the niceſt Rules of *Rhetorick*, as in the moſt celebrated Compoſitions of the *Heathens*. To mention one for all, which is the Place, where the Apoſtle undertakes the [x] Vindication of himſelf: *Whereinſoever any is bold, I ſpeak fooliſhly, I am bold alſo. Are they* Hebrews? *So am I. Are they* Iſraelites? *So am I. Are they the Seed of* Abraham? *So am I.* *Elegant.*

[m] Iſa. lxvi. 3. [n] Exod. xv. [o] Chap. xli. [p] Pſal. xviii, and cvii. [q] Chap. vii. Ch. iv. [r] Ch. ii. 3, &c. [t] Eſſays on Natural and Reveal'd Religion. [u] Ch. lxiii. [x] 2 Cor. xi. 21, &c.

Are they the Miniſters of Chriſt? I ſpeak as a Fool, I am more; in Labours more abundant; in Stripes above Meaſure; in Priſons more frequent; in Deaths often. Of the Jews *five Times received I forty Stripes ſave one; thrice was I beaten with Rods; once was I ſtoned; thrice I ſuffered Shipwrack; a Night and a Day I have been in the Deep. In Journeyings often; in Perils of Waters, in Perils of Robbers, in Perils by my own Countrymen, in Perils by the Heathen, in Perils in the City, in Perils in the Wilderneſs, in Perils in the Sea, in Perils among falſe Brethren; in Wearineſs and Painfulneſs, in Watchings often; in Hunger and Thirſt, in Faſtings often; in Cold and Nakedneſs; beſides the Things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the Care of all the Churches.* Hitherto the Diviſion and Cadence of every Period has been very *rhetorical*, conſonant to the niceſt Ear, and the Matter throughout truly noble, but, in the next Verſe, the Apoſtle's Eloquence is ſtill more ſurprizing: *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? If I muſt needs glory, I will glory of the Things which concern my Infirmities.* Here the *Heroicalneſs* of the Apoſtle's Religion inſpires his Stile with a new Degree of *Sublimity*, and gives it ſuch a Turn of Grandure, and Nobleneſs of Thought, as is inimitable by *Pagan* Eloquence. Thoſe Infirmities, which a *Pagan* would have palliated by little Extenuations, for Fear of impairing his Reputation and affected Fame, our Apoſtle values himſelf upon, as the Glory of his Religion, and the brave Conqueſt of the Fleſh, by the Grace of God, under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, which the *Heathen* Morality knew nothing of.

FROM theſe few Examples (for it would be endleſs to proceed in Inſtances of this Kind) it appears, that the Holy Scriptures are far from being defective in Point of Eloquence; and (what is a peculiar Commendation of them) [y] their Stile is not only full of grateful Variety, ſometimes majeſtick, as becomes [z] *that high and holy One that inhabiteth Eternity*; ſometimes ſo low, as to anſwer the other Part of his Character, *who dwelleth with him that is of an humble Spirit*; but at all Times ſo *proper*, and adapted to the ſeveral Subjects, they treat of, that when they ſpeak of ſuch Things, as God would not have Men to pry into, [a] they wrap them up in *Clouds* and thick *Darkneſs*, by that Means, to deter inquiſitive Man (as he did at *Sinai*) *from breaking into the Mount*; when they ſpeak of Things of a middle Nature, (which may be uſeful to ſome, but not indiſpenſably neceſſary to all) they leave them more *acceſſible*, yet not ſo obvious, as to be within every Man's Reach; but when they ſpeak of ſuch Truths, as are *neceſſary* for every one to know, there they are as plain as poſſible, and condeſcenſive to the meaneſt Capacity; it being agreeable to the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, that, what he has made the Revelation of his Will, ſhould contain an Exerciſe for all Sorts of Readers, to humble the *Learned*, and inſtruct the *modeſt* Chriſtian, [b] and, in this Reſpect, reſemble the Fulneſs of a River, wherein the *Lamb* may quench its Thirſt, and yet the largeſt *Elephant* not be able to exhauſt it.

SECT. V.

Of the METHOD, *and* PERSPICUITY *of the* HOLY SCRIPTURE.

Method, when invented.

WHATEVER Opinion we may have of *Method*, as very conducive to the *Clearneſs* and *Perſpicuity* of Diſcourſe, yet we cannot but know, that this *artificial* Way of Writing was an Invention but of a *modern* Date, in Compariſon of the Time, when ſome Books of this ſacred Volume were wrote. [c] It was a Kind of Art or Science, firſt invented and cultivated at *Athens*, and the Rules of it were laid down by *Philoſophers* for Authors to obſerve in their Writings; but it is unreaſonable to expect, that other Nations ſhould bind themſelves up to the ſame Rules, which they were utter Strangers to, and were never taught at School in the Way of their Education. We indeed in *Europe*, who have taken our Examples from *Greece*, can hardly read any Thing with Pleaſure, that is not digeſted into Order, and ſorted under proper Heads: But the *Eaſtern* Nations, who were uſed to a free Way of Diſcourſe, and never cramped their Notions

[y] Lively Oracles, by the Author of the Whole Duty of Man. [z] Iſa. lvii. 15. [a] Exod. xx. 18.
[b] *Boyle* of the Stile of Scripture. [c] *Nicholls's*, ibid.

Notions by *methodical Limitations*, would have deſpiſed a Compoſition of this Kind, as much as we do a School-boy's Theme, with all the Formalities of its *Exordiums*, *Ratios*, and *Confirmations*. And if this was no *Precedent* for other Nations, [d] much leſs can we think that God Almighty's Methods ought to be confin'd to human Laws, which, being deſign'd for the Narrowneſs of our Conceptions, might be improper and injurious to *his*, whoſe Thoughts are as far above ours, as *the Heavens are higher than the Earth*. *Not requiſite in the Holy Scriptures.*

'THE Truth is, *Inſpiration* is, in ſome Meaſure, the Language of another World, and carries in it the Reaſoning of Spirits, which, without Controverſy, is vaſtly different from ours. We indeed, to make Things lie plainly before our Underſtanding, are forc'd to ſort them out into diſtinct *Partitions*, and conſider them by little and little, that ſo, at laſt, by *gradual Advances*, we may come to a tolerable Conception of them: But there is no Cauſe to think that pure Spirits do reaſon after this Manner. Their Underſtandings are quick and intuitive: They ſee the whole Compaſs of rational Inferences at once; and have no need of thoſe little *methodical* Diſtinctions, which oftentimes help the Imperfection of our Intellects. Now, tho' we do not aſſert, that the Language of the Holy Scripture is an exact Copy of the Reaſoning of the *ſpiritual* World; yet, ſince they came *by the Inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt*, it is but reaſonable to expect, that they ſhould retain ſome ſmall *Reliſh* of it, as Books tranſlated into another Tongue, always preſerve ſome Marks of their Originals. And hence it comes to paſs, that though the Holy Ghoſt does vouchſafe to ſpeak in the Language of Men; yet, in his Divine Compoſitions, there are ſome Traces to be found of that bold and unlimited *Ratiocination*, which is peculiar to the heavenly Inhabitants, whoſe *noble* and *flaming* Thoughts are never clogged with the *cold* and *jejune* Laws of human Method. To this Purpoſe we may obſerve, that even among the *Heathens*, whenever their Authors repreſent an *inſpired* Perſon, a *Sybil*, a *Caſſandra*, or a *Tireſias*, they never introduce them making a ſet methodical Speech, but ſaying always ſomething noble and ſublime, that diſdains our ordinary artificial Fetters. And if the greateſt Maſters of *philological* Learning thought it proper to neglect all Rules and Reſtraints, in Compoſitions of pretended Inſpiration, why ſhould that be thought culpable in the Holy Scriptures, that is held ſo exquiſite in *Sophocles*, or any other lofty Tragedian?

BUT after all, the Holy Scriptures are far from being deſtitute of Method: For though they be not wrote upon the Formalities of the *Greek* and *Latin* Plan, (as it is impoſſible they ſhould) yet are they delivered in ſuch a Manner, as is eaſy to be underſtood, not unpleaſant to read, and, to ſuch, as are accuſtomed to *Oriental* Compoſitions, exceedingly beautiful. Where can we find a more methodical Hiſtory, than that of *Moſes*, *beginning* at the firſt Creation of all Things, and the Formation of human Kind; *proceeding* in the Account of their Increaſe, and Depravation, and almoſt total Deſtruction by an univerſal *Deluge*: After their ſecond Increaſe, *relating* their Relapſe into Idolatry, and thereupon God's electing a peculiar People to ſerve him, according to his own Appointment; and ſo *recording* the firſt Original, and various Succeſſes of their Progenitors, the Afflictions and Wanderings of that choſen Nation, and the *Polity*, which they ſhould obſerve, when they were to be ſettled in the promiſed Land? Nothing can be more regular than this; and as for the other Hiſtorians, who wrote the Tranſactions of the *Jewiſh* Nation, from the Conqueſt of *Canaan*, to the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, they are ſo exact in obſerving the Order of Time, and in ſetting down the Length of each Prince's Reign, that they afford us a better Foundation for *hiſtorick* Truth, as well as *Chronology*, than is to be found in the beſt *Heathen* Writers of this Kind. The *Evangeliſts begin* their Account with the Incarnation and Birth of Chriſt; they *continue* it with the Doctrines he preached, and the Actions he did, and *conclude* it with his Death and Reſurrection; in which it muſt be allowed there is no Want of Method: And as for the *doctrinal* and *argumentative* Parts of Scripture, they are digeſted in ſuch wiſe, as to make them intelligible; and, though the Partitions and Tranſitions in them are not ſo formally diſtinct, as in ſome other Books, yet they are perceivable enough by an attentive Reader, and will receive great Illuſtration from the *Analytical Works* of ſome *Expoſitors*. *The Scripture methodical.*

IN ſhort, if there appears to be any Defect of *Method*, or Incoherence of Senſe in the Holy Scriptures, it muſt ariſe, either from the Negligence of Tranſlators, *Why ſometimes defective herein.*

[d] *Boyle*, of the Stile of Scripture. [e] *Nicholls's* Conference.

ſlators, or our Ignorance of the Holy Ghoſt's Manner of Writing; which ſometimes, (from an accidental Word or Expreſſion) takes an Occaſion to make a *Digreſſion*, for our Inſtruction, which ſeems to interrupt the *original* Subject; and many Times carries the Prophets into a long Prediction of the *Meſſias*, which, at firſt Sight, may look like a cauſeleſs Ramble of Thought, but is, in Reality, a wiſe Deſign of Providence to give us, as much as poſſible, a ſtedfaſt Hope of that wonderful *Mercy*, which, in *Fulneſs of Time*, God Almighty intended for Mankind.

[f] THE *Hebrew* Tongue, wherein a great Part of the Holy Bible is wrote, has very many Words conſiſting of the ſame Syllables, and yet of very different Significations; it is defective too in ſeveral Moods and Tenſes, which the Languages, we are more accuſtomed to, are ſupplied with: And by this Means it comes to paſs, that, if the *Tranſlator* had miſtaken the Signification of the Word, he ſpoils the *Connection* of the Sentence; or, if he has not given the *Verb* the right *Mood* and *Tenſe*, (which, in a great Meaſure, he is obliged to gueſs at) there will be a plain *Incoherence* in the Senſe: And yet theſe, and ſuch like Omiſſions, are what generally occaſion the Confuſion we meet with.

[g] IT ought to be remember'd likewiſe, that the Diſorder, which is complained of in Scripture, is frequently occaſioned by the *miſplacing* of a *Parentheſis*: For, as there were none in the Original *Hebrew*, and *Greek* Originals, the Tranſlators have placed them as they thought fit; ſome having made long ones, ſome ſhort ones, ſome none at all, and moſt of them ſuch, as ſtand in need of ſome Correction. Nor muſt it be forgot, that the preſent Diviſion of the Scripture into Chapters and Verſes, contrived by *Stephanus*, and drawn up in Haſte, (though of excellent Uſe to the Memory) has ſometimes *ſeparated* Things, which ſhould have been united, and ſometimes *united* Matters, which ſhould have been ſeparated; which diſturbs the Senſe, and makes it look very wild and ſtaring to thoſe, who are not qualified to obſerve its Propriety and Connection in the *Original*.

Why ſometimes obſcure.

THESE are ſome of the Reaſons of the ſeeming *Immethodicalneſs*, and the like may be ſaid of the *Difficulties*, and Want of *Perſpicuity*, which ſome have complained of, in the Holy Scriptures, *viz.* that, when they do not ariſe from the *Subject-Matter*, which ſometimes contains *Myſteries* above all human Comprehenſion, and ſometimes relates to Hiſtories, Cuſtoms, and Ceremonies, which we in a Manner are quite ignorant of; they uſually happen, [h] when the Signification of Words is *ambiguous* and uncertain in the Original; when there occur any particular *Idioms* of the *Hebrew* or *Greek* Languages, not ſo familiar to us; when the *Conſtruction* is intricate, and the Words make different Senſes, according as they are differently joined together; when the *Stile* itſelf is obſcure by Reaſon of *Figures*, *Metaphors*, and *Allegories*, which are uſual in the *Poetick* Books; or when the Writer *paſſes* from one Subject to another, a little too abruptly, which frequently happens in thoſe of the *Prophets*. But, theſe Caſes excepted, (which, with a little Study and Application of our own, and Inſtruction from thoſe, to whom is committed the Expoſition of theſe Matters, may be remedied) that the Holy Scriptures are, in all Points neceſſary to Salvation, and to all Perſons of a competent Underſtanding, ſufficiently plain and intelligible, [i] we have the expreſs Teſtimony of the Scriptures themſelves, the avowed Deſign of writing them, God's frequent commanding us to read them, and our Obligation, under Pain of Damnation, to believe and practiſe them, effectual Arguments to convince us.

For the main, plain and perſpicuous.

THE Commendation that the Royal Pſalmiſt gives of the Laws of God, which were written before his Days, runs in this Strain: [k] *The Law of the Lord is an undefiled Law, converting the Soul; the Teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, and giveth Wiſdom unto the Simple; the Statutes of the Lord are right, and rejoice the Heart; the Commandment of the Lord is pure, and giveth Light unto the Eyes: Moreover, by them is thy Servant taught, and in keeping them there is great Reward:* But how can any Law make the *Simple* wiſe, enlighten *the Eyes*, or *convert the Soul* of Men, unleſs it be ſo plainly and clearly revealed, as that the *Simple* may be capable of apprehending it, and the *Eyes* or Underſtanding of Men able to diſcern the Senſe of it? In what Manner the Apoſtles behaved themſelves in the Diſpenſation of the Word, St *Paul* has declared for himſelf, and all the reſt: [l] *Having renounced the hidden Things of Diſhoneſty, we handle not the Word of God deceitfully, but, by Manifeſtation*

[f] *Boyle* of the Stile of Scripture. [g] *Boyle*, ibid. [h] *Du Pin's* Canon of Scripture. [i] *Scot's* Sermons, Vol. II. [k] Pſal. xix. 7, &c. [l] 2 Cor. iv. 2, &c.

Manifeſtation of Truth, commend ourſelves to every Man's Conſcience in the Sight of God. For if our Goſpel be hid, 'tis hid to them that are loſt, in whom the God of this World has blinded the Eyes of them that believe not, leſt the Light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt (who is the Image of God) ſhould ſhine unto them. Suppoſing then that the Apoſtles wrote with the ſame Clearneſs that they ſpoke, (as there's no Shadow of Reaſon to doubt it) then is it evident, that they neither, in their Preachings or Writings, affected to ſpeak *obſcurely*, but that their great Deſign was, ſo to manifeſt and make known the Truth, as that, by their Plainneſs and Simplicity, they might recommend themſelves to the Conſciences of all, who heard and read them.

[m] AND, indeed, ſince *Jeſus Chriſt* came into the World to teach Men all thoſe Truths, which God was pleaſed to reveal unto them, and was pleaſed likewiſe to have his Life and Doctrine written by his *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts*, in Books, which were to be the *Rule* and *Foundation* of his Holy Religion; it was agreeable to his Wiſdom, to provide, that thoſe Books ſhould be written in a diſtinct and perſpicuous Manner, to the End that Chriſtians might eaſily diſcern the Truths, they were obliged to believe, and the Rules they were to practiſe. For nothing ſeems more incongruous to the Divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs, than to ſuppoſe, that the Books which God has given Men, to teach them the Truths neceſſary to their Salvation, ſhould, by his Appointment, be written ſo obſcurely, that very few Perſons ſhould be able to underſtand them.

[n] MOST of the *hiſtorical* Parts of Scripture are delivered in a plain, ſimple Stile, much better adapted to common People's Capacity, than any Tranſlation of *Saluſt* or *Thucydides* would be. And though it ſometimes happens, that *Commentators* upon theſe Books differ, as to the Senſe of a Word, or the Deſign of ſome old Cuſtom, or the like; yet this is no more than what is common to all other Books of Antiquity: Nor does it affect theſe Sacred Records any more, than it does *Virgil* or *Homer*, or the fore-mentioned Hiſtorians, whoſe *Annotators* as often diſagree, as the others do about the Explanation of the *Bible*. Moſt of the *Doctrinal* Parts of Scripture are far from being *obſcure*, in thoſe Points eſpecially, whoſe Knowledge relates to our Salvation. The Doctrines of the Incarnation of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and his Sufferings for the Sins of the World; the Doctrines of future Rewards and Puniſhments; the Neceſſity of Repentance and a good Life, in order to Salvation; the common Precepts of *Morality*, and thoſe other improved ones of Peaceableneſs, Humility, Self-denial, *&c.* are ſo plainly delivered, and over and over again repeated, that Words cannot make any Thing more intelligible and more expreſs.

Myſteries in the Scripture.

IT muſt not be diſſembled indeed, that there are ſeveral Places in Scripture, which have their *Obſcurities*: But then there is a very good Reaſon to be aſſigned for it, *viz.* that the *Sublimity* of the Subject will admit of no greater Clearneſs. Thus, when any Paſſages relate to the Doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, or the eternal Generation of the Son of God; when they ſpeak of the Nature of Angels, whoſe Beings and Operations are above the Compaſs of our Underſtandings; when they treat of Propheſies of future Events, whoſe Nature it is to be dark and obſcure; or contain Deſcriptions of the World to come, which we, in this imperfect State, can have no adequate Notions of: In theſe and ſeveral ſuch Inſtances, it is impoſſible, but that they ſhould ſeem obſcure; but this is no Fault of the Writer: It is entirely owing to the *ſublime* Nature of theſe noble and tranſcendent Subjects, and to the Shallowneſs of our Underſtandings, that cannot comprehend them. Wiſh therefore we may, that the Scriptures were leſs difficult to us; but then we ſhould remember, that we wiſh away that, which was deſigned by Providence, as not the leaſt Part of their Excellency: For it is not, without a Divine Intention, that ſome Paſſages are obſcure, in order to raiſe in Men a more ſacred *Awe* and *Veneration* (which they would not be ſo apt to have) for theſe Books, if nothing, but a plain Method and Tenor of Perſpicuity were diſcernable in them; juſt as the Gloomineſs of an ancient Church raiſes a devotional Reſpect within us, not to be affected by the Gaiety or Lightſomeneſs of any other Building.

[o] The Truth is, 'tis a great Commendation of this ſacred Volume, that it is not deſtitute of Abſtruſities; that there is a Freedom of Diſquiſition allowed us; and that, in ſeveral Places, every Man is at Liberty to embrace what Senſe he pleaſes of the Words, if it be but according to the *Analogy* of Faith, and agreeable to other, leſs intricate, Parts of this inſpired Book. This gives us an Opportunity of exciting

[m] *Du Pin*'s Canon of Scripture. [n] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. II. [o] *Edwards*, of the Stile of Scripture, and *Boyle*, ibid.

our Care, of exerting our Induſtry, of improving our Knowledge, and of enlarging our Faculties by continual Reſearches. Beſides the Repreſentation, that it ſets before us, of the preſent Weakneſs of our Capacities; the conſtant Leſſon it teaches us againſt *ſpiritual Pride*; and the ardent Deſires it is always ſuggeſting, of aſpiring at that happy State, where our *imperfect* Knowledge *now*, ſhall be *then* improved into a *beatifick Viſion*.

The Scriptures the only Rule of Faith.

FROM what we have hitherto ſaid, concerning the Divine Authority and Inſpiration of the Holy Scriptures, their Excellency both in Matter and Stile, their Perfection and Incorruptneſs, their Plainneſs and Perſpicuity, *&c.* it will neceſſarily follow, that they are the only Rule of Faith we are to apply to, and that [p] they "contain all Things (as our Church expreſſes it) neceſſary to Salvation; ſo that "whatever is not read therein, or may be proved thereby, is not to be required "of any Man to be believed, as an Article of Faith, or be thought requiſite or ne-"ceſſary to Salvation." And, [q] in Conformity to this, we aſſert, that theſe Writings are plain and perfect, as to all neceſſary and eſſential Matters, and accordingly able to put an End to all *Controverſies*, which relate to Salvation; that the *Hereticks*, as well as *Orthodox*, looked upon them, as the Standard and Meaſure of Chriſtian Doctrine, appealed always to them in Matters of Diſpute; and that the Fathers, in their *Homilies*, did uſe conſtantly to declare to the People, what they were to believe, and what they were to practiſe out of them; that the *New Teſtament*, in particular, is the laſt Revelation of God's Will and Counſel, to which nothing is to be added, nothing taken from it; in which there is nothing *ſhort* and *defective*, nothing *ſuperfluous* and *redundant*; in which all the Principles of true Religion, and all the Meaſures of Holy Living are contained; ſo that, while we proceed according to this perfect *Canon*, we are infallibly certain of the Truth of what we believe, and of the Rectitude and Lawfulneſs of what we act: And therefore our neceſſary Duty of reading it, and being daily converſant in it, together with the beſt Method of doing it to Advantage, will be no improper Concluſion of what has been ſaid on this Subject.

That they ought to be tranſlated.

NOTHING is more eaſy to common Conception, than that a Revelation of God's Will, when committed to Writing, ought to be read promiſcuouſly by all, as containing Matters of the higheſt Conſequence to all; and, for this Reaſon, ſhould either at firſt be *indited*, or afterwards *tranſlated* into ſuch Languages, as are beſt accommodated to every one's Capacity. To this Purpoſe we may obſerve, [r] that *Moſes*, and the other Authors of the Books of the *Old Teſtament* (until the Time of *Ezra*) wrote in the Language of their own Country, that the *Jews* might not want Opportunity, by reading theſe Books, of inſtructing themſelves in the Laws of God, and the Hiſtory of their Anceſtors: That after the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, (when *Hebrew* was by Degrees intermitted) learned Men began to tranſlate the Holy Bible into the *Chaldean* Tongue, for the Benefit of the *Jews* living in *Judea*; while the *Helleniſts*, *i. e.* thoſe that dwelt in other Countries, and were better acquainted with the *Greek*, made uſe of the Verſion of the *Septuagint*: That the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles wrote at a Time, when the *Greek* was in the greateſt Vogue in the *Roman* Empire; and did therefore chiefly make uſe of that, as the moſt *general* Language, wherein to publiſh the Goſpel over the Face of the Earth: That in the Parts of the *Roman* Empire, where the *Greek* was not ſo perfectly underſtood, *Tranſlations* were ſoon made into the *Latin* Tongue; and in every Country, in ſhort, where Chriſtianity prevailed, there were always *Verſions* in the common Language, for the Benefit and Inſtruction of thoſe, who had given up their Names to Chriſt; inſomuch that we may reſt aſſured, that there is not, at this Day, any Nation or People, that are enlightened by the Goſpel, who have not the Bible among them, or at leaſt the *New Teſtament*, and ſome Books of the *Old*, tranſlated into the vulgar Tongue. [s] *Whatſoever Things were written aforetime, were written for our Learning, that we, through Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures, might have Hope*; and ſince whatſoever Things were written in Languages, that were then of general Uſe, but ſince of leſs Currency among the *Vulgar*, were tranſlated into every one's *Mother-Tongue*; what ſhould the Deſign both of writing and tranſlating the Scriptures be, but that every one, even of the meaneſt Capacity, ſhould be in a Condition to acquaint himſelf with the Will of God?

And read by all.

THE Law of *Moſes*, I am ſure, was delivered by God to all the People in general; and what he requires them all to do is, [t] *to keep the Words, which he commanded them,*

[p] *Edwards*, of the Excellency of the Holy Scripture. [q] *Du Pin's* Canon of Scripture. [r] Rom. xv. 4.
[s] Deut. vi. 6.

them, in their Hearts, to teach them diligently to their Children, to talk of them as they ſat in their Houſes, and as they walked in the Way, and when they lay down, and when they roſe up. The Sermons of the Prophets were uſually prefaced with an *Hear, O* Iſrael, *hear O Houſe of* Judah, *hear O Houſe of* Jacob, *and all ye of* Judah. Our bleſſed Saviour preached his Diſcourſes and Parables, not only to his Apoſtles and Diſciples, but to all the *Multitude*, and in his Conferences with the People, frequently aſks them theſe Queſtions: *Have ye not read? Have ye never read in the Scripture?* And, *hath not the Scripture ſaid ſo and ſo?* His Apoſtles direct their Epiſtles, *not only to the Saints, to the Beloved, and to the faithful in Chriſt Jeſus,* which in Scripture-Language includes every Chriſtian, but alſo *to all that are at* Rome; *to all the Saints, which are in* Achaia; *to the twelve Tribes, which are ſcattered abroad*; *and to all, that, in every Place, call on the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Since then the Holy Scriptures are directed to *all*, this not only gives a Right, but lays an Obligation likewiſe upon *all*, to acquaint themſelves with them: And ſince the Articles of Faith, which they propoſe, are neceſſary to be believed by all, the Precepts of Life, which they preſcribe, are neceſſary to be practiſed by all; and the Threats and Promiſes, wherewith they inforce thoſe Precepts, are neceſſary to be conſidered by all; it muſt follow, that for Men wilfully to neglect reading, what God has written for their Uſe, and thereby not only authoriz'd, but obliged them to read, argues a very profane Contempt both of the Author, and Matter of ſuch Divine Revelation; and for any Man, or Society of Men, to inhibit others from reading it, is *ſhutting up the Gates of Heaven* againſt them, as it were, by making bold Invaſions upon their common Right.

Abuſe in Reading them.

"IT were heartily to be wiſhed, that the groſs Neglect of converſing with theſe ſacred *Oracles*, were not ſo ſcandalous, ſo ungrateful, as muſt needs one Day riſe up againſt the Generality of Chriſtians, and condemn them: But it is greatly to be feared withal, that Matters will not be found much better with many, who ſpend a great deal of Time and Pains upon the Holy Scriptures, but to no good Purpoſe. Entering into the *Niceties* of Argument and Expreſſion, ſettling *dark Points* of Hiſtory, explaining *difficult Texts*, and reconciling *ſeeming Contradictions*; theſe are too often propounded as the chief End of ſome Mens Studies. Nay, well it were, if we had not others among us, who read them infidiouſly, on purpoſe to collect Matter of Objection and Cavil; who with a malicious Diligence compare Texts, in hopes to find out Contradictions; and read attentively, but to no other End, than to remark what they account Incoherences and Defects in Stile; which when they think they have ſtarted, they have their Deſign, and look no farther for any proper Solution. A groſs Spirit of Infidelity this, which loves to fortify itſelf againſt Convictions, and to turn the moſt ſalutary Medicines into Poiſon!

Requiſites for right reading them.

" How then ſhall we, who have theſe *lively Oracles* in our Hands, and ſuch fre-
" quent Exhortations to a conſtant Peruſal of them, acquit ourſelves in this Duty?
" And by what Means ſhall we be enabled to find out their true Meaning, and to
" make our Acquaintance with them conducive to the Improvement of Knowledge,
" and the Salvation of our Souls?" This is an Enquiry of great Concernment to us, and in order to give it a ſatisfactory Anſwer, ſome Qualifications, we muſt know, are antecedent, ſome concomitant, and ſome ſubſequent to our profitable Reading of them. For, [x] ſince they are written in an unknown Tongue, have *Strictures* of moſt Arts and Sciences in them, and in many Places allude to the Rites and Cuſtoms, the Manners and Opinions, the Sayings and Proverbs of diſtant Ages, and almoſt all Nations in the World; ſince, in the very Subject-Matter of them, there are [y] *ſome things hard to be underſtood*, Rules of great Nicety, and Doctrines of great Sublimity, *which thoſe that are unlearn'd and unſtable may wreſt to their own Deſtruction*; ſome Skill in the learned Arts and Languages, ſome Knowledge of Hiſtory, and other Monuments of Antiquity, and ſome Acquaintance with the beſt and earlieſt Commentators upon obſcure Paſſages, is certainly neceſſary to a competent Underſtanding of them: And thoſe Men muſt *be proud and vainly puff'd up in their fleſhly Minds*, who pretend to deſpiſe all humane Attainments, in a *Diſquiſition*, where ſo much Learning, as well as Strength of Faculties, is requir'd.

Sincerity.

SINCE the Scriptures are acknowledg'd to be the only Rule of our Faith, and Director of our Lives, our next Care ſhould be to approach them with *Simplicity, and a godly Sincerity*, i. e. with a Mind diveſted of all Prejudice, and fully reſolv'd to

[t] *Scot*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. II. [u] *Stanhope* on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I. [x] *Edwards*'s Excellency of the Holy Scriptures. [y] 2 Pet. iii. 16.

to practiſe whatever it finds recommended as a Duty, and to believe whatever God has been pleaſed to reveal as an Object of Faith. For, without ſuch a Diſpoſition, we do but deceive our Souls, and, in every Page we read, if it be more for the Improvement of our Knowledge, than Amendment of our Lives; more for the Confirmation of our *private* Opinions, than the Illumination *of our Underſtandings to the Acknowledgment of the Truth, we are treaſuring up Wrath againſt the Day of Wrath:* And, laſtly, ſince they were written at firſt by the *Inſpiration* of the Holy Ghoſt, we muſt implore of God the Aſſiſtance of the ſame Spirit, to conduct us to a right Underſtanding of them. [a] *The Things of God* (the Apoſtle tells us) *are ſpiritually diſcerned:* [b] And tho' the natural Man may well enough apprehend the Letter and *grammatical* Senſe of God's Word; yet, its Power and Energy, its inſinuating and perſuaſive Force, whereby it works on Hearts, is peculiar to the Spirit; without whoſe Aids, even the Bible, while it lies open before our Eyes, may ſtill be *as a Book that is ſeal'd*, as ineffectual to our Advancement in ſaving Knowledge, as if its Characters were *illegible*. [b] Since ſpiritual Illumination then is neceſſary, in order to the comprehending of Scripture-Truths, our great Care muſt be (after we have prepared our Minds with honeſt Purpoſes, and reverential Thoughts) with all fervent Devotion to repair to this infallible Teacher, the Spirit of God, and, with mighty Importunity, beſeech him to open our Eyes, that we may behold *wondrous Things out of the Divine Law*, and to conduct our Reaſon and Underſtanding right, while, with all Modeſty and humble Diffidence of our own Abilities, we are enquiring into this ſacred Volume.

Prayer.

Attention.

WHEN this is done, we are in ſome Meaſure qualified to take it into our Hands: And while we are employ'd in reading it, the firſt Thing we are to do, is to ſettle our Minds into a fix'd Attention to the Senſe of what we read; to conſider diligently the principal *Deſign* of the holy Penman, and the Weight of every Argument he makes uſe of to enforce his Doctrines or Precepts; to attend carefully to the *Context*, and be always mindful what the Words refer to, and what Coherence they have with the Things which went before, or follow in the Thread of the Diſcourſe; to compare one Place with another, or with ſeveral others, if there be Occaſion, that the *Doubtful* and *Obſcure* may be aſcertain'd and illuſtrated by thoſe that are more *plain* and *eaſy*; and, laſtly, to obſerve (as we go along) the peculiar Force and Elegancy of the ſacred Stile, which, in ſeveral Inſtances will be found (to the great Satisfaction of every impartial Reader) to riſe above the Strains of the moſt eloquent Orators of *Greece* and *Rome*.

Recollection.

THIS cloſe Attention would make what we read both inſtructive of our Underſtandings, and influential of our Lives: Eſpecially if, after we have finiſh'd the holy Exerciſe, we ſit ourſelves down, and recollect what obſervable Things, what Exhortations to Virtue, or Determents from Vice; what Promiſes to Obedience, or Menaces to the contrary; what Examples of God's Vengeance againſt Sins, or what Inſtances of his Bleſſings, upon ſuch and ſuch Duties, we have met with in the Portion of Scripture, we have juſt done reading. Our Memories at the beſt are but very weak; and, in Things of a ſpiritual Concern, extremely defective: Nor is the Defect unimprov'd by the Induſtry of the Devil, who hates *our acquainting ourſelves with God*, and, by one Wile or other, endeavours to ſteal the good Seed out of our Hearts, as ſoon as it is ſown. To remedy therefore this Infirmity of our Nature, and Malice of our Adverſary, we muſt keep our Minds in a Poſture of ſerious Meditation, and for ſome Time conſider the Importance of what we have read, until the Weight of it has fix'd itſelf in our Minds, above the Cunning of the Enemy, the Amuſements of Life, or our own natural Forgetfulneſs to eraſe. By this Means we ſhall become Men *powerful in the Scriptures*, if we take but Care, in the laſt Place, to add to our Knowledge Practice, without which, all our Reading, Attention, and Recollection, will only ſerve to inhance our Guilt. For, if after we have known the Will of God, and been inſtructed in his Laws; if, after we have been convinc'd of the Reaſonableneſs of his Injunctions, and their juſt Agreement with the Excellency of our Nature; if, after we have ſeen the Deformity of Sin diſplay'd, and God's utter Abhorrence and Deteſtation of it; if, after we have been perſuaded of the Riches of his Promiſes, and made to believe, that in keeping the Laws of Heaven *there is great Reward*, in breaking them, eternal Puniſhment; we ſuffer ourſelves to be entangled with our Luſts, and live in open Contradiction to our Faith,

Practice.

[a] 1 Cor. ii. 14. [a] The Chriſtian's Birthright, by the Author of the Whole Duty of Man.
[b] *Edwards's* Excellency of the Holy Scriptures.

Faith, happy *Turk!* and happy *Heathen!* whoſe Ignorance or Senſuality bears ſome Apology, as well as ſome Proportion to the Groſſneſs of his Religion, in Compariſon of the wicked *Chriſtian*, whoſe deſpairing Wiſh will be, at the laſt great Day, that he had never ſeen the Bible, nor heard of the Name of Chriſt, when he ſees him returning from Heaven, to judge the Lives of all, who profeſſed his Faith, according to the Laws laid down in his Goſpel.

CHAP. V.

Of the NATURE *and* ATTRIBUTES *of* GOD.

THE *Rule of Religion*, as it is contained in the Holy Scriptures, (which we have ſhewn to be a *Revelation* of the Divine Will) is ſufficiently conſidered already: And we now proceed to an Examination of the ſeveral *Parts of Religion*; ſuch, in the firſt Place, as are called *ſpeculative*, and relate to our Knowledge of the *Nature* and *Operations* of God, which, when duly conſidered, introduce the Obligation of what we call *practical*, as including our Duty to *him*, our *Neighbour*, and *ourſelves*.

The Nature of God incomprehenſible.

WHAT the Nature and Eſſence of Almighty God is, we muſt not ſuppoſe ourſelves able, after the ſtricteſt Enquiry and Application, to comprehend; this being, in the Nature of it, † impoſſible from the infinite Diſproportion between the Faculty and the Object. [a] If we will confeſs the Truth, we muſt own ourſelves ignorant of the Subſtance of all other Things, even ſuch as are moſt familiar to us, and which we think we beſt underſtand. The meaneſt and moſt contemptible *Plant* or *Animal* puzzles the moſt enlarged Underſtanding upon Earth: Nay, even the ſimpleſt and plaineſt of all inanimate Beings have their Eſſence or Subſtance hidden from us in the deepeſt Obſcurity; and therefore the Queſtion, which his Friend *Zophar* puts to *Job*, carries its own Conviction with it: [b] *Canſt thou by Searching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty to Perfection? It is as high as Heaven, what canſt thou do? deeper than Hell, what canſt thou know? The Meaſure thereof is longer than the Earth, and broader than the Sea.*

Yet ought to be contemplated.

BUT though we muſt for ever deſpair of *finding out the Almighty to Perfection*, [c] yet we ought not, for this Reaſon, to give over our *Diſquiſitions* after him; ſince the Pleaſure and Advantages, wherewith they are rewarded, do more than compenſate for all the Pains of our Attention and Reſearches. This made holy *Job*, under the greateſt Conflicts of Mind and bodily Sufferings, expreſs ſo ſtrong a Deſire of ſtill purſuing his Enquiries concerning the Divine Nature and Perfections: [d] *Surely I would ſpeak with the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God.* When [e] *Moſes* deſired the Bleſſing of a more particular View of God, though his Requeſt was partly refuſed, becauſe not ſuitable to his *mortal* State, and what might have proved *fatal* to him, had it been granted; yet God, we find, is ſo far from being diſpleaſed at him, that he returned him a gracious Anſwer, and vouchſafed him a *Privilege*, which no Man ever had before: *Thou canſt not ſee my Face and live; but I will cover thee with my Hand, while I paſs by, and thou ſhalt ſee my Back-parts, but my Face thou ſhalt not ſee:* Which ſeems to imply, that to meditate upon Subjects, which we cannot comprehend, and to enquire even into the Nature and Attributes of God himſelf, is far from being offenſive to him, ſo long as our Enquiries are tempered with Humility and a godly Fear. [f] Now, if it be lawful to contemplate God, in order to raiſe in ourſelves

† The Words of a late learned Author, upon this Subject, are very excellent, "As our Minds are *finite*, they cannot, without a Contradiction, comprehend what is *infinite*; for, how ſhould we comprehend the Nature of the Supreme, incorporeal Being, or how he exiſts, when we comprehend not the Nature of the moſt *inferior Spirits*, or have any Conception even of *Matter* itſelf, diveſted of its Accidents? How ſhould we attain to an adequate Knowledge of the *Supreme* Author of the World, when we are utterly incapable of knowing the *Extent* of the World itſelf, and the numberleſs undeſcried *Regions*, with their ſeveral States and Circumſtances, contained in it, never to be frequented or viſited by our *Philoſophy*? What Way ſoever we turn ourſelves, we are ſtill accoſted with Something above our Underſtanding; and if we cannot penetrate ſo far into *Effects*, as to diſcover them, and their Nature thoroughly, it is not to be expected that we ſhould, that *we can* ever be admitted to ſee through the *Myſteries* of his Nature, who is the *Cauſe*, ſo far *above them all*;" *Behold, God is great, and we know him not, and touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out*, Job xxxvi. 26. and xxxvii. 23. *Wollaſton*'s Religion of Nature, page 39.

[a] *Clarke*'s Demonſtration. [b] Job xi. 7, &c. [c] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [d] Job xiii. 3. [e] Exod. xxxiii. 20, &c. [f] *Boyle* of the Veneration due to God.

juſt Sentiments of his Perfections, this ſeems to be the moſt delightful Exerciſe, the Soul can enjoy on this Side Heaven. For, as *Admiration* is the moſt pleaſing Affection of the Mind, and bears Proportion to the Nature and Circumſtances of the Thing admired; ſo no Admiration can afford ſo much Satisfaction to the Mind, as that which has God for its Object. In our Admiration of the moſt ſublime corporeal Things, we have this to allay our Satisfaction, that they are of a limited Nature; that they are of a Nature inferior to ourſelves, and fall in our Eſteem, the more we are acquainted with them; conſequently, that they expoſe our Weakneſs, and upbraid the Imperfection of our Underſtanding in admiring them: Whereas, to be amazed and aſtoniſhed in the Contemplation of ſo glorious and infinitely perfect a Being, as God, can be no Reflection upon *finite human* Underſtanding, nor prove any Pall to the Appetite; ſince his Perfections are ſo immenſe, that the more Knowledge we have of him, the more Reaſon we ſhall have to love and admire him, and every freſh Diſcovery will prove an Incitement to us to diſcover more.

How to form right Notions of it.

FOR theſe Reaſons we are not only allowed, but encouraged, to make the Nature of God the Subject of our Contemplation: And though the redundant Luſtre of his Deity hinders him from being directly looked upon, yet we may behold it by Reflection; and, from the Conſideration of our own Souls, (which are ſaid to be framed *after the Image of God)* raiſe ſome tolerable Idea of his infinite Perfections. [g] We perceive, for Inſtance, what *Thought* is; but, at the ſame Time, we perceive likewiſe the Advantage of ſuch *an eaſy* Thought, as ariſes out of a Senſation, ſuch as *Seeing* or *Hearing*, which gives us no Trouble. We think, without Trouble, of many of the Objects, which we ſee all *at once*, or ſo near at once, that the Progreſſion from one Object to another is ſcarce perceptible; but the Labour of Study, and of purſuing Conſequences, wearies us, though the Pleaſure or Vanity of having found them out, compenſates the Pains, and ſets us upon new Enquiries. We perceive in our Minds a Love of Truth, and a Vexation, when we ſee ourſelves in an Error, or labouring under any Doubt; and we are ſenſible that we act moſt *perfectly*, when we act upon the cleareſt Views, and in the ſtricteſt Purſuance of them. Now, out of all this, we may eaſily raiſe, in our Imaginations, an Idea of a *Mind*, which ſees all Things by a clear and full Intuition, without the Poſſibility of being miſtaken; which always acts in that Light upon the ſureſt Proſpect, and with the perfecteſt Reaſon; and does therefore rejoice in every Thing it does, and has a conſtant Perception of all Truths ever before its Eyes. This Idea does ſo naturally ariſe from what we perceive both of the Perfections and Imperfections of our own Minds, that a very little Reflection will help us to form it to a very high Degree.

By aſcribing all Perfections to him.

1. THE firſt Step therefore, in order to do Juſtice in our Thoughts to God, and form right Apprehenſions of him, will be, to aſcribe all imaginable and poſſible Perfections to him. [h] For, ſince he is the firſt and ſupreme Cauſe, from whence all the Perfections of Being are derived, he muſt not only neceſſarily include in himſelf all the *Perfections*, which he hath communicated to others, but every Perfection likewiſe, that is poſſible in itſelf, muſt be *poſſible* to him; and what is poſſible to him, muſt be *actually* in him, who is the Cauſe of all Things. [i] For this Reaſon we ſay of God, that he is *a Spirit*, *i. e.* quite another Thing than Body and Matter, which, being determined by the neceſſary Laws of Motion, are incapable of Knowledge and Liberty, and conſequently of Wiſdom or Goodneſs. We ſay of him, that he is the *Cauſe of all other Beings*, which were by him, and are always dependent on him; that he *knows all Things*, and *can do all Things* in the moſt perfect Manner, by a *Glance* of his Mind, and a *Nod* of his Will, without long Study or Deliberation, without laborious Pains and Endeavours; and conſequently that nothing is exempted from his Knowledge, and Power, and Providence; that he adminiſters all Things in a Way of Goodneſs and Wiſdom, of Juſtice and Truth, and therefore all Things are to be referred to him, as their laſt End. Theſe, and all other poſſible Perfections, we are to conſider the Divine Nature as fully poſſeſſed of, in an higher and more excellent Degree, than our finite Underſtandings are able to comprehend: And,

By removing all Imperfections from him.

2. As we are to aſcribe all imaginable *Perfections* to God, ſo are we to ſeparate and remove all Manner of *Imperfection* from him; becauſe, to admit of any, the leaſt *Shadow* of Defect, is to ſtrike at the Foundation, and deſtroy one of the cleareſt and moſt eſſential Notions, we have of God. When therefore we aſcribe unto God any Perfection, that we ſuppoſe in ourſelves, we muſt, at the ſame Time, be careful to *abſtract* from the Notion every Degree of Imperfection, that is intermixed with it.

[g] *Burnet* upon the Articles. [h] *Scot*'s Chriſtian Life, Part II. Vol. I. [i] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

it. [k] Thus, when we call him by the Name of *Subſtance*, becauſe we have no proper Denomination of his Eſſence, we muſt ſeparate from him all Matter, and material Affections, and conceive of him, as a pure and ſimple *Spirit*. † When we attribute to him the Power of *Activity*, we muſt exempt him from the Labour and Pains, which it coſts other Beings in their Operations, and conſider him as an omnipotent and indefatigable Agent; and when we aſcribe to him the Perfections of *Knowledge*, our Manner of Reaſoning and Diſcourſing, our arguing Conſequences from Principles, and Effects from Cauſes, muſt be no *Compariſon* to him, who, at one Intuition and ſimple View, beholds all Things paſt, preſent, and to come, and in his infinite Mind comprehends them all together. [l] Above all, we muſt be careful, in our Conceptions of God, to clear him of all *moral* Imperfections, wherein the Holy Scriptures have more eſpecially conſulted his Honour, by removing every Thing of this Kind from his Character: For, if it be an Imperfection to be *unjuſt*; [m] *That be far from thee, to do after this Manner; to ſlay the Righteous with the Wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the World do right?* If it be an Imperfection to *countenance Sin*; the Scripture acquits God of this: [n] *Thou art not a God, that has Pleaſure in Wickedneſs, neither ſhall any Evil dwell with thee.* If it be an Imperfection to *ſtand in need* of any Thing, or to depend on others for our Happineſs; this is likewiſe remov'd from him: [o] *Can a Man be profitable to God? Or is it any Gain to him, that thou makeſt thy Way perfect?* If it be an Imperfection to *falſify one's Word*; this is denied of him: [p] *The Strength of* Iſrael *will not lye, or repent; for he is not a Man, that he ſhould repent:* And, (to mention no more) if it be an Imperfection to be in any Reſpect *mutable*; this is likewiſe ſet far from God, *with whom there is no Variableneſs, nor Shadow of Turning.*

3. THUS in our Conceptions of God, we muſt be mindful not only to *aſcribe* to him all poſſible Perfections, but to *ſeparate* from him every Semblance of Imperfection likewiſe, and (to make our Idea ſtill more compleat) we are to conſider his Perfections in *Conjunction*, and *ſo*, as to reconcile them with one another. [q] The greateſt Miſtakes, that have yet happened in Religion, have certainly ſprung from this Root; *viz.* from ſeparating the Perfections of God, from conſidering them ſingly, and framing ſuch wide and large Notions of *one*, as have, in a Manner, quite excluded *another*. Among Men indeed, an eminent Degree of any one Excellency does uſually impair another. And therefore it is obſerved, that Power and Moderation, Love and Diſcretion, do not often meet together; that a great Memory, and a ſmall Judgment, a good Wit, and an ill Nature, are many Times found in Conjunction: But in infinite Perfection, all Perfections do eminently meet, and conſiſt together. [r] They are indeed but *one* entire Perfection, which, tho' it exerts itſelf in different Ways and Actions, and accordingly admits of divers Names, ſuch as *Wiſdom*, *Goodneſs*, *Juſtice*, and *Mercy*, yet in itſelf, is but one *ſimple* and indiviſible Principle of Action, whoſe Operations are all uniform and harmonious; whoſe Acts of Wiſdom are infinitely *good*, whoſe Acts of Goodneſs are infinitely *wiſe*, whoſe Acts of Juſtice are infinitely *merciful*, and whoſe Acts of Mercy are infinitely *juſt*. If this were but once rightly conſidered, it would be of mighty uſe to ſecure our Minds againſt all thoſe falſe Apprehenſions of God, which lead to *Superſtition* and *Preſumption:* For we ſhould *ſo* apprehend his Wiſdom and Juſtice, as not to be overwhelm'd with *Deſpair*, and ſo apprehend his Goodneſs and Mercy, as not to be buoy'd up with *Security:* And, as on one Hand, his Juſtice would protect his Mercy from being abuſed by an *Over-Confidence*, ſo, on the other Hand, his Goodneſs would protect his Wiſdom from being miſrepreſented by an *anxious Suſpicion.*

Conſider his Perfections conjunctively.

THESE are ſome Rules, which may be of uſe to govern our Opinions concerning the Attributes and Perfections of God: And we have only this one Caution more to adjoin concerning them; *viz.* [s] that we are not to conſider them, as having any ſeparate

[k] *Scot*'s Chriſtian Life, Part. II. Vol. I.

† A learned Author upon this Subject has given ſome other Inſtances, which help to illuſtrate it. "Wiſdom, "ſays *he*, is an abſolute Perfection, as it includes in it no Imperfection, or Want of Knowledge, and ſo we abſolutely "ſay, that *God is wiſe*; but Learning is a Perfection acquir'd with much Study, and preſuppoſes former *Ignorance* of "what we have now learn'd, which Ignorance is an Imperfection; and ſo we cannot properly ſay, that *God is* "*learned*, but only that his Underſtanding far exceeds the Learning of the wiſeſt Man:" And, in like Manner, to be able to move ſwiftly from Heaven to Earth, and from one Country to another, is a Perfection in the *Angels*, but then it argues Imperfection, as preſuppoſing a *finite* Nature, and limited to one Place; and therefore cannot be aſcrib'd to that God, who is preſent every where, and *filleth all in all*, Eph. i. 23. *Whitby* on the Attributes.

[l] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. ii. [m] Gen. xviii. 5. [n] Pſal. v. 4. [o] Job xxii. 2, 3.
[p] 1 Sam. xv. 29. [q] *Tillotſon*, ibid. [r] *Scot*'s Chriſtian Life, Part II. Vol. 1. [s] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity.

ſeparate and *diſtinct* Subſiſtence in the Divine Nature, (for the Wiſdom of God is God himſelf, and the Power of God is God himſelf, and ſo of all the reſt) but only in the Manner of our conceiving them, according to their different and external Operations. Thus when God *puniſhes*, we conſider his Act, as an Act of *Juſtice*; when he *pardons*, as an Act of *Mercy*; and when he *promiſes*, as an Act of *Goodneſs*: And † yet we are not to conſider his Juſtice, Mercy, or Goodneſs, as flowing from ſo many Principles, really diſtinct in him, but from *one* pure, ſimple, and undivided Principle.

And in a more exalted Senſe.

IN ourſelves indeed, (becauſe we are limited, and compounded Creatures) there are certain Powers and Faculties, really *diſtinct* from one another, and from our own Eſſence, ſo that what we *do*, admits of a *ſeparate* Conſideration from what we *are*: But in God there can be no inherent Powers and Faculties, *formally* diſtinct from *one another*, or from *himſelf*. To ſuppoſe ſuch a Diſtinction, would be to deſtroy the perfect *Simplicity* and *Unity* of his Nature, and infer ſuch a Sort of *Compoſition* in it, as an *all-perfect* Being is abſolutely incapable of. [t] 'Tis from the Default of our Underſtanding therefore, (which cannot conceive Things in the Groſs) that we divide our *Notions*, and contemplate the ſame infinite Being under different Apprehenſions, which we call *Attributes*; but even what we call *Attributes* in God, muſt not be ſuppoſed to be of the ſame Kind and Quality, with what we term *Properties* in Men, but Something, that we are to underſtand in a Senſe infinitely more exalted and ſublime. [u] Thus, when we ſpeak of the *Knowledge* of God, we muſt not ſuppoſe that he knows Things *in the Manner that we do*, that any Intention or Operation of his Mind is requiſite to produce it; that he *apprehends* by the Impreſſion of Objects, or reaſons by the Help of Ideas, (for this were to make him a *paſſive*, limited, and imperfect Being) but that his Knowledge of all Things paſt, preſent, and to come, is *immediate* and *intuitive*, infinitely exceeding, and vaſtly different from the *Faculty* which we perceive in ourſelves, and which we aſcribe unto him, not from any *Congruity* or *Likeneſs* in the Nature of the Faculties, but from ſome ſmall *Proportion* obſervable in the Effects of them. And, in like Manner, when we ſay that God is *merciful*, we muſt not underſtand it to be *Mercy*, like that which is called *Compaſſion* in us: For, though this be a Property implanted in human Nature, for wiſe and good Reaſons of Providence, yet, as it is accompanied with *Uneaſineſs*, it muſt not be imputed to God, in the ſame Senſe, wherein it is aſcribed to us, but only by Way of *Reſemblance* and *Analogy*.

THE Truth is, † we perceive in our own Minds Pity and Compaſſion, Love and Hatred, Wiſdom and Knowledge, *&c.* and thence we transfer them to the Nature of God, and call them by the Name of his *Attributes*; but then we are to remember, that between theſe, when aſcribed to God, and as they are in us, the *Difference* is infinite: That *in us* they are but faint *Shadows* and Reſemblances, or indeed *Emblems* and *parabolical* Figures of the Divine Attributes, and that theſe Attributes are the *Originals*, the true real Things, and of a Nature infinitely ſuperior, and different from any Thing we diſcern in his Creatures, or that can be conceiv'd by *finite* Underſtanding; for, *as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, ſo are his Ways higher than*

† As God is a pure and uncompounded Being, his Attributes of *Mercy*, *Juſtice*, &c. cannot be, as we conceive them, becauſe in him they are *one*. Perhaps they may more properly be called together *Divine Reaſon*, which, as it exerts itſelf upon this or that Occaſion, is by us *variouſly* denominated. *Wollaſton*'s Religion of Nature, Sect. 5.

[t] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity. [u] *Wollaſton*'s Religion of Nature, Sect. 5. and Archbiſhop *King*, on Divine Predeſtination.

† "The Deſcriptions, which we frame to ourſelves of God, or of the Divine Attributes, *(ſays the great Author I am now quoting)* are not taken from any direct or immediate Perceptions, that we have of him, or them, but "from ſome Obſervations, we have made of his Works, and from the Conſideration of thoſe Qualifications, that we "perceive would enable us to perform the like. Thus, obſerving great Order, Conveniency, and Harmony in all "the ſeveral Parts of the World, and perceiving that every Thing is adapted, and tends to the Preſervation and Advantage of the whole; we are apt to conſider, that we could not contrive and ſettle Things in ſo excellent and proper a Manner, without great Wiſdom, and thence we conclude, that God, who has thus concerted and ſettled Matters, muſt have Wiſdom: And, having then aſcribed to him Wiſdom, becauſe we ſee the Effects and Reſult of it in "his Works, we proceed, and conclude, that he has likewiſe *Foreſight*, and *Underſtanding*; becauſe we cannot conceive Wiſdom without theſe, and becauſe, if we were to do what we ſee he has done, we could not expect to perform "it without the Exerciſe of theſe Faculties: And from hence it truly follows, that God muſt either have theſe, or "other Faculties and Powers equivalent to them, and adequate to theſe mighty *Effects*, which proceed from them: "And becauſe we do not know what his Faculties are in themſelves, we give them the Names of thoſe *Powers*, "that we find would be neceſſary to us, in order to produce ſuch Effects, and call them *Wiſdom*, *Underſtanding*, and "*Fore-knowledge*: But, at the ſame Time, we cannot but be ſenſible, that they are of a Nature altogether different "from ours, and that we have no direct and proper Notion or Conception of them; only we are ſure, that they have "Effects, like unto thoſe, that do proceed from Wiſdom, Underſtanding, and Fore-knowledge in us, and that, "when our Works fail to reſemble them in any Particular, as to Perfection, it is by Reaſon of ſome Want or Defect in theſe Qualifications. Thus Reaſon teaches us to aſcribe thoſe *Attributes* to God, by Way of *Reſemblance* "and *Analogy* to ſuch Qualities and Powers, as we find moſt valuable and perfect in ourſelves." Archbiſhop *King*, "on Divine Predeſtination.

than our Ways, and his Thoughts than our Thoughts. Our Powers and Faculties do more imperfectly imitate him, than a Picture does a living Man; and yet, if we reaſon from them by Way of *Analogy* and *Proportion*, they are ſufficient to give us ſuch a Notion of his Divine Perfections, as will oblige us to fear and love, to obey and adore him.

SECT. I.

Of the incommunicable ATTRIBUTES *of* GOD: *And firſt, of his* UNITY.

God's Unity.

IT may be worth Obſervation, perhaps, that the Scripture gives ſometimes the Title of *Gods* to ſuch as are only *Creatures*, upon the Account of ſome Character, or a Reſemblance, that they bear to the *Supreme* Being; that [x] Angels are ſo called, by reaſon of their *Spiritual* Nature, their Wiſdom and Strength, as well as *Miniſterial* Office in the Court of Heaven; that [y] Magiſtrates are ſo named, as being on Earth the *Vicegerents* of God, from whom they derive all their Power, and Right of Government; and that [z] Judges are dignified with the ſame Appellation, becauſe they are inveſted with a Divine Authority, and [a] *judge not for Men, but for the Lord, who is with them in Judgment.* But there be many, who, upon theſe Accounts, may be called Gods, yet is there but *one*, who, by Way of Eminence, is ſo named, *i. e.* one Eternal and Infinite, one Supreme and Independent, one All-powerful and All-wiſe, one perfectly juſt, and merciful, and good God: The God, who created all Things for his own good Pleaſure, and on whoſe *Will* depends every Moment their Preſervation; the God, by whoſe *Providence* every Thing is governed, by whoſe *Wiſdom* every Thing is directed, and by whoſe *Bounty* every Thing is fed: [b] *The Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort*; whoſe Title in Scripture is, *The Moſt High God, God over all, God of Gods*, and *Lord of Lords.* And that there can be but one ſuch God as this, and no more, will appear from a brief Conſideration of ſome of theſe Attributes. For,

Proved from his other Attributes.

IF God be a *ſelf-exiſtent* Being, it is impoſſible there ſhould be more than one: For to ſuppoſe two, or more diſtinct Beings, neceſſarily *exiſting of themſelves*, and *independent* from each other, implies this plain Contradiction, *viz.* [c] that *each* of them being *independent*, they may either of them be ſuppoſed to exiſt alone; ſo that it will be no Contradiction to imagine the other not to exiſt, and conſequently, neither of them will be *neceſſarily* exiſting. Whatſoever therefore exiſts neceſſarily, is the one *ſimple Eſſence* of the *ſelf-exiſting* Being; and whatever differs from that, is not neceſſarily exiſting; becauſe in abſolute Neceſſity there is no *Difference* or *Diverſity* of Exiſtence. Other Beings there may be innumerable, beſides the one *infinite, ſelf-exiſtent*; but no other Being can be ſelf-exiſtent, becauſe it would be *individually* the *ſame*, at the ſame Time that it is ſuppoſed to be *different*.

IF God be an *infinitely perfect* Being, 'tis impoſſible to imagine two ſuch Beings at the ſame Time: [d] Becauſe, either they muſt have *ſeveral* Perfections, or the *ſame*. If they have ſeveral Perfections, it will follow, that neither of them can be *God*, becauſe neither of them have all *poſſible* Perfections: If they have both *equal* Perfections, neither of them again can be God, *i. e. abſolutely* perfect, becauſe it is not ſo great a Privilege to have the ſame equal Perfections, in a Kind of Partnerſhip with another, as to be *alone*, and ſuperior to all others; and to ſuppoſe one of them, (whether with *ſeveral*, or the *ſame Kinds* of Perfections) inferior to the other, ſufficiently ſhews, that one of them is not *properly* God, becauſe not *Supreme*; for Supremacy over all other Beings comes ſo naturally into the Idea of infinite Perfection, [e] that we cannot ſeparate the one from the other. A Being therefore, that has not all other Beings *inferior* and *ſubordinate* to it, cannot be *infinitely perfect*; and what is not infinitely perfect, cannot be *God*.

From Reaſon.

THERE is no Neceſſity then for ſuppoſing more Gods than one; for one *infinite Being* is ſufficient to all the Purpoſes, that we can imagine, and *more* may but occaſion Confuſion. If we can ſuppoſe more than *one*, inveſted with a ſupreme

T Power,

[x] Pſal. xxxiv. 7. compared with Heb. i. 6. [y] Exod. xxii. 28. [z] Pſal. lxxxii. 6. [a] 2 Chron. xix. 6. [b] 2 Cor. i. 3. [c] *Clarke*'s Demonſtration of the Being, &c. of a God. [d] *Wilkins*, on the Principles of Natural Religion. [e] *Burnet*, on the Articles.

Power, we may ſuppoſe a *thouſand*; and, as they muſt all be ſuppoſed to have a *Freedom* of Will, they may poſſibly determine not only *different*, but *contrary* Things; and what then would the Conſequence be? Why, theſe many Gods, *willing* different and contrary Things, would diſturb the Courſe of Nature, and put the whole Frame into Diſorder. But now, [f] the plain Connexion and Dependance of one Thing upon another, through the whole *material* Univerſe; through all Parts of the Earth, and in the viſible Heavens; the Diſpoſition of the Air, and Sea, and Winds; the Motions of the Sun, and Moon, and Stars; and the uſeful Viciſſitudes of Seaſons, for the regular Production of the various Fruits of the Earth, have always been ſufficient to make it evident, even to mean Capacities, that all Things are under the Direction of *one* Power, under the Dominion of *one* God, to whom the whole Univerſe is *uniformly* ſubject.

THE *wiſeſt* of the *Heathen* World, therefore, (among the Multitude of their *inferior* Gods) did always acknowledge one *ſupreme Deity*, in whom they placed their greateſt Confidence, and made him the Object of their Adorations. [g] The *Egyptians* of old (though of all others the moſt infamous for their Multiplicity of Gods) did nevertheleſs aſſert one *Maker*, and *chief Governor* of the World, under whom they ſuppoſed ſeveral *ſubordinate* Deities, who preſided, as his *Deputies*, over ſeveral Parts of the Univerſe. *Orpheus*, indeed, gives us an Account of the *Genealogy* of the Gods, whom he reduces to the Number of three hundred and ſixty; but he afterwards (in a Diſcourſe to his Son *Muſæus*, and other of his Friends) recanted his abſurd Fables, and aſſured them, "That there was but one God, *of himſelf*, and none "beſides him; by whom all other Things were made, and on whom they did "depend: For though Men differ much in their Opinions about other Matters, "(as we have it in [h] *Maximus Tyrius*) yet in this they all agree,——that there is "one God, the King and Father of all, under whom there are leſſer Deities, who "are admitted to ſome Share of Government with him."

From Scripture.

THE Inſtitution of theſe leſſer Deities was probably from a Deſire, in the firſt and rude Ages of the World, to perpetuate the Manners of ſuch *heroick Perſons*, as had, either by their Valour or Inventions, proved *beneficial* to Mankind; and were thereupon thought fit to be advanced to the higheſt Honour after their Death, and admitted (in a *ſubordinate* Way) to ſome Share of Government, eſpecially the *Protection* of their own Countries. And to this the Apoſtle ſeems to allude, when he tells us, [i] *there are Gods many, and Lords many*, (i. e. Angels in Heaven, and Magiſtrates on Earth, as well as the departed Souls of Heroes) but theſe are but figuratively ſo called; *To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all Things, and we in him, and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom are all Things, and we by him.* To which Purpoſe the *Pſalmiſt* profeſſes, [k] *Among the Gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord,——thou art God alone*; by his Servant *Moſes* God himſelf declares, [l] *I, even I am he, and there is no God with me*; and by the Mouth of his holy Prophet, [m] *There is no God beſides me, a juſt God and a Saviour. There is none beſides me*; *for I am God, and there is none elſe*; *I am the firſt, and I am the laſt, and I know no other. And therefore the firſt of all the Commandments is*; *Hear, O* Iſrael, *the Lord our God is one Lord* *.

An Objection anſwered.

"But if the Declarations in Scripture are ſo poſitive, "that *there is only one God*, and, *beſides him none elſe*, how come we to aſcribe Di"vinity to two other Perſons, our bleſſed Saviour and the Holy Ghoſt, when the "Terms are apparently ſo excluſive, that they will admit of no other?" Now † it is a Rule and Maxim, and may be proved by many Inſtances in ſacred and profane Writings, that *excluſive* Terms are not to be interpreted with the utmoſt Rigour, ſo as to leave no room for tacit Exceptions, ſuch as Reaſon and good Senſe will eaſily ſupply. Thus, for Inſtance, when it is ſaid, [n] *that no one knoweth the Father, but the Son, and no one knoweth the Son, but the Father*, were we to interpret theſe *excluſive* Terms with the utmoſt Strictneſs, it would follow, that the Father does not know himſelf, nor the Son himſelf, but no Man of common Senſe will think ſo of either. In like Manner, when it is ſaid of the Son, that [o] *he had a Name written, which no one knew but himſelf.* Upon a ſtrict Conſtruction of theſe Words, it will follow, that the Father himſelf was ignorant of what was known to the Son. And again, when St *Paul* declares, [p] *I determine not to know any thing among you, ſave* Jeſus Chriſt, *and him crucified*, according to a rigorous Acceptation of what the Apoſtle

[f] *Clarke*'s Sermon, Vol. I. [g] *Wilkins*'s Principles. [h] Diſſert. I. [i] 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. [k] Pſal. lxxxvi. 8, 10. [l] Deut. xxxii. 39. [m] Iſa. xlv. 5, 6, 21, 22. * Mark xii. 29. † *Waterland*'s Serm. at Lady *Moyer*'s Lectures. [n] Matt. xi. 27. [o] Rev. xix. 12. [p] 1 Cor. ii. 2.

Apoſtle ſays, he muſt have been ignorant of God the Father, and of many the moſt important Articles of the *Chriſtian* Religion. So that theſe Inſtances plainly ſhew, that, in many Caſes, *excluſive* Terms muſt admit of a favourable Conſtruction: And therefore, when it is ſaid of the Father, that he *only is God*, the excluſive Term *only* need not be ſuppos'd to affect the other two Perſons in the Godhead: They may ſtill be tacitly underſtood, as they certainly are, in all the Expreſſions of *Unity*, which we meet with in Scripture; unleſs it be better to ſay, that the Word *God*, in all ſuch Places, is to be underſtood in the *indefinite* Senſe, and abſtracted from the particular Conſideration of this or that Perſon, in like Manner as the Word *Man* often ſtands not for any particular human Perſon, but for the whole *Species*, or human Nature in General. Since therefore the Doctrine of the Trinity (as we ſhall prove in its proper Place) is demonſtrable from other Scriptures, the Suppoſition is not without Foundation, that the true and real Meaning of the Word *God*, is the Divine Nature, or Godhead, as oft as the Context, or other Circumſtances do not confine its Signification to one Perſon only. Now, if according to this Acceptation, there be no Gods but *one*, the proper Reſult of this Conſideration is, *not to make to ourſelves any more.*

THE *Jews*, to whom this Precept was primarily given, by their Abode in the Land of *Egypt*, had contracted a ſtrange Inclination to *Idolatry*, and, according to the Humour of the Country, were wont to worſhip ſeveral Kinds of living *Creatures*, and ſometimes *Images* made of Stocks and Stones. There is not the like Danger of our tranſgreſſing in this Manner; but there is another Kind of Idolatry, by Divines called *moral*, wherewith we are all liable to be overtaken: For whatever we immoderately ſet our Hearts upon, whatever we love, or fear, or deſire, or truſt in to Exceſs, that we make our *Idol*, and in ſome Meaſure *our God*. And accordingly the Apoſtle, in a very elegant Figure, tells us, that [q] *Covetouſneſs is Idolatry*, and therefore [r] *charges them, who are rich in this World; not to truſt in uncertain Riches, but in the living God.* And, becauſe all leud and debauch'd Perſons have no Regard, no Intention, no Deſire to pleaſe God, but are wholly intent upon pleaſing and gratifying their own corrupt Inclinations, and are entirely Servants and Slaves to their Pleaſures, he therefore very elegantly repreſents theſe likewiſe as *figurative Idolaters*, [s] *whoſe God is their Belly*, and elſewhere, [t] *who ſerve not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own Belly.* The like is to be ſaid of all wilful Sinners, of whatever Denomination, who take Delight in the Practice of what is vicious and unlawful; they make their Luſts their *chief Good*, and, in ſo doing, diſparage the God of Heaven, whom alone they are bound to [u] *love with all their Hearts, and with all their Minds, and with all their Strength.* If there be no Gods but *one*, the Reſult again is, that we place all our Truſt and Confidence in him, who *alone* is able to ſupport, and *ſave us to the uttermoſt*; to which Purpoſe we find God himſelf, in the Words of the Prophet, applying the Conſideration of his *Unity*. [x] *I am God, and none elſe, there is none other beſides me; and therefore look unto me, and be ſav'd, all the Ends of the World.* And indeed to what other Being can we turn ourſelves in any Time of Danger or Diſtreſs. *Angels* are limited, *Men* are impotent, *Idols* are Vanity; and the *Saints* know nothing of us; he only, whoſe *Power* no Strength can reſiſt, whoſe *Wiſdom* no Craft can over-reach, whoſe *Juſtice* no Art can evade, whoſe *Goodneſs* no Malice can pervert, and whoſe *Being* no Time can out-laſt, is the proper Saviour and Defender of Mankind, under which Conſideration the *Royal Pſalmiſt* could triumphantly ſay, [y] *The Lord is my Light, and my Salvation, whom then ſhall I fear? The Lord is the Strength of my Life, of whom ſhall I be afraid? Though an Hoſt ſhould encamp againſt me, my Heart ſhall not fear; though War ſhould riſe againſt me, in this will I be confident.* The whole Univerſe is under his Dominion: All *ſecond* Cauſes are at his Diſpoſal: Angels are his *miniſtring Spirits*: Men his appointed Inſtruments; his Preſence and Inſpection is always with us; the Shadow of *his Wings* always over us; and his providential Care always extended to us; and being under this Perſuaſion, we may take up again the Pſalmiſt's Reſolution, and ſay; [z] *I will lay me down in Peace, and take my Reſt; for it is the Lord only that maketh me to dwell in Safety.*

We ought therefore to place our Heart and Affections on God only.

[q] Eph. v. 5. [r] 1 Tim. vi. 17. [s] Phil. iii. 19. [t] Rom. xvi. 18. [u] Matt. xxii. 37.
[x] Iſa. xlv. 21, 22. [y] Pſal. xxvii. 1, 3. [z] Pſal. iv. 8.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of the ETERNITY *of* GOD.

God's Eternity, what.

BY *Eternity*[a], in this Place, we mean an infinite Duration, which never had a Beginning, and will never have an End. But there are ſeveral Texts in Scripture, wherein the Words *Eternal* and *Everlaſting* are to be underſtood in a more limited Signification. For [b] ſometimes they ſignify no more, than Things of a *long Continuance* or Duration. This indeed is the loweſt *Senſe* of the Words, and in this Senſe it is, that the *Hills* and the *Mountains* are called [c] *everlaſting*, merely becauſe they are ſtrong, and as permanent as the Frame and Conſtitution of the Earth. Sometimes they denote a Duration continuing as long as the Subject exiſts, and then putting it into a State, out of which it ſhall never be reſtored, *even as* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *and the Cities about them, are ſet for an Example, ſuffering the Vengeance of* eternal *Fire*, i. e. of ſuch a Fire, as irrecoverably deſtroy'd theſe wicked Cities, and ended in their final, or *eternal* Overthrow. At other Times they ſignify, in an higher Senſe, a Duration not *figuratively*, but *properly* and *literally everlaſting*, without End, though not without Beginning; for thus *Angels* and the *Souls* of Men are eternal, or *immortal*, and the Happineſs they enjoy in Heaven is *everlaſting Life*, an endleſs and *eternal Weight of Glory*. But the laſt, and higheſt, and moſt abſolutely perfect Senſe of the Words, is, when they ſignify a Duration of *inexhauſtible* and *never-failing* Permanency, both without Beginning, and without End; and not only ſo, but including likewiſe *neceſſary* and *independent* Exiſtence, ſo as, in no Manner whatever, to derive from any other; for what depends not upon any Thing external for its Exiſtence, muſt always *unalterably* be the *ſame*; ſince, having no other Cauſe of its Exiſtence, but the abſolute Neceſſity of its own Nature, it muſt of Neceſſity have exiſted from everlaſting *without Beginning*, and muſt of Neceſſity exiſt to everlaſting *without End.*

Proved from Reaſon.

[d] SINCE God then is a Being, that never depended on any, what ſhould make him ceaſe to be what he has been, to all Eternity, or put any Stop to his own Perfections? He cannot deſire his own Deſtruction; that is againſt the univerſal Nature of all Things to ceaſe from Being, if they can preſerve themſelves. He cannot deſert his own Being; becauſe he cannot but love himſelf, as the beſt and chiefeſt Good. There is Nothing in his Nature, that can introduce any Decay; becauſe he is infinitely ſimple, without any Mixture. There is nothing without, that can controul or circumvent him; becauſe of his infinite Power and Wiſdom: And as he has no *Original* of his Exiſtence, but his very Being is inſéparable from his Nature, ſo he ever was, and ever muſt be. [e] *To be*, we muſt allow, is ſome Degree of Perfection; to *continue in Being* is a greater Degree of that Perfection; and therefore it is evident, that, when we conceive of God as the moſt perfect Being, we muſt conceive him to be *infinite* in this Perfection alſo, as well as in others; and that as his *Power* is not bounded by any oppoſite Strength, nor his *Immenſity* terminated by any Bounds of Place, ſo neither is his *Duration* limited by any Periods of Time, but that he exiſts, and lives, and governs all Things from everlaſting to everlaſting. And therefore we may obſerve farther, that the wiſeſt of the *Heathen* Nations, partly by their Aſſertions, and partly their Symbols and Hieroglyphicks, always expreſſed their Belief of this Article. [f] The antient *Egyptians* repreſented God by a Circle, which is without Beginning and End: The antient *Romans* built round Temples to their Gods, to ſignify the ſame Thing; and, to remind his *Diſciples* of the like Doctrine, it was an Injunction of *Pythagoras*, that, in their Worſhip of God, they ſhould always move in a *circular* Motion. Though therefore their Poets might talk of the Birth and Genealogy of their Gods, [g] yet what they ſay of this Kind is only to be aſcribed to their *Heroes* and *Dæmons*; their *Supreme* God they always look upon as *eternal:* And therefore their known *Epithet* for him was ἀθάνατος, *immortal*, and their uſual Oath ran thus, *Deos teſtor immortales, I call the immortal Gods to witneſs* the Truth of what I ſay. Nay, *Lucretius* himſelf (who has undertaken to repreſent to the World the Doctrine of *Epicurus*, and has robbed the *Divinity* of as many Perfections, as he well could) gives us notwithſtanding this Account of it, [h] *that 'twas abſolutely*

[a] *Fiddes's* Body of Divinity. [b] *Clarke's* Sermons, Vol. I. [c] Hab. iii. 6. [d] *Clarke*, ibid.
[e] *Charnock*, on the Being and Attributes of God. [f] *Edwards*, ibid. [g] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. II.
[h] *Omnis enim per ſe Divûm Natura neceſſe eſt*
Immortali Ævo ſummâ cum Pace fruatur.

lutely neceſſary to the Nature of the Gods, that they ſhould paſs an Eternity in profound Peace and Quiet: For to ſpeak of a God, that may be mortal and corruptible, (according to the Senſe of † *Plutarch*) is ſo monſtrouſly abſurd, that a Man cannot deviſe any thing more wild and extravagant.

From Scripture.

BUT, after all, it muſt be owned, that the richeſt Diſcoveries we have of this Doctrine, are from the Holy Scriptures; which not only repreſent it in the cleareſt Light, but from the Conſideration of this Attribute excite likewiſe the moſt pious and moving Senſations in the Heart. [i] The Royal *Pſalmiſt*, ſpeaking of this Divine Attribute, expreſſes himſelf after a Manner ſuitable to the Light that ſhines through his Compoſitions: [k] *Lord, thou haſt been our Refuge from one Generation to another: Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadſt formed the Earth, and the World, even from Everlaſting to Everlaſting thou art God.* And again, to denote the perpetual Continuance of his Duration: [l] *Thy Years are throughout all Generations: Of Old, thou haſt laid the Foundations of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Work of thy Hands: They ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure; yea, all of them ſhall wax old, as a Garment, and as a Veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed; but thou art the ſame, and thy Years ſhall have no End.* There are ſeveral Paſſages in *Iſaiah* anſwerable to the Sublimity of Thought, and Strength of Expreſſion, that diſtinguiſh that Prophet: [m] *Haſt thou not known, haſt thou not heard, that the everlaſting God, the Lord, the Creator of the Ends of the Earth, fainteth not? For, thus ſaith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, I am the firſt, and I am the laſt, and beſides me there is no God.* And to mention one Paſſage out of the *New Teſtament*, where God is repreſented as ſpeaking himſelf of his eternal Duration: [n] *I am* Alpha *and* Omega, *the Beginning and the Ending, ſays the Lord; which is, and which was, and which is to come;* [o] *for one Day with the Lord,* ſays *St* Peter, *is as a thouſand Years, and a thouſand Years as one Day;* which Words, however *Interpreters* have troubled themſelves about them, as being afraid of a *Contradiction* in them, do plainly import no more than this; that ſuch is the infinite Duration of God, that all the Meaſures of Time can bear no Proportion to it: [p] *For he is great, and we know him not, neither can the Number of his Years be ſearched out.* [q] When therefore we find the Spirit of God in Scripture condeſcending to our Capacities, in ſignifying the *Eternity* of God by *Days* and *Years*, (which are Terms belonging to Time, whereby we meaſure it) we muſt no more believe that God is bounded by Time, or has Succeſſion of Years, becauſe of theſe Expreſſions, than we can conclude him to have a *Body*, becauſe ſeveral Members are aſcribed unto him, the better to help our Conceptions of his glorious Nature and Operations. Now, if God be *eternal*, † it will hence follow, that he is *independent* in his Being, and all his Attributes. For he, that is the *firſt* of Beings, could not receive his Being, or thoſe Divine Perfections, that neceſſarily exiſt together with it, from any other Being, that exiſted after him, becauſe the Cauſe muſt always be before the Effect; and therefore the Apoſtle argues rightly, when he makes the Enquiry, [r] *Who hath firſt given to him, that he may repay him? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all Things; to whom be Glory for ever, Amen.*

Reliance on God, and fearing him, the Reſult of this Attribute.

WHAT we are to learn from the Conſideration of God's Eternity then, is in the Words of the Prophet, [s] *Truſt ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord* Jehovah *there is everlaſting Strength.* When we truſt in Men, we have no real Foundation for our Confidence: Their Kindneſs may change, their Power faint, or, at leaſt, their Lives may vaniſh, and diſappoint our Expectations. And therefore the *Pſalmiſt*'s Advice is, [t] *not to truſt in Princes, nor in any Child of Man, in whom there is no Help; for when his Breath goes forth, he returneth to his Earth, and then all his Thoughts,* of Favour and Kindneſs to us, *periſh*; but *bleſſed is he, that hath the God of* Jacob *for his Help, and whoſe Hope is in the Lord his God.* In like Manner, when we fear Man, we do it without Reaſon, becauſe the Wrath of Man is deſpicable; it has its Limits and Bounds; it can only extend to the Body; it expires with this Life, and cannot follow us beyond the Grave; and therefore the Advice of God, by the Mouth of his Prophet, is, [u] *Fear ye not the Reproach of Men, neither be afraid of their reviling; for the Moth ſhall eat them up like a Garment, and the Worm ſhall eat them up like Wool.* But now the Wrath of the *eternal* God reaches not only the Body, but the Soul likewiſe; is not only confined to this Life, but purſues us to the

† *Adv. Stoicos.* [i] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity. ch. xliv. 6. ch. lvii. 15. [k] Pſal. xc. 2, 4. [l] Pſal. cii. 24, &c. [m] Iſa. xl. 28. [n] Rev. i. 8. [o] 2 Pet. iii. 8. [p] Job xxxvi. 26. [q] *Charnock*, on the Being and Attributes of God. † *Whitby*, on the Attributes. [r] Rom. xi. 35, 36. [s] Iſa. xxvi. 4. [t] Pſal. cxlvi. 3, 4. [u] Iſa. li. 7, 8.

other World; and, after a thouſand and ten thouſand Ages, is ſtill as violent and unappeas'd, as it was the firſt Moment it fell upon us; and therefore our Saviour's Admonition is founded upon the Rules of human Prudence: [x] *Be not afraid of them, that kill the Body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom you ſhall fear; fear him, who, after he hath killed, hath Power to caſt into Hell; yea, I ſay unto you, fear him.*

SECT. III.

Of the IMMENSITY *of* GOD.

God's Immenſity, *what.*

BY the [y] *Immenſity* of God, we mean that *infinite Greatneſs*, whereby his Being has no Bounds or Limits; but does every Way ſpread and diffuſe itſelf, beyond what we can imagine. We cannot therefore define the Preſence of God by any *certain Place*, ſo as to ſay, *Here he is*, but *there he is not*; nor by any *Limits*, ſo as to ſay, *Thus far his Being reacheth, and no farther*; but he is every where preſent, after the moſt infinite Manner, in the darkeſt Corners, and moſt private Receſſes. The moſt ſecret Cloſet that is in the World, the Heart of Man, Darkneſs and Privacy, cannot keep him out; the Preſence of another Being, even of a Body, (which is the groſſeſt Subſtance) cannot exclude him; the whole World doth not confine him; but he fills all the *Space*, that we can conceive beyond this viſible World, and infinitely more, than we can imagine.

Proved from Reaſon.

AND indeed, if we conſider that God is the ſole *Creator* of the World, we cannot but imagine, that he muſt be *preſent* in every Part of it: [z] For if there be any Part of the World, from which God is excluded, whatever Cauſe it be, that does exclude him, limits his Power, and reſtrains him in his Operations. Now, ſince neither the Power, nor any other Attribute of God, is really diſtinguiſhed from his *Eſſence*, but only in our Manner of conceiving it; wherever his Power acts, there muſt his *Eſſence* be, and conſequently, if he created all Things, his Eſſence muſt of Neceſſity always have been, and muſt always continue to be of the ſame Extent with the whole Creation. Nay, had it been his good Pleaſure to have carried the Creation to a farther *Extent*, and added infinite Worlds more to the preſent *Syſtem*, this would have been no *Limitation* to his *Eſſence*, nor would *the Heaven of Heavens*, and all the immenſe Spaces, we may conceive beyond them, have ever been able *to contain it.*

IF we conſider farther, that God is not only Creator, but *Conſerver* of the Univerſe, [a] we muſt neceſſarily conclude, that he is every where: For this is the Argument of the great Apoſtle, when he diſputed with the learned *Athenians*; *He is not far from every one of us*, i. e. he is intimately near, and preſent with us; *for in him we live, and move, and have our Being.* [b] If Things *live*, God is in them, and gives them Life: If Things *move*, God is in them, and gives them Motion: If Things *have any Being*, God is in them, and gives them Being: And ſince by him all Things and Perſons, at the greateſt Diſtance from one another, are preſerved and ſuſtained, he, of Neceſſity, muſt be in every Place, to aſſiſt and concur with them in their ſeveral Operations. [c] So that to ſuppoſe the Divine Eſſence † to be limited or confined, and his Preſence any where excluded, is to contradict this neceſſary Perfection

[x] Luke xii. 4, 5. [y] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons. [z] *Fiddes*'s and *Uſher*'s Body of Divinity.
[a] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity. [b] *Charnock*, on the Attributes. [c] *Tillotſon*'s, ibid.

† A learned Author upon this Subject draws the Argument from one Perfection in the Divine Nature to another, in this Manner: ——— "It is to be obſerved, *ſays he*, that, if *Being* or Exiſtence be at all a Perfection, (as it manifeſtly is the Foundation of all other Perfections) it will follow, that in like Manner, as *continuing* to exiſt through larger Periods of *Time*, ſo alſo *Extent* of Exiſtence (and conſequently of Power) through larger Portions of *Space*, is the having a greater Degree of this Perfection. And as that *Being*, which is abſolutely perfect, muſt, with regard to Duration, be *eternal*; ſo, in reſpect of *Greatneſs*, it muſt likewiſe be *immenſe*. Otherwiſe its Perfections will be limited (which is the Notion of *Imperfection.*) And, by being ſuppoſed to be *finite* in Extent, the Perfection of its Power will as totally be deſtroyed, as it would be, ſuppoſing it to be *temporary* in *Duration*: For as any Being, which is not *always*, at the *Time*, when it is not, is as if it never was; ſo whatever Being is not *every where*, in thoſe Places, where it is not, (to all the Purpoſes of Power and Activity) is as if it had no Being in any Place at all; becauſe no Being can act *where* it is not, any more than *when* it is not. To frame to ourſelves therefore a true Idea of this Attribute, we muſt reaſon in this wiſe; ——Since all created Beings, by the neceſſary Condition of their Nature, are finite and circumſcribed, they can be preſent but in one determinate Place at once, but then the larger the Space is, which any Creature occupies, the greater Share it has of the Perfection of *Extent*, and therefore by inlarging this Perfection to its utmoſt Poſſibility, we come to aſcribe to God (the moſt perfect of all Beings) *Infinity* or *Immenſity*, and are led to conceive of him, as a Being, that fills all Things, and that contains all Things within his own boundleſs Nature; that is not defined or circumſcribed by any Space, but co-exiſts with, and is preſent with all Things, and infinitely beyond whatever we can imagine, without Limits, and without Bounds." *Clarke's* Serm. Vol. I.

fection of God, his univerſal Providence, which, implying in it his *Omniſcience* and *Omnipotence*, muſt likewiſe include his *Omnipreſence*.

WE find that all *finite* Beings have a finite Knowledge, and a finite Power; nor can it be conceiv'd, how *infinite* Underſtanding and Power can be founded any where elſe, but in an infinite *Eſſence*. To have an infinite Knowledge of all Things, that are moſt ſecret and hidden; to be able to do all Things; to ſteer and govern the Actions of all Creatures; and to have a conſtant and watchful Care of them, ſeems, in all Reaſon, to require immediate *Preſence*: And accordingly we may obſerve, that the wiſeſt of the *Heathen* World always eſpouſed this Doctrine: [d] *That God is*, as it were, *a Soul paſſing through, and inſpiring all Nature*; that *Men ought to believe that the Gods ſee all Things, and that all Things are full of them*; inſomuch, [e] *that which Way ſoever thou turneſt thyſelf*, ſays Seneca, *thou ſhalt find God meeting thee*; *for nothing is void of him: He himſelf fills all his Works, and is preſent with the whole Creation.* [f] *Whither* then *ſhall I go from thy Spirit?* ſays holy *David*, in a rapturous Contemplation of this Attribute, *and whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence? If I aſcend up to Heaven, thou art there*; *if I make my Bed in Hell, behold thou art there*; *if I take the Wings of the Morning*, i. e. if I could flee as ſwift as the Morning Light, which darts in a Moment from under one End of Heaven to the other, *and dwell in the uttermoſt Parts of the Sea, even there ſhall thy Hand lead me, and thy Right Hand ſhall hold me*: For [g] *I am a God at Hand, and not a God afar off*; *I fill Heaven and Earth, ſaith the Lord*; *and can any one hide himſelf in ſecret Places, that I ſhall not ſee him?* [h] *Tho' he dig into Hell, thence ſhall my Hand take him*; *tho' he climb up to Heaven, thence will I bring him down*; *and tho' he hide himſelf in the Top of* Carmel, *I will ſearch and take him out from thence.* *From Scripture.*

THUS fully do the *Holy Scriptures*, in Conjunction with the Voice of Reaſon, declare the *Immenſity* of God's Eſſence, and Ubiquity in his Preſence; nor is this Truth any way impair'd by thoſe Expreſſions, where he is ſaid to *dwell in Heaven, to draw near unto us*, or *depart from us*: For ſince (as we ſaid before) there is a Difference to be made between his *eſſential* and *majeſtick* Preſence; [i] his *eſſential* being equally and alike in all Places, while his *majeſtick* diſcovers itſelf by an extraordinary Manifeſtation of his *Glory* chiefly in Heaven; there is likewiſe his *gracious Preſence*, which is attended with miraculous Effects of his Favour, and Kindneſs, and Aſſiſtance, whereby he is ſaid to dwell in the Hearts of good Men, *and with them that are of an humble and contrite Spirit*. When therefore God is ſaid to *make Heaven his Habitation*, it muſt be meant of his *majeſtick Preſence*, which diſplays itſelf, both in its Operations and Attendants, in a more conſpicuous Manner *there*; and when he is ſaid to *draw near to*, or *forſake us*, it muſt be underſtood of his *gracious Preſence*, which is exhibited, or withheld, according to our Behaviour. But, in both Caſes, his *eſſential* Preſence is the ſame: [k] And therefore when we are told, that [l] *Heaven is his Throne*, we are aſſur'd, at the ſame Time, that the *Earth is his Footſtool*. He dwells *on high* in regard of the Excellency of his Name; but he is *in all Places*, in regard of the Diffuſion of his Preſence: He is *far from us*, as he is our angry Judge; and he is *near to us*, as he is our gracious Benefactor: He *departs from us*, when he leaves us to the Frowns of his Juſtice; and he *comes to us*, when he encircles us in the Arms of his Mercy: But ſtill we are to remember, that he was equally preſent with us in both Diſpenſations, in regard of his *Eſſence*. Nor is his Glory and Majeſty at all diminiſh'd, by ſuppoſing him to be always actually preſent in all, even in *impure* Places; [m] for as the Beams of the Sun are no Way ſoiled by the Matter they ſhine upon; and as the Purity and Holineſs of the Divine Nature is not in the leaſt diminiſhed by beholding all the Wickedneſs, and *moral Impurity*, that is acted in the World; ſo the *Omnipreſent* Eſſence of God is not at all affected by any *natural Impurity* of Things, or Places whatever; becauſe it is the ſuperlative Excellency and Prerogative of his Nature, to act always upon all Things every where, but itſelf *to be acted upon by nothing*. *Clear'd from Objections.*

SUCH is the Nature and Perfection of the Divine *Immenſity*, and what now is the proper Affection of Mind, which the Contemplation hereof ſhould beget in us? The ſame Wonder and Aſtoniſhment [n] that Men are uſually ſtruck with, at the firſt Sight of the Sea, when they behold a vaſt Maſs of Waters, without being able to ſurvey the Bounds, or conſider the Depth of it. [o] All other Beings are narrow and contracted, *To be admir'd.*

[d] *Tully*, De Nat. Deorum. De Legibus, Lib. ii. [e] Seneca de Benef. Lib. iv. Cap. 8. [f] Pſal. cxxxix. 7, &c. [g] Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. [h] Amos ix. 2, 3. [i] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons. [k] *Charnock*, on the Attributes. [l] Iſa. lxvi. 1. [m] *Clarke*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [n] *Charnock*, ibid. [o] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity.

contracted, and have their certain Boundaries ſet them, that they cannot paſs. The Earth comparatively is but a Point, the Ocean a Drop, and the whole World an Atom; but the Creator of theſe is *immenſurable, unlimited*, and ſurpaſſing all Bounds. He is every where; he repleniſhes all Places, and his Preſence is ſpread thro' all Extents of *Space*, whether *real* or *imaginary*, and yet, is confin'd by none. [p] Of his other Perfections we meet with ſome Traces and Footſteps in the Creatures, that his Hands have made. In the holy *Angels*, and in holy *Men* too, Men influenc'd and govern'd by the Divine Spirit, there are fair Images of the *Veracity*, the *Wiſdom*, the *Goodneſs*, the *Mercy*, and the *Compaſſion* of God, which yet, are all *infinite* in him: The vaſt Meaſures of *Power*, which are imparted to ſome Creatures, eſpecially to the *Angelick Hoſt*, are ſome Repreſentation of *Omnipotence*; that *Steddineſs* of Soul, which is the Portion *of juſt Men made perfect*, looks a little like the *Immutability* of God: But, in all the Ranks and Orders of Creatures, there is no Semblance of *Immenſity*, or *Omnipreſence* to be found. All is amazing and aſtoniſhing, when we think of it: And therefore (as the Angels *cover their Faces* before him) with what awful Reverence, with what Proſtration of our Souls, ſhould we, creeping Worms, come into his Sight; with what Zeal and Fervency reſound his Praiſe; and, above all, be careful and ſollicitous to ſhun and avoid every Thing, that we are conſcious will offend him!

Dreaded. IF then we believe, that *God ſearcheth us, and knoweth us*; that *he is about our Paths, and about our Beds, and ſpieth out all our Ways*; that *he hath beſet us behind and before, ſo that there is no fleeing from his Preſence*, no Darkneſs, that can hide us from him, no Night, that can conceal our Impieties: If we believe this, I ſay, [q] how ſhould we live in an awful Senſe of his Majeſty, which is always above us, and before us, and about us, and within us; as inſeparable from us, as we are from ourſelves; and whoſe Eye, from the Beginning of our Lives, to the End of our Days, is conſtantly obſerving and inſpecting us! Did Men believe that God is always with them, that he ſees thro' the Darkneſs, wherein they think to hide themſelves, and pries into the moſt ſecret Receſſes of their Hearts; that they do all Things in his Sight, ſpeak all Things in his Hearing, and think all Things in his Preſence; the Thoughts of this would not only put a Check to their exorbitant Lives, and arreſt them in their moſt impetuous Career of Vice, but, even in every looſe Sally of their Minds, and Determinations to do ill, whiſper this preventing Admonition of the wiſe Heathen: "[r] God is preſent, what doſt thou do? What doſt thou con-
" trive? What doſt thou hide? God, thy Keeper, will follow thee; even he,
" whom thou canſt not poſſibly ſhift off: Why therefore doſt thou ſeek for a ſecret
" Place, and ſhunneſt Witneſſes of thy Deeds? 'Tis in vain to expect Privacy, or
" to imagine that thy Actions or Deſigns will paſs undiſcover'd."

And relied on. IF we believe, *that the Eyes of the Lord are in every Place,* [s] *and run to and fro thro' the whole Earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in Behalf of them, whoſe Heart is perfect towards him*; how ſerviceable muſt this Conſideration be, to adminiſter Comfort to all ſuch, as are in Difficulties, and loaded with Afflictions; ſince there is no Calamity or Diſtreſs of Life, that the Contemplation of this Divine Attribute will not alleviate! For, are we in never ſo many Straits? God is with us; in never ſo many Troubles? God is not far from us; never ſo diſtant from our Friends and Acquaintance? We cannot be baniſh'd from his Preſence and Protection, [t] *tho' we be forced to dwell beyond the uttermoſt Parts of the Sea.* In every Country and Climate God is the ſame; *his Hand will there* lead us, *his Right-Hand hold us*, and his omnipotent Goodneſs ſecure and preſerve us; *ſo that*, if we commit our Souls to him in well-doing, *we ſhall not need to fear, tho' the Earth be removed, and the Mountains be carried into the midſt of the Sea: Tho' the Fig-Tree ſhall not bloſſom, nor Fruit be in the Vines; tho' the Labour of the Olive ſhall fail, and the Fields yield no Meat; tho' the Flock ſhall be cut off from the Fold, and there be no Herd in the Stalls, yet will I rejoice* (may the Righteous ſay) *in the Preſence of God; I will joy in the God of my Salvation.*

[p] *Lupton*'s Sermons. [q] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons. [r] *Seneca*, de Benef. Lib. iv. Cap. 8. [s] 2 Chron. xvi. 9.
[t] Pſal. lxv. 8. and xlvi. 2. Hab. iii. 17, 18.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Of the IMMUTABILITY *of* GOD.

BY the *Immutability* of God, we mean, that he always is, and was, and, to all Eternity, will be the *ſame*; being ſubject to no Changes, either in his Eſſence or Perfections. [u] As to his *Eſſence* †, he is ſaid to be *eternal*, *incorruptible*, and only *to have Immortality*; and in Reference to his *Perfections*, he is always the ſame infinitely wiſe, good, and powerful, infinitely juſt and holy *Being*; and from hence follows, that he is conſtant and *immutable* in all his *Decrees* and *Purpoſes*. We indeed are uncertain and *mutable* in our very Nature and Beings, in all thoſe Qualities and Perfections, that belong to us, and in all our Deſigns, Reſolutions and Actions. We frequently change from one Extreme to another; are better or worſe, ſtronger or weaker, more knowing or more ignorant, as it happens, or as we order ourſelves; and are ſo fickle in our Minds, as to alter our *Purpoſes*, and break our *Promiſes*, and contradict our firmeſt and moſt ſerious *Reſolutions*, upon every ſlight Occaſion; but God is everlaſtingly the ſame in all his Perfections; conſtant to his *Intentions*, ſteady to his *Purpoſes*, and immutably fix'd, and perſevering in all his *Decrees* and Reſolutions. *God's Immutability, wherein it conſiſts.*

AND indeed if we conſider the Nature of God, [x] that he is a *ſelf-exiſtent* and *independent Being*, the great Creator and wiſe Governor of all Things; that he is a *ſpiritual* and *ſimple Being*, void of all Parts, and all Mixture, that can induce a Change; that he is a *ſovereign* and *uncontroulable Being*, which nothing from without can *affect*, or work an Alteration in; that he is an *eternal Being*, which always has, and always will go on in the ſame Tenor of Exiſtence; an *omniſcient Being*, who, knowing all Things at one Point of *Intuition*, has no Reaſon to act contrary to his firſt Reſolves; and, in all Reſpects, a *moſt perfect Being*, that can admit of no Addition or Diminution; we cannot but believe, that both in his *Eſſence*, in his *Perfections*, in his *Will*, in his *Purpoſes*, in his *Covenants*, and in his *Threatnings*, he muſt of Neceſſity be *unchangeable*. To ſuppoſe him otherwiſe, is to ſuppoſe him an *imperfect Being*. [y] For, if he change, it muſt be either to a *greater* Perfection, than he had before, or to a *leſs*: If to a *greater Perfection*, then was there plainly a Defect in him, and a Privation of ſomething better, than what he had, or was; then again was he not always the *beſt*, and conſequently, not always *God*: If he changes to a *leſſer Perfection*, then does he fall into a Defect again; loſe a Perfection, he was once poſſeſs'd of; and ſo ceaſing to be the *beſt Being*, ceaſe at the ſame Time to be God. The ſovereign Perfection of the Deity therefore is an invincible *Bar* againſt all Mutability: For, which Way ſoever we ſuppoſe him to *change*, his ſupreme Excellency is null'd or impair'd by it: For ſince in all Changes, there is ſomething from which, and ſomething to which, the Change is made, a Loſs of what the Thing had, or an Acquiſition of what it had not; it muſt follow, that if God change to the *better*, he was not *perfect* before, and ſo not God; if to be *worſe*, he will not be perfect, and ſo no longer God, after the Change. Changeableneſs in Men, we generally eſteem either an Imperfection or a Fault. Their *natural* Changes (as to their Perſons) are from Weakneſs and Vanity; their *moral* Changes (as to their Inclinations and Purpoſes) are from Ignorance or Inconſtancy; and therefore what is a Blemiſh in us, can no ways be compatible with the Glory and Attributes of God. For, if the Divine Nature be, in any Caſe, ſubject to Change, this will caſt an univerſal Damp upon all its Attributes and Excellencies, and make them *like a Flower of the Field*, which, how gay and glorious ſoever, is but fading and corruptible: Nay, the greater its Perfections are, the more imperfect they will become, if once [z] we ſuppoſe them mutable. How cloudy will his Bleſſedneſs be, if it proves liable to Change! How dim his Wiſdom, if it may be obſcur'd! How feeble his Power, if it is capable to decay or languiſh! How will Mercy loſe its Luſtre, if it ſhould change into Wrath, and Juſtice its Dread, if it ſhould be turn'd into Mercy, while the Object of Juſtice remains unfit for Mercy, and the Object of Mercy undeſerving of divine Vengeance! *Prov'd from his Nature.*

From his Perfections.

[u] *Tillotſon*'s Serm. Vol. II.

† In reſpect to his *Eſſence*, God is abſolutely unchangeable, becauſe his Being is *neceſſary*, and his Eſſence *ſelf-exiſtent*: For whatever *neceſſarily is*, as it cannot but *be*, ſo it cannot but *continue* to be *invariably what it is*; and that, which depends upon nothing, can be *affected* by nothing; can be *acted upon* by nothing, can be *chang'd* by nothing, can be *influenc'd* by no *Power*, can be *impair'd* by no *Time*, can be *varied* by no *Accident*. *Clarke*'s Serm. Vol. I.

[x] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity. [y] *Charnock*, on the Attributes. [z] *Charnock*, ibid.

From Reaſon.

AND, as the Mutability of God would darken all his other Perfections, ſo would it take away the *Foundation* and Comfort of all Religion, inſomuch, that we could have no great Honour and Eſteem for a *Being*, that is fickle and inconſtant: His *Threatnings* would loſe their Awe and Force, if his Power and Juſtice were *uncertain*; and his *Promiſes* and Declarations, how graciouſly ſoever tender'd, be of no *Security* to us, if *his Truth and Faithfulneſs* could at any Time *fail*. And therefore, [a] the wiſeſt of the *Heathen* World were always of this Opinion, that *God is never in any wiſe capable* (as *Plato* with great Emphaſis [b] expreſſes it) *of any Kind of Change whatever*, [c] and that *he is always conſtant to his Decrees, and does never repent of his Purpoſes*; [d] *for 'tis neceſſary that he ſhould be always pleas'd with the ſame Thing, who can be pleas'd with nothing, but what is beſt: Nor can this be any Prejudice to his Liberty or his Power, ſince he is his own Neceſſity, i. e.* nothing from without, but his own natural Perfection lays this Neceſſity upon him.

And from Scripture.

BUT the fulleſt Declarations of God's *Immutability*, both as to his Nature and Properties, his Decrees and Purpoſes, his Threats and Promiſes, *&c.* are from his own Divine Oracles, which teach us, that though all other Things are mutable, even the Frame of the Heavens above, and the Foundations of the Earth below, which [e] *ſhall periſh, and wax old as a Garment*; yet *God is the ſame*, the *ſame* through all Generations, and beyond all Generations ſtill unchangeable, the ſame. Which teach us, that [f] the *Counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, and the Thoughts of his Heart to all Generations*; that his *Mercy and Goodneſs endureth for ever*, and his [g] *Righteouſneſs* is firm and immoveable, *like the ſtrong Mountains*. Which teach us, that [h] his *Faithfulneſs he will not ſuffer to fail, his Covenant will he not break, nor alter the Thing that is gone out of his Lips*; ſince [i] *I the Lord have ſpoken it, it ſhall come to paſs, and I will do it, I will not go back, neither will I ſpare*. Which teach us, in ſhort, that in God [k] *the Father of Lights, there is no Variableneſs neither Shadow of turning*; [l] where the Compariſon is taken from the *Sun*, and ſeems to intimate to us, that though that bright *Luminary* is the moſt regular, and the moſt conſtant Diſpenſer of Light and Heat to this inferior World; yet is its Influence frequently varied by different Motions, by Clouds and Shadows, as well as by Alterations within its own Body; whereas God, the *Father* of Spiritual *Light*, the Author and Diſpoſer of all *good and perfect Gifts*, has in him no Motion, no Uncertainty, no Alteration of any of his Perfections, *no Variableneſs, neither Shadow of turning*.

An Objection anſwer'd.

WHENEVER therefore we meet, in Scripture, with any Expreſſions, which ſeem to imply a *Mutability* in God, we muſt be ſatisfied of this, that they are not to be taken in a *ſtrict* Senſe, as if God were at any Time accuſtom'd to alter his Purpoſe, or falſify his Word, or repent of any Action, that he does; [m] *For he is not a Man, that he ſhould lye, neither the Son of Man, that he ſhould repent: Hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? Or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good?* [n] The Expreſſion of *God's Repentance*, therefore, (as well as many other which occur in Holy Writ) is to be underſtood in a *figurative* Senſe; as ſpoken by Way of Condeſcenſion and Accommodation to our Weakneſs and Capacity, and not as caſting any Imputation of *Mutability* or Inconſtancy upon him, as if, out of Levity, or Want of Foreſight, he chang'd and alter'd his Mind. Thus when God is ſaid *to repent, that he made Man*, or that *he made* Saul *King*, the Change was not in him, but in them; and it ſignifies, not that God was *abſolutely* deceiv'd in his Expectations, but that Things had fallen out contrary to all reaſonable Expectation: And therefore the Scripture cloathes God with the human Paſſion of *repenting* and *grieving* for what he had done, as Men are us'd to do, when they are greatly diſappointed, and fall ſhort of their Expectations; to ſignify to us, that the unworthy Behaviour of Men, and their Abuſe of the Divine Goodneſs was ſuch, as was enough to raiſe *Grief* and *Indignation* in his Breaſt, were the *Majeſty* of his Nature capable, as the Infirmity of ours is, of any *uneaſy Senſations*. And, in like Manner, when God is ſaid *to repent him of the Evils, which he threatned*, the Expreſſion only ſignifies thus much, that God does not execute that, which ſeem'd to us to have been his peremptory Purpoſe and Reſolution, *i. e.* he is pleas'd to do otherwiſe, than his Threatnings ſeem'd openly to expreſs, becauſe of ſome *tacit Condition* imply'd in them, which he did not think fit to acquaint us with.

* IN

[a] *Wilkins*, on the Principles of Natural Religion. [b] Ουδὶποτε, ϑδαμῆ, ϑδαμῶς ἀλλοίωσιν ϑδμίαν ἐνδέχεται. In Phæd. [c] Seneca de Benef. Lib. VI. [d] Nat. Qu. 1. Pref. [e] Pſal. cii. 26. [f] Ibid. xxxiii. 11. [g] Ibid. xxxvi. 6. [h] Ibid. lxxxix. 33. [i] Ezek. xxiv. 14. [k] James i. 17. [l] *Clarke*'s Serm. Vol. I. [m] *Numb.* xxiii. 19. [n] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons.

* IN moſt of the Threats, and Promiſes in the Word of God, there is always a Condition expreſs'd or underſtood. 'Tis ſometimes *expreſs'd*, as in this [o] remarkable Text: *If that Nation, againſt whom I have pronounc'd my Judgments, turn from their evil Ways, I will repent me of the Evil, which I thought to bring upon them*; where Amendment of Life is the Condition annex'd: But ſometimes it is only *imply'd*, as in the Caſe of *Nineveh*; *Yet forty Days, and Nineveh ſhall be deſtroyed*, i. e. unleſs that City repent of their Sins. [p] Now, put the Caſe that a People do *repent*, after a Sentence of Deſtruction is gone out from God, yet, ſince that Sentence was not *abſolute*, but *conditional*, there is no Change or Diſappointment in the Divine Will, tho' it be not executed; becauſe the Condition, upon which it is ſuſpended, is Part of the Decree, which being performed, the Sentence is vacated; for, [q] *when the Men of* Nineveh *turned from their evil Ways*, (which was the Condition imply'd in the Denunciation) [r] *The Lord repented of the Evil, he ſaid he would do unto them, and he did it not.* The Sum of the whole Solution is this: [s] The *Declarations* of the Divine Decrees and Purpoſes (as being *prophetical* of the great Events of Providence) are in themſelves *abſolutely fix'd* and *unalterable*; becauſe the Wiſdom of God could not poſſibly be deceiv'd in the original Deſign and Intention of appointing them; but his *Promiſes* and *Threats* (which are merely *perſonal*) either to any particular Man, or to any Number of Men, are always *conditional*; becauſe the Wiſdom of God thought fit to make *theſe* depend on the Behaviour of Men. Good or Evil, Virtue or Vice, are the Things which God has declared his immutable Love or Hatred unto, and his Promiſes and Threats invariably follow theſe Diſpoſitions thro' all the Changes of Mens perſonal Behaviour: And therefore, as the ſame Fire, with one unvaried Action, conſumes combuſtible Matter, but purifies and refines Gold; and, as the ſame Sun, with one continual Heat, melts one Sort of Bodies, and hardens another; ſo God, without any Change or Alteration in himſelf, puniſhes the Wicked, when they ſo *continue*, and ſhews Compaſſion upon the ſame Perſons, when they become truly and ſincerely penitent.

THIS is the State of the Doctrine: and what now are the proper Affections that the Contemplation hereof ſhould beget in our Minds? Here is Matter enough for *Terror* to ſuch, as continue in the Practice of their Sins: *For, if he is an holy God, and of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*; [t] if he is a juſt God, *and will by no means clear the Guilty, nor let Sin go unpuniſh'd*; if he is *omnipotent*, ſo that none can reſiſt his Power, or [u] *ſtand in his Sight when once he is angry*; and, (what gives a ſad Accent to all this) if he, that is thus holy, juſt, and powerful, continues *for ever the ſame*; will never alter, nor put off any of theſe Properties; will never ceaſe to hate Iniquity; will never be reconcil'd to impenitent Sinners; what a fearful Thing muſt it needs be to *fall into his Hands*, who lives for ever, and can puniſh for ever, and whoſe Indignation againſt ſuch as die in their Sins, all they can ſuffer to eternal Ages will be unavailable to appeaſe! *The Uſe of the Doctrine.*

HERE likewiſe is Matter of *Comfort* and Conſolation enough to ſuch, as ſeek the Divine Favour, by leading godly Lives; ſince, in all the Changes and Viciſſitudes of the World, if we do ſo, [x] *he will be our God for ever, and our Guide unto Death:* For [y] *tho' the Mountains depart, and the Hills be removed, yet my Kindneſs* (as God aſſures the Righteous) *ſhall not depart from thee, nor ſhall the Covenant of my Peace be removed.* Which Way ſoever we turn our Eyes, [z] whether without us or within us, we can find no ſolid Ground for Comfort and Confidence but in God. If we look without us, we can perceive nothing but what is ſubject to Change. Men are inconſtant, and as their Circumſtances, or Opinions, or Intereſts vary, aſſume many Times a different Deportment. But admitted they were more fix'd and permanent, yet [a] *what is their Life? It is even as a Vapour, that appeareth for a little Time, and then vaniſheth away.* And therefore, weak muſt that Dependance be, which is placed in Man, [b] *whoſe Breath is in his Noſtrils.* But now our God will be the ſame, *yeſterday and to-day, and for ever.* His Affection to his faithful Children will be the ſame, his Promiſes the ſame: He will not leave us, when we are old, nor forſake us when *our Strength decays*, but [c] *when our Fleſh and our Heart ſhall fail us, he will be then the Strength of our Heart, and our Portion for ever.* A powerful

* *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity.
[o] Jer. xviii. 8.
[p] *Edwards*, ibid.
[q] Jonah. iii. 10.
[r] Ibid.
[s] *Clarke*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[t] Exod. xxxiv. 7.
[u] Pſal. lxxvi. 7.
[x] Ibid. xlviii. 14.
[y] Iſa. liv. 10.
[z] *Whitby*, on the Attributes.
[a] James iv. 14.
[b] Iſa. ii. 22.
[c] Pſal. lxxiii. 26.

powerful Inducement this, [d] to *be ſtedfaſt, and immoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, foraſmuch as we know that our Labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

SECT. V.

Of the Communicable ATTRIBUTES: *And firſt, of the* LIFE *of* GOD.

BESIDES the *Incommunicable* Attributes which we have already conſider'd, there are others ſtil'd *Communicable*, becauſe they are in ſome lower Degree, and by Way of Participation communicated to other *inferior* Beings; and among theſe, that which in the firſt Place occurs to our Thought, is *Life*.

The Life of other Beings.

THE Life of any Being may be ſaid to conſiſt in its having ſuch a *Motion* or Action proper to it, as tends to advance whatever Power or Perfection it is capable of. 'Tis in the *loweſt* Signification of the Word, that Life is attributed to Things, which, by a Motion proper to them, are only preſerv'd in their natural State; in which Senſe, we read of *living Waters*. [e] In the next Degree of Life are thoſe *Beings*, whoſe Parts are contriv'd in ſuch a Manner, as to make them capable of *Nutriment* and *Increaſe*; ſuch are *Stones*, and all *Minerals*, but more eſpecially *Plants* and *Trees*, which have not only their *periodical* Seaſons of flouriſhing and bearing Fruit, but (what is no leſs ſurprizing to obſerve) have the *Principles* of Life ſtill *abiding* in them, (even when there ſeems to be the leaſt Appearance of it) and *awakening* into freſh Vigour and Beauty, according to the nearer Approach of the Sun. In *Animals*, the Organs and Offices of Life are ſtill more curious. They move ſpontaneouſly from Place to Place; they feed, they grow, and ſeverally propagate their Kind; are acted by the *Impreſſion* of diſtant Objects; and not only diſcover all the *Capacities* and Operations of Senſe, but the viſible Effects of *Paſſion* likewiſe, of Anger and Love, of Fear and Revenge; for which there is hardly any accounting by the ſtated Rules of *Mechaniſm*. In *Man*, conſider'd as a rational Creature, the Principle of Life is ſtill more vigorous; for, by Virtue of his *Intellect*, (which we conſider as a Power flowing from the *Life of his Soul*) he can, not only reaſon, and deliberate, and judge of Things within; but even carry his Contemplations into the *inviſible* World of Spirits, converſe with God and Angels, and take a Survey, in his Imagination, of all the innumerable Beatitudes, that the heavenly *Manſions* abound with; in ſhort, can extend himſelf, as it were, over the whole Creation in a Moment, climb up to Heaven, and go down to Hell, and fly to the uttermoſt Parts of the Earth, at the Inſtant he deſigns. In Angels, *who excel in Strength*, and are accounted *the Chief of the Ways of God*, the *Power* of Life (in all the aforeſaid *Functions* and Operations) is ſtill more excellent, in Proportion to the Dignity of their Nature, and the Incumbrances of Fleſh, which they are exempted from: Beſides that, they may probably have certain other *Modifications* of Life peculiar to them, that we are unacquainted with, and can form no manner of Conception of.

The Excellency of God's Life.

THESE are the different Degrees of *vital* Powers, obſervable in created Beings; but when, by theſe Steps, we aſcend to the *original* Source and *Fountain of Life*, how infinitely more powerful and perfect muſt the Operations of it be! For, becauſe whatever we find in the *Effect*, muſt of Neceſſity be more eminently contain'd in the *Cauſe*. God therefore, in the ſtricteſt Senſe, may be only ſaid to *live*, as operating *independently*, and [f] *having Life in himſelf*; whereas thoſe living Creatures, which ſeem to be moſt free and vigorous in their Actions, are only Agents in Subordination to him, [g] *in whom they live, and move, and have their Being*. And, upon this tranſcendent Excellency of his Life, the Scriptures peculiarly appropriate to him, by Way of Diſtinction, the Name of [h] *the Living God, and everlaſting King*; telling us, at the ſame Time, [i] *that he only has Immortality*; that [k] *as to his Years, they fail not*; that [l] *his Work is always perfect*; and himſelf [m] *mighty in Strength, and excellent in Power*.

From Scripture.

THAT

[d] 1 Cor. xv. 58. [e] Vid. *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Part I. [f] John v. 26. [g] Acts xvii. 28.
[h] Jer. x. 10. [i] 1 Tim. vi. 16. [k] Heb. i. 12. [l] Deut. xxxii. 4. [m] Job xxxvii. 23.

THAT ſuch a Life, even in the higheſt Degree of Perfection, is to be attributed to God, we have the Voice of *Reaſon*, as well as *Revelation*, to convince us. For, ſince God is the great *Ruler* and *Governor* of the Univerſe, he muſt needs be inveſted with a Nature capable of ſuch Government, and have all the *vital* Powers in himſelf, which are found diſpers'd among his Creatures; otherwiſe, his other ſuppos'd Perfections are of no Avail; for without Life, he is but an *Idol*, incapable of Rule, and undeſerving our *Adorations*, becauſe he can neither *know* nor *reward* them. Vain therefore and trifling muſt the Notions of thoſe idle *Diſputers of this World* be, who tell us, ſo much of *Nature*, *Fate*, *Chance* and the like; and, in their Diſcourſes, ſeem to aſcribe the Being and Order, the Beauty and Uſefulneſs of the World, and all that is therein, to *theſe*, as their real *Cauſes*, which, in Truth, are nothing, but mere empty *Words*, mere *abſtract* Notions, mere Fictions, or *Idols* of the Imagination, which have no Life, no real Exiſtence, and (as St *Paul* expreſſes himſelf in the like Caſe) are *nothing in the World!* For, what is *Nature?* What is *Fate*, or *Chance?* Are they any real Beings, or Agents? Or can that be truly the Cauſe of any Thing, which itſelf has no Manner of Subſiſtence? Leſs unreaſonable, of the two, were thoſe ancient *Idolaters*, who ſtopping ſhort at the *viſible* Cauſes of the Life, and Plenty, they enjoyed, paid their Obſervance to the Sun, Moon, and Stars of Heaven, as the *Authors* of thoſe Bleſſings, whereof they were only the *Inſtruments*. Leſs unreaſonable, I ſay, was even *this*, than to attribute the Cauſe of all Things to the Efficacy of a mere *abſtract Nothing*; and yet even this, was not pardonable in the darkeſt Times of *Heathen* Ignorance, as the Words of *Job* (who ſeems to have had no Knowledge of the *Jewiſh* Religion) abundantly teach us: *If I beheld the Sun, when it ſhined, and the Moon, walking in Brightneſs, and my Heart hath been ſecretly enticed, or my Mouth hath kiſſed my Hand; this were an Iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judge, for then I ſhould have denied the God that is above.* *And Reaſon.*

How much then are we concern'd to acknowledge this great Truth, *viz.* that, in the higheſt and moſt abſolute Senſe, *God liveth*, and, in reſpect of him, nothing can be ſaid to *live*; to frame our Minds according to the deep Apprehenſions we have of this Divine Attribute; to entertain becoming Thoughts of him, in whom we *live*; to own our continual Dependance on him, by whom we *act*; and to dedicate our whole Lives to his Glory and Honour, who is the ſole *Donor* and *Conſerver* of our *Lives* and *Beings* both! *Reſult of this Doctrine.*

SECT. VI.

Of the SPIRITUALITY *of* GOD.

THAT *God is a Spirit*, i. e. a Subſtance without Body, Parts, and Paſſions, is not only a *Propoſition* of our *Chriſtian* Faith, and what is deduceable from ſeveral Declarations of the *Jewiſh* Law, but a Principle of Religion likewiſe, that the *Heathens* themſelves were not unacquainted with. To this Purpoſe *Cicero* informs us, *That we cannot conceive of God, but as of a pure Mind, entirely free from all mortal Compoſition and Mixture*; for [n] that he cannot be compounded of any *Principles* or *Parts*, is plain from hence, becauſe the Principles and Ingredients, which concur to the making of any Thing, muſt be *antecedent* to the Thing that is made: And therefore, if the Divine Nature were *compounded*, it would follow, that there muſt be ſomething in Nature before God, and he, conſequently, not the *firſt Cauſe*, which Conſideration might induce *Plutarch* to give us this Deſcription of the Divine Nature: *God is a Mind*, ſays he, *an abſtract Being, pure from all Matter, and diſtinguiſhed from whatever is paſſible, or capable of ſuffering.* *God a Spirit univerſally own'd.*

[o] SOME indeed, from the pretended Difficulty of conceiving what a *Spirit* is, have cloathed the Deity with a *corporeal* Subſtance, and would endeavour to perſuade us, that whatever Being exiſts, muſt be *Matter*: Whereas, if we will be impartial, the Notion of a Spirit is as intelligible as that of a Body; and 'tis by the *latter* indeed, that we are able to form ſome tolerable Apprehenſion of what the *former* is. A *Body*, or *Matter*, is ſuch a Subſtance, as conſiſts of external Parts, and conſequently is capable of *Diviſion*, and thereby of *Alteration* and Corruption. It is the Object of external Senſe and Perception; is dull and ſluggiſh in itſelf; has no Principle of Activity, no Motion or Operation of its own Nature; nor any, the leaſt Capacity *In a ſuperlative Degree.*

[n] *Wilkins*, on Natural Religion. [o] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity.

for ſuch refined Acts, as Underſtanding and Thinking. Now that, which has Qualities contrary to theſe; that which, in its own Nature, is *indiviſible* and *incorruptible*; that which can move and actuate itſelf; whoſe chief and diſtinctive Operation is to reaſon and underſtand; and cannot, by any corporeal Senſe, be ſeen, felt, or apprehended, as having no Quantity or Parts, to be the Object of ſenſible Perception, *this is a Spirit*: And, becauſe it is the higheſt Excellence in our Nature, we apply the Term to God; but, at the ſame Time, muſt conceive it in a Senſe, infinitely ſuperior to any Thing we find in ourſelves, *viz.* that he is an *immaterial*, *incorruptible*, *impaſſible* Subſtance, uncapable of being divided, or impair'd by any Force whatever; an immenſe Mind or Intelligence, *ſelf-active*, *ſelf-moving*, and wholly above the Comprehenſion of bodily Senſe; free, in ſhort, from the *Imperfections* of Matter, and all the *Infirmities* of corporeal Beings, and of a far more excellent and tranſcendent Nature, than any finite or created Spirit whatever, as being originally *ſuch*, and therefore not improperly ſtiled, [p] *the Father of Spirits*, and *the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh*.

This proved from Reaſon.

THE firſt and moſt natural Notion we have of God, is, that he is a Being every Way perfect; and from this Notion we muſt argue about the *Properties*, which are attributed to him, and accordingly govern our Reaſonings concerning him: So that, when any Thing is ſaid of God, the beſt Way to know whether it is to be aſcribed to him, is to enquire whether it be a *Perfection* or not; if it be, it belongs to God; if it be not, as we ſaid before, it is to be *ſeparated* from him. Now ſince *ſpiritual* Subſtances are more excellent than *bodily*, [q] the *Soul* of Man more excellent than other Animals, and *Angels* more excellent than Man, as containing in their own Nature whatever Dignity there is in *inferior* Beings; God muſt have an Excellency above all *theſe*, and muſt therefore be infinitely remov'd from the Conditions both of the moſt refin'd *corporeal*, and of the moſt ſublime *ſpiritual* Subſtance.

And Scripture.

AND accordingly we may obſerve, that the wiſeſt, and moſt learned of the *Heathen* World, always embrac'd a Notion ſomething like this; that ſome of the *Greek* Sages were wont to ſtile him νῦς ἀσώματος κοσμοποιός, *the incorporeal Mind, who made the World*, and, among the *Latin* Philoſophers, theſe Appellations were common [r] *Mens Divina, mens pura & ſincera, mens ſoluta & libera, ſegregata ab omni Concretione mortali*: And therefore, we may well expect to find him in Scripture characteriz'd, as [s] *the inviſible God*, [t] *whom no Man has ſeen at any Time, nor can ſee*. To find our Saviour affirming to the *Jews*, that they had [u] *neither ſeen his Shape, nor heard his Voice*; and *Moſes*, after the miraculous Appearance on the Mount, giving them this Caution, [x] *Take heed unto yourſelves, leſt you make you a graven Image, or the Similitude of any Figure; for ye ſaw no Manner of Similitude, in the Day, that the Lord ſpake unto you in* Horeb, *out of the midſt of the Fire*.

WOULD we then form right Apprehenſions of God as to this Particular, [y] we muſt conceive of him, as of a *Being*, infinitely remov'd from all thoſe groſs Properties, which conſtitute the Nature of *Matter* or Body; as of a *Being*, not limited by human *Shape*, nor included under any other *Form* whatever; as excelling, in an infinitely higher Proportion, not only the Souls of Men, but alſo all other *Intellectual* Natures, or *Spirits* whatſoever; and, laſtly, as wholly void of all thoſe Paſſions, Affections, and Commotions, ſuch as Love, Hatred, Anger, *&c.* which are the Properties of *embodied Spirits*, but cannot be aſcrib'd to him in any other, than a *figurative* Senſe.

In what Senſe he is ſaid to have Members.

WE indeed, at preſent, are not able to conceive *ſpiritual* Objects without ſenſible *Images* and Repreſentations; and therefore God, (who is deſirous to make himſelf known to us) in Compliance to this general Defect of human Nature, ſpeaks of his *Attributes* and *Operations* after the *Manner* of Men, and, by all ſuch Repreſentations, ſignifies ſuch Actions of his, as bear ſome Reſemblance to *thoſe*, which we perform by the Faculties, which he hath given us: Inſomuch, that whenever we meet with any of the Parts or Actions of human Bodies aſcribed to God, we ſhould always conceive them in a *figurative* Senſe. By his *Eyes* and *Ears* we are to underſtand his *Omniſcience*; by his *Face*, the Manifeſtation of his *Favour*; by his *Mouth*, the *Revelation* of his Will; by his *Bowels*, the Tenderneſs of his *Compaſſion*; by his *Heart*, the Sincerity of his *Affection*; and by his *Hand*, the Strength of his *Power*, *&c.*

And to be viſible.

And in explaining thoſe Paſſages of the *Old Teſtament*, where God is repreſented as appearing *viſibly*, and, as it were, *Face to Face*, to holy Men of old, (whereas, according

[p] Heb. xii. 9. Numb. xvi. 22. [q] *Charnock*, on the Exiſtence and Attributes. [r] Tuſcul. Quæſt. lib. i.
[s] Col. i. 15. [t] 1 Tim. vi. 16. [u] John v. 37. [x] Deut. iv. 15. [y] *Clarke*'s Serm. Vol. I.

cording to the Nature of Things, the Eſſence of a *pure* Spirit is abſolutely impoſſible to be ſeen, and according to the Senſe of Scripture, the Divine Character is, that he is [z] *the inviſible God whom no Man has ſeen, or can ſee).* It is to be obſerv'd, that tho' God's *Eſſence* is inviſible, [a] yet there is a *Glory*, which is as it were the *Train* and *Attendance* of his Eſſence, (by the *Pſalmiſt*'s Authority, we may call it the *Garment* or Cloathing of his Eſſence; for ſo the *Pſalmiſt* ſays of God, that *he decketh himſelf with Light as with a Garment)* and by the Apoſtle's Authority, we may call it the *Dwelling* or Palace of his Eſſence, (for ſo ſays the Apoſtle concerning God, that *he dwelleth in Light that is unapproachable)* and this *Glory* or Majeſty of God is ſuch, as we muſt all allow to be viſible. There is therefore a Diſtinction to be made between the *eſſential* and *majeſtick* Preſence of God; for his *eſſential* Preſence is infinite; and ſo every where, and every where unſeen; but, on the contrary, his *majeſtick* Preſence is the *notifying* or diſcovering of his *eſſential* Preſence, in a determinate Place, by ſome Kind of *magnificent luminous* Appearance; and this we know has been *accommodated*, and brought down to the Perception even of mortal Eyes. Thus all the People *ſaw God Face to Face*, by ſeeing this *Symbol* of his Preſence on the Mount, and thus, in all Probability, *Jacob* ſaw God, becauſe he ſeems to rejoice that, after ſuch a Sight, his [b] *Life was preſerv'd*, contrary to the prevailing Notion, that no Man could ſee the *Face of God*, and live.

We are not to liken him to any Thing.

SINCE Reaſon and Scripture then both declare, that God is a *Spirit*, [c] we muſt be careful how we repreſent him to our Thoughts, as having a Body, or any corporeal Shape or Members. He condeſcends indeed, to repreſent himſelf to us according to our Capacities, but it will be very *ungrateful* in us, if we abuſe his Condeſcenſion, to the Blemiſh and Reproach of his Divine Nature; and, becauſe he is pleas'd to *ſtoop* to our Weakneſs, to level him to our Infirmities. Above all, we muſt be careful how we worſhip God under any Image or ſenſible Repreſentation: [d] For, to put a religious Character upon any *Image*, form'd by the corrupt Imagination of Man, as a Repreſentation of the inviſible and ſpiritual Deity, is to think [e] *the Godhead to be like Silver, or Gold, or Stone, graven by Art or Man's Device.* [f] *Have ye not known? Have ye not heard? Hath it not been told you from the Beginning?* (ſays the Prophet, upbraiding the People with their Folly) *It is God, that ſitteth upon the Circle of the Earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are as Graſhoppers; that ſtretcheth out the Heavens as a Curtain, and ſpreadeth them out as a Tent to dwell in; that bringeth Princes to nothing, and maketh the Judges of the Earth as Vanity. To whom then will ye liken me? And to whom will ye make me equal, ſaith the Holy One?* 'Tis ridiculous then to think of repreſenting a Being, ſo inconceivably great and mighty, by the Work of any Man's Hands; and to worſhip him thro' any ſuch Medium, is the groſſeſt *Idolatry*. The Works of God's own Hands, eſpecially thoſe great celeſtial Bodies, that we behold, are certainly a more excellent Repreſentation of him, than any Thing of human Compoſition; and [g] yet *kiſſing the Hand to the Sun when it ſhineth, or to the Moon walking in Brightneſs*, (as Repreſentative of the Excellency and Majeſty of God) is declared Idolatry in the Scriptures, *a Denial of the God that is above, and an Iniquity fit to be puniſhed by the Judge*; much more is our debaſing and adoring his Divine Nature, thro' Repreſentations vaſtly meaner, and more contemptible.

But to worſhip him in Spirit, and how to do it.

THE Direction that the Holy Scripture gives us in what Manner we are to behave towards God, is, not to repreſent him, even in our Imagination, *by the Likeneſs of any Thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the Waters under the Earth*; but as [h] *he is a Spirit, to worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth.* Now to lay a Foundation for this *ſpiritual Worſhip* of God, we muſt be careful, at all Times, to poſſeſs our Minds with right Apprehenſions of his Nature and Perfections: [i] To repreſent him to our Thoughts, as our *chief Good*, and our *exceeding great Reward*, and therefore worthy to be belov'd by all: As a God, who is infinitely *wiſe* and *powerful*, able to preſerve us from all the Evils we dread, and to confer on us all the Bleſſings we want: A God, rich in *Mercy* and *Compaſſion*, of great Kindneſs to thoſe, that endeavour to be Objects of his Love, and a bountiful Rewarder of all them that ſerve him in Sincerity: A God of exact *Truth* and *Faithfulneſs*, ſincere in all his Promiſes and Threats, his Exhortations and Addreſſes, his Offers and Declarations made to the Sons of Men: A God of *Holineſs* and *Purity*, who abhors all

[z] 1 Tim. i. 17. [a] *Young*'s Sermons. [b] Gen. xxxii. 30. [c] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [d] *Charnock*, on the Exiſtence and Attributes. [e] Acts xvii. 29. [f] Iſa. xl. 21, &c. [g] Job xxxi. 26, &c. [h] John iv. 24. [i] *Whitby*, on the Attributes.

all Iniquity, and ſtands bound both in Juſtice and Veracity, to *render unto every Man according to his Works:* And, laſtly, a God, who is continually preſent with us, who is [k] *about our Paths, and about our Beds, and ſpieth out all our Ways*, in order to *bring every Work into Judgment, with every ſecret Thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

THESE are the Notions of God that we muſt endeavour to impreſs upon our Minds; and from theſe will that inward and *ſpiritual Worſhip* of him, which we are now enquiring after, naturally flow. The Conſideration of his *Power, Truth*, and *Faithfulneſs*, will cauſe us to *rely* upon his Promiſes and *hope* in his Word. The Apprehenſion of his *Goodneſs, Wiſdom*, and *Readineſs* to help us, will engage us to *truſt* in him, to wait on him, and to pour out our Souls before him. The Senſe of his *Greatneſs* and *Purity* will diſpoſe us to reverence his Majeſty, and to walk humbly with him. The Belief of his ſovereign *Power* to diſpoſe of us, and our Concernments, will move us with Patience to *ſubmit* to his Will, and with Chearfulneſs to *reſign* ourſelves to his Diſpoſal. The Thought of his *Juſtice*, and *all-ſeeing* Eye, will beget in us a religious *Fear* of offending him, and an holy Care to *purify ourſelves from all Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit.* And (to name no more) the Conception of him, as our *chiefeſt Good* and only true *Felicity*, will make us inwardly to *long* and *thirſt* for him, to chuſe him as our *Portion*, and, at every Reflection upon his Bounty and Goodneſs, to break out into this Soliloquy; [l] *Whom have I in Heaven but thee! And there is none upon Earth that I deſire beſides thee.* Thus Love and Deſire, Truſt and Reliance, Humility and Reverence, Submiſſion and Reſignation, *&c.* fixt ſtedfaſtly in the Mind, and exerted upon all proper Calls and Occaſions, are that *ſpiritual Worſhip*, which the Conſideration of the Divine *Attributes* is apt to beget in us. Theſe are called [m] *the Kingdom of God within us:* In theſe conſiſt the Power and Life of *Godlineſs:* From theſe all *outward* Worſhip derives its Goodneſs; and without theſe, the utmoſt Expreſſions of our Homage will be but a lifeleſs Service, and a *Sacrifice* without an Heart.

GOD however requires of us to *glorify him with our Bodies, which are his*, as well as *our Spirits*; and therefore this *internal* Worſhip muſt not be ſuppoſed to exclude, or to ſtand in Oppoſition to what is *external.* Prayer, Praiſes, and Thankſgiving, a ſolemn Invocation of God's Name upon proper Occaſions, Hearing his Word preached, and Entering into Covenant with him by Sacraments, and theſe performed in the moſt devout and reverential Manner, that is poſſible, are Duties of perpetual Obligation: Only we muſt take abundant Care, that, as we ſerve the *Searcher of Hearts*, one that is preſent to our Spirits, and conſcious of their moſt ſecret Motions, we make our † Minds, our Thoughts, and Affections accompany what we do of this Kind. For "the beſt and choiceſt Oblation, ſays [n] a wiſe *Heathen*, that "thou canſt make to God, is thy *Soul.* 'Tis this only, that joins us to God; there "being no Affinity between Matter and Spirit, as there is between Spirit and Spirit, "from whence ariſes our Likeneſs and Communion with God. The worſt and "vileſt Perſons can bring rich Offerings to the Altar, but good Men only can make "an Oblation of their Hearts: Wherefore *ſays he*, give thyſelf to God, give ſome"thing of thine own, ſomething that is inward; for Things without us pleaſe not "God."

SECT. VII.

Of the KNOWLEDGE *of* GOD.

The Knowledge of God, what.

BY the *Knowledge* [o] of God, we mean that Perfection or Faculty, whereby he underſtands, and conſiders Things abſolutely, and as they are in their own Natures, their Powers, Properties, and Differences, together with all the Circumſtances belonging to them. [p] Our Knowledge and Comprehenſion of Things indeed is *ſhort*, as our Duration, and *narrow*, as our Extent. Our *Senſes* inform us of the Surfaces, and external Properties of a few Things, within the Reach of our imperfect *Organs.* Our *Imaginations* and Conjectures extend a little farther, to a greater Number of Things, but with greater Uncertainty, and leſs Diſtinctneſs. *Angels*, according to the greater Activity of their Natures, and higher Perfection of

[k] Eccles. xii. 14. [l] Pſal. lxxiii. 25. [m] Luke xvii. 21. † Adv. Stoicos. [n] *Hierocles*, on *Pythagoras*'s Golden Verſes. [o] *Wilkins*, of the Principles of Natural Religion. [p] *Clarke*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

of their Faculties, comprehend ſtill *more* Things, than we, more in *Number*, and with a clearer *Inſight*; yet are they limited, and bounded within their proper Sphere, as we within *ours*. But the Knowledge of God is abſolutely unlimited, and perfectly univerſal; infinite as his *Duration*, and boundleſs as his *Immenſity*; extending to all Things, every where, without *Exception*, and to all the *Properties* and Powers of Things, without *Reſtriction*.

Prov'd from Reaſon.

[q] AND indeed to deny this Perfection, even in its utmoſt Latitude, to God, would be ſtrangely to eclipſe the divine Nature, and bring an univerſal Obſcurity upon all its other Attributes. It would deſtroy his *Wiſdom*; for where there is no *Knowledge* of the Nature and Qualities of Things, there can be no *Application* of Means to Ends, nor any proportioning one Thing to another: It would weaken his *Power*; for Power without Knowledge muſt, in moſt Caſes, be *ineffectual*, and in many produce great Irregularities: It would take away his *Providence*; [r] for without Knowledge there could be no *Forecaſt* or Proviſion for the future, nor any Kind of regular *Government* of the World: And (what is more) it would take away his *Goodneſs* too, ſince no Being can properly be ſaid to be *good*, that acts either out of *Ignorance* or blind *Neceſſity*. The Idea of *Eternity* and *Omnipreſence*, devoid of *Knowledge*, is as the Notion of *Darkneſs* compar'd with that of *Light*, or as the Notion of the *World* without the Sun to illuminate it; and therefore we find *Plato* aſſerting, that *Wiſdom* was of ſuch Excellency, that it could not *properly be aſcrib'd to any but God*; *Seneca* maintaining, [s] *that nothing is hid from God, who is intimate to our Minds, and mingles himſelf with our very Thoughts*; and *Tully* making it an Argument for a [t] ſtrict and cautious Behaviour, both in private and publick.

From Scripture.

THE Holy Scriptures however are more eſpecially copious in Declarations of this Kind, when they aſcribe every Object of Knowledge to God, and give us the Reaſons for this Immenſity of his Underſtanding. Thus, in Relation to his own *Eſſence* and Attributes, they teach us, [u] *that the Spirit of God knoweth the deep Things of God:* In Relation to his own *Works*, they aſſure us, that [x] *known unto him are all his Works, from the Beginning of the World, neither is there any Creature, that is not manifeſt in his Sight:* In Relation to the Works of his *Enemies*, they tell us, that [y] *Hell and Deſtruction are before him*, and that [z] *there is no Darkneſs or Shadow of Death where the Workers of Iniquity may hide themſelves*; in Relation to *human Actions*, [a] *that the Ways of Man are before the Eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his Goings*; in Relation to their *Words*, [b] *that there is not a Word in their Tongue, but he knoweth it altogether*; and in Relation to their *Thoughts* and *Intentions*, that [c] he *ſearches their Hearts, and underſtandeth every Imagination of their Thoughts*; [d] *for the Lord ſeeth not as Man ſeeth; Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but the Lord looketh on the Heart.*

THUS the Scriptures repreſent the Omniſcience of God: And they ſupply us farther with two Conſiderations, that of his *Preſence*, and that of his *Creative-Power*, whereby this Notion may be better clear'd, and the Conviction of it confirm'd upon our Minds.

1. THE Royal *Pſalmiſt*, having aſſerted the Omniſcience of God at large, [e] *Lord, thou haſt ſearched me, and known me; thou knoweſt my Down-ſitting, and my Up-riſing, art acquainted with my Ways, and underſtandeſt my Thoughts afar off*, confirms his Argument, and inculcates the Belief of the Doctrine, with this Reflection: *Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit? Or, whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence? If I climb up to Heaven thou art there, &c.* intimating, that God's *Immenſity* neceſſarily inferr'd an Univerſality of his Knowledge, and that he, who is *every where*, muſt of Neceſſity know *every Thing*. [f] Now this Conſideration of God's *Omnipreſence* is uſeful to prevent thoſe Miſtakes in our Opinion of him, which we are wont to take up, by thinking of him with Reſemblance to ourſelves. We ourſelves are confin'd to a Place, and limited to a certain Diſtance in our Perception of Things; and ſo we are apt, in our firſt Thoughts, to limit, and confine God, and conſequently to imagine, that a conſtant Inſpection and Obſervation of *all* Men, and *all* their Actions, would beget either Trouble, or Wearineſs, or Diſtraction in God, becauſe any great Application does ſo in us: Whereas, on the contrary, the Notion of God's *being every where*, leads our Underſtanding to apprehend, that it is as eaſy for him to obſerve

[q] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [r] *Wilkins*'s Principles. [s] Nihil Deo clauſum, intereſt Animis noſtris, & mediis Cogitationibus intervenit. *Sen. Epiſt.* [t] Quis enim non timeat Deum, omnia pervidentem, & cogitantem, & animadvertentem, curioſum, & Negotii plenum Deum? *Tull. De Nat. Deor.* Lib. I. [u] 1 Cor. ii. 10. [x] Acts xv. 18. [y] Prov. xv. 11. [z] Job xxxiv. 22. [a] Prov. v. 21. [b] Pſal. cxxxix. 4. [c] 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. [d] 1 Sam. xvi. 7. [e] Pſal. cxxxix. 1, 2. [f] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

every Man, as *one* Man, and *every* Action, as *one ſingle* Action of our Lives; that he, conſequently, is as near to our *Mouth*, when we ſpeak, as the Man is, who leans his Ear to our *Whiſpers*; as near to our *Actions*, when we do any Thing in ſecret, as they are, whom we admit to our *Confederacy*; and as near to our *Thoughts*, when we purpoſe, wiſh, or deſign any Thing, as our own Soul is, that conceives them, and in Conſequence, that he is *familiarly* acquainted with them all.

2. THE other Conſideration, which the Scripture offers, to inculcate the Belief of God's Omniſcience, is that of his *Power*, *viz.* that *plaſtick operative* Power, whereby he is the Fountain and Author of all our Beings; from which Topick the ſame Royal *Pſalmiſt* argues thus; [g] *He that planted the Ear, ſhall he not hear? He that formed the Eye, ſhall not he ſee? He that teacheth Man Knowledge, ſhall not he underſtand?* Which, (if thrown into a general Form of Reaſoning) will run thus: "All our *Faculties* of Knowledge, all our *Organs* and Inſtruments of Information, "we have from God; and can we think then that he wants any for his own Uſe? "All of us are his *Creatures*; and can we conceive that he has made any Creature of "ſuch a Capacity, as to act any Thing beſide his Privity, or beyond his Comprehen-"ſion?" This would be a weak, and (as our Author calls it) a *brutiſh Imagination*. [h] The Truth is, *if God gives Wiſdom to the Wiſe, and Knowledge to Men of Underſtanding*; if he communicates this Perfection to his Creatures, the Inference muſt be, that he himſelf is poſſeſs'd of it, in a much more eminent Degree, than they; [i] that his Knowledge is *deep* and *intimate*, reaching to the very Eſſence of Things, theirs but *ſlight* and *ſuperficial*; his *clear* and *diſtinct*, theirs *confus'd* and *dark*; his *certain* and *infallible*, theirs *doubtful* and *liable* to Miſtakes; his *eaſy* and *permanent*, theirs *gotten* with much Pains, and ſoon *loſt* again by the Defects of Memory or Age; his *univerſal* and extending to all Objects, theirs *ſhort* and *narrow*, reaching only to ſome few Things, while [k] *that which is wanting cannot be number'd*; and therefore, [l] *as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, ſo* (the Prophet has told us) are *his Ways above their Ways, and his Thoughts above their Thoughts.*

An Objection. "BUT how *tranſcendent* ſoever the Knowledge of God be, yet ſome Things it "muſt, of Neceſſity, be ignorant of; ſince we cannot conceive, how Fore-Know-"ledge in him *can be conſiſtent with Liberty of Action in Man*; and yet, without "ſuch Liberty, the very Formality of all Virtue and Vice is deſtroyed."

Anſwer'd. IF indeed the † *Preſcience* of God and the Freedom of Man were abſolutely *inconſiſtent*, it would follow, not, that Man's Actions were not *free* (for that would vacate all Religion at once) but that ſuch Actions, as Man's are, and without which rational Creatures could not be rational Creatures, were not the Objects of divine *Fore-Knowledge*: And, in ſuch Caſe, it would be no more a Diminution of God's *Omniſcience*, not to know Things *impoſſible*, and *contradictory* to be *known*, than 'tis a Diminution of his *Omnipotence*, not to be able to do Things impoſſible, and contradictory to be *done*. But this is not the Caſe. Fore-Knowledge in itſelf has no Influence at all upon the Things fore-known, becauſe Things would be juſt as they are, and no otherwiſe, though there was no Fore-Knowledge. [m] The *Futurity* of free Actions is exactly the *ſame*, and, in the Nature of Things themſelves, of the *like* Certainty in *Event*, whether they *can*, or *cannot* be fore-known: And, as our knowing a Thing to *be*, when we ſee *it is*, does not hinder an Action from being *free*, notwithſtanding that it is then *certain*, and cannot *but* be, what it is; ſo God's *foreſeeing* that any Action will be done, does not at all hinder its being *free*, becauſe his fore-ſeeing Things to come does no more *influence*, or alter the Nature of Things, than our *ſeeing* them, when they *are*. The Truth is, [n] God, who has an intimate Knowledge of the State of our Souls, of all the Affections, Paſſions, Springs, and Weights, wherewith they are mov'd, knows infallibly, how every *poſſible* Object, that preſents itſelf, will determine our Judgments and Choices, tho' he himſelf does not determine them at all: As the Man, who ſees the *Setting* of the *Chimes*, can tell

[g] Pſal. xciv. 9, 10. [h] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [i] *Wilkins*'s, ibid. [k] Eccleſ. i. 15. [l] Iſai. lv. 9.

† The Learned Author of *Divine Predeſtination* has made it evident, that *Fore-Knowledge* in God is of a different Kind, quite of another Nature, than what it is in Man, and that we only aſcribe it to him by Way of Analogy and Compariſon; that, in ſhort, as it is in God, we have no proper and adequate Notions of it, any more than a Man born blind has of Sight and Colours, and that therefore we ought no more to pretend to determine, what is *conſiſtent*, or *not conſiſtent* with it, than a *blind* Man ought to determine, from what he hears, or feels, to what *Objects* the Senſe of Seeing reaches; for this would be to reaſon from what is only *comparatively*, and *improperly* aſcrib'd to God, and by Way of *Analogy* and Accommodation to our Capacities, as if it were *properly* and *univocally* the ſame in him, and in us.

[m] *Clarke*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [n] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

tell ſeveral Hours before, what Time they will play, without any poſitive Influence either upon their *Setting* or their *Playing*.

1. THIS Perfection of the divine Knowledge then, ought, in all Reaſon, to excite our Veneration, and humble our Minds, at the ſame Time, under a Senſe of our great Deficiency in that Particular. [o] Of all the Attainments of human Nature, there is nothing, that we admire ſo much as *Knowledge*; and yet the higheſt Knowledge of Man, the moſt glorious Underſtanding, that ever any one of the Sons of Men were endow'd with, compar'd to the Knowledge of God, is but as a *Gloworm* to the *Sun*. If then we eſteem *theſe Candles of the Lord*, which ſhine ſo imperfectly in the *Dark*; if we reverence a little Knowledge, compaſs'd about with much Ignorance; how ſhould we admire the *Father of Lights, in whom is no Darkneſs at all*, and adore that Knowledge, which has not the leaſt Blemiſh or Imperfection in it! [p] *Who hath put Wiſdom into the inward Parts? or who has given Underſtanding to the Heart?* Is a Queſtion that God himſelf puts to *Job*, and the Anſwer is very obvious: Even the original Cauſe and Author of all Things: But then the Conſequence muſt be, that *Knowledge*, and all other Faculties in created Beings, not only in Men, but even in the higheſt Angels alſo, are but little *Images* and Shadows of Perfection; *faint* and derivative Rays of Light from the Incomprehenſible *Fountain* of Glory; in Compariſon of whom our Knowledge itſelf is *Ignorance*, and our Light as *Darkneſs* [q]. *The Reſult of this is Veneration.*

2. AND as the *Omniſcience* of God ſhews the Weakneſs of human Underſtanding, ſo it expoſes the Folly of all *Colluſion* and *Hypocriſy*. How vain it is to make a Shew of that *outwardly*, which *inwardly*, and in our Hearts we are not; to put on a *Maſk* of Religion, and paint ourſelves beautifully without, when inwardly we are full of *Rottenneſs* and *Uncleanneſs*. If we were to deal with Men, this would not be a very wiſe Way, ſince there is Danger of Diſcovery even from them: But when we have to do with God, [r] *to whom the Works of Men are as the Sun before him*; to whom all our Diſguiſes are tranſparent, and all our little Arts of Concealment ſignify nothing, 'tis Madneſs *to hide our Iniquity in our Boſom*, or to think that any Place, tho' never ſo ſecret and retir'd, can conceal us from his Sight, [s] *to whom Darkneſs is no Darkneſs at all, but the Night is as clear as the Day, and the Darkneſs and Light are both alike.* *Humility.*

3. RATHER let the Conſideration of this Attribute engage us to live, as under his continual Obſervation and Inſpection. 'Tis the Advice of [t] *Seneca* to his Friend *Lucilius*, that he ſhould repreſent to his Mind and Thoughts *Socrates*, or *Ariſtides*, or *Cato*, or ſome other excellent and worthy Man, as a conſtant Obſerver and Examiner of his Actions; and this he recommends as a good Expedient towards reforming a Man's Life, and making him more virtuous in his Converſation. We are told by ſome late Writers, that the People of *China* think themſelves oblig'd to be very wary and circumſpect in all their Actions, from an Opinion generally prevailing among them, *that the Souls of their departed Friends are preſent with them, and take ſpecial Notice of their Behaviour.* This is but a falſe Surmiſe; but what I am ſpeaking of is a real Truth: We have a conſtant Inſpector and Obſerver of our Lives, noting down every Thing, we think, ſpeak, or do, in his all-containing Mind, to be produc'd for, or againſt us, at the laſt great Audit. [u] As therefore he is ever preſent with us, and his *Eyes* always upon us, ſo let *ours* proportionably be upon him; keeping our Minds in a lively Senſe of the *Venerableneſs* of his Preſence, and the *Awfulneſs* of his Inſpection, which is the beſt Method, to guard us from treating that *Inſpection irreverently*, and to keep us tender of doing any Thing *unſuitable* to ſuch a *Preſence*. *And Circumſpection.*

SECT. VIII.

Of the WISDOM *of* GOD.

THE *Knowledge* and *Wiſdom* of God, though both one in his infinite *Eſſence*, may nevertheleſs admit of this Diſtinction, that the one is the *ſpeculative*, and the other the *practical* Act of the divine Mind; that the one implies a bare Knowledge of Things, the other the ordering and diſpoſing of Things to a proper End: That *The Wiſdom of God, what.*

[o] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [p] Job xxxviii. 36. [q] *Clarke*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [r] Eccleſiaſticus xvii. 19. [s] Pſal. cxxxix. 11, 12. [t] Epiſt. 11 & 25. [u] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

[x] That the *Knowledge* of God, consequently, is a perfect Comprehension of the Nature of all Things, with all their Qualities, Powers, and Circumstances; whereas the *Wisdom* of God is a perfect Comprehension of the *Respects* and *Relations* of Things to one another, of their Harmony and Opposition, their Fitness and Unfitness to such and such Ends.

Prov'd from Reason.

THAT there is in the Mind of God such a Faculty, as we term *Wisdom*, or a Power of disposing and regulating Things to Purposes, best conducing to the Advancement of his own Glory and Honour, no one can doubt, who considers him as the *Center* of all Perfection. As he is indeed the sole *original* Cause and Author of all Things, [y] he cannot but know, what each of their Powers and Faculties can produce; cannot but see, at one View, all the possible Circumstances and Dispositions of Things; all their mutual Relations and Dependences, all their Compositions and Divisions, their Variations and Changes, their Fitness or Suitableness to certain respective Ends and Purposes; and, beholding all these Things at once, of Necessity he cannot but know, without all Possibility of Error, what is the best and *propereſt End* to be brought about, in every possible Method of disposing Things; which are the *fittest Means* to that End; and how those Means may be best employ'd, in order to accomplish it: And, having no wrong *Inclinations* within to change his Will, or Opposition from without to withstand his Power, 'tis plain, that he will always effect, what, in Right and Reason, is *fittest* to be done. Now this is *infinite* and perfect Wisdom; to know always the best End; to see always the *Means*, that will produce that End; to understand exactly how to apply those Means, and to have always a right and invariable Inclination to act accordingly.

MANKIND, I think, are agreed in this, that [z] Wisdom is the most eminent of all human Virtues, without which the other Graces of the Mind lose their Value and Lustre, (insomuch, that *Mercy* becomes Weakness, and *Justice* Cruelty, *Patience* Timorousness, and *Courage* Brutality, without the Conduct of Wisdom) and therefore we cannot but allow, that God (who is the Author and Giver of Being to the whole Universe) must in himself possess whatever is noble in any of his Creatures: If Wisdom, which is the most noble Perfection in any Creature, be wanting in him, he must be deficient in that, which every one accounts the highest Excellency. Nay, he must be deficient in that, whereof himself is confessedly the *Fountain* and Original, and distribute to others, what, upon this Supposition, he has not the Power to give. Since *every good and perfect Gift* therefore *cometh from God above*, and what is in the *Effect* is always more eminent and perfect in the *Cause*; it must follow, that he only is *originally* and *independently* wise, and that all created Wisdom, whether of Men or Angels, is but a Spark of the divine Light, like that of the *Planets* borrow'd from the *Sun*.

From Scripture.

WITH this Sentiment it is, that holy *Job* asks the Question: [a] *Where shall Wisdom be found? Or, where is the Place of Understanding?* And then, proceeding to observe, that it is neither *to be found in the Land of the Living*, nor purchas'd with the most valuable Merchandize, he resolves us at length where we may seek for the original Source of it: *God understandeth the Way, and knoweth the Place thereof; for he looketh to the Ends of the Earth, and seeth the whole Heaven, to make the Weight for the Winds, to weigh the Waters by Measure, to make a Decree for the Rain, and a Way for the Lightning of the Thunder.* And in like Manner, to shew the Excellency and Superiority of the divine Wisdom, in a comparative Sense, the Prophet expresses himself in a very sublime Manner: [b] *Who hath measur'd the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand, meted out Heaven with a Span, comprehended the Dust of the Earth in a Measure, and weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his Counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he Counsel? And who instructed him in the Path of Judgment, and taught him Knowledge, and shewed to him the Way of Understanding?*

From the Works of Creation and Providence.

AND indeed, if we take never so slight a Survey of the Works of *Creation* and *Providence*, we cannot but perceive in them very legible Characters of divine Wisdom. [c] The Sun, and Moon, and other Luminaries in Heaven, whether *planetary* or *fixt*, with their different Orders and Revolutions; the Air, and other Bodies, that occupy the Space between Heaven and Earth; the wonderful Balancing of the Winds, and gentle Falling of the Clouds in useful Rain and Showers; the Frame and Situation of the Earth, and the great Variety of Plants and Trees, of Rivers and Foun-

. tains,

[x] *Tillotson's* Sermons, Vol. II. [y] *Clarke's* Sermons, Vol. I. [z] *Charnock*, on the Attributes.
[a] Job xxviii. 12. [b] Isa. xl. 12, &c. [c] *Edwards's* Body of Divinity.

tains, of Men and other Creatures, that do ſtock and adorn it; the ſubterraneous World, wherein are repoſited Metals and Minerals, Salts, Sulphurs, and Stones, both precious and common, for the Uſe and Ornament of Mankind; and the wide and great Deep, ſo ſtored with Treaſures, and fitted for the Commerce of the different Inhabitants of the World: All theſe, or the leaſt Individual in them, if carefully enquired into, will abundantly proclaim the Glory of God, and diſcover the *Wiſdom* of their Creator, as the holy Penmen, in ſome of the loftieſt Strains of Eloquence, have endeavoured to ſet it out. [d] *He ſpreadeth out the Heavens, and treadeth upon the Waves of the Sea; he maketh* Arcturus, Orion, *and* Pleiades, *and the Chambers of the South; he doth great Things paſt finding out, yea, and Wonders without Number.* [e] *He ſtretcheth out the North over the empty Space, and hangeth the Earth upon nothing: He bindeth up the Waters in the thick Clouds, and the Cloud is not rent under them: He hath compaſſed the Waters with Bounds, until the Day and Night come to an End. The Pillars of Heaven tremble, and are aſtoniſhed at his Reproof; he divideth the Sea by his Power, by his Spirit he hath garniſhed the Heavens. Lo, theſe are Parts of his Ways! But how little a Portion is heard of him, and the Thunder of his Power who can underſtand?* For, if (as ſome have done) [f] we ſuppoſe other Worlds beſides this, furniſhed with Creatures, whoſe Fabrick and Motions, and conſequently, their Properties and Operations differ from what we ſee before us, how muſt this increaſe our Ideas of God's Wiſdom, both in *framing* and *governing* ſuch a vaſt Variety of different Worlds! For, if to keep one complicated *Machine* in Order be accounted a Work of no ſmall Skill, how extremely aſtoniſhing muſt it be to conſider, what Wiſdom and Providence is requiſite, to guide and over-rule ſo many Millions of *Engines*, (as we may call them) and many of them endowed with *Liberty* of Will, in ſuch a Manner, as to make them ſubſervient to his wiſe Purpoſes and Decrees! [g] *O Lord! how manifold are thy Works, in Wiſdom haſt thou made them all; the Earth is full of thy Goodneſs.*

2. IF we conſider the Work of Man's Redemption, we ſhall find the ſame Diſplay of [h] *the manifold Wiſdom of God*, as the Apoſtle calls it. [i] Man had ſinned, and, by his Tranſgreſſion, ſtopped the Effuſions of Goodneſs, and opened a wide Paſſage for divine Wrath to fall upon him: But how to ſave this Creature, loſt and undone by his own Choice, the Invention of Men and Angels could not deviſe. Nay, Heaven itſelf ſeemed to be divided, *Mercy* inclined to ſave, but *Juſtice* interpoſed for Satisfaction; and the Difficulty was, how to anſwer the Demands of *the one*, and not deny the Requeſts of *the other*. In this Exigence, his *Mercy* excited his *Wiſdom* to interpoſe as an *Arbiter*, which, in the Treaſure of its incomprehenſible Light, found out an admirable Expedient to ſave Man, without Prejudice to his other Perfections; and that was, by conſtituting a proper *Mediator* between the guilty Creature and himſelf, that, by tranferring the Puniſhment on the *Surety*, he might puniſh Sin, as *Juſtice* required, and yet pardon the Sinner, as *Mercy* deſired. *And Redemption.*

[k] HERE then is the Compaſs of Divine Wiſdom diſplayed: In God's taking Occaſion, from Sin and the *Fall* of Man, to magnify his own Glory, and exalt his Creature to a more excellent State; in ordaining ſuch a *Mediator*, as was qualified to reconcile God to Man, by making *Expiation*, and Man to God, by making *Interceſſion* for him; in making, in all Appearance, ſuch oppoſite Means accompliſh ſuch glorious Effects; and in laying the Deſign of the *Goſpel* in ſuch a Manner, as both provides for the *Comfort*, and promotes the *Holineſs* of Mankind; for the matchleſs Wiſdom of God is *equally* viſible in the *Revelation*, he hath made of himſelf; [l] in the Doctrines, and Laws, and Precepts, which he hath delivered, to inſtruct us in the right Principles of Knowledge, and to regulate our Actions in a Manner moſt congruous to Reaſon.

IF then the Wiſdom of God, in all his Diſpenſations to us, be ſo conſpicuous, the proper Reſult of this Conſideration is, to praiſe and adore his Divine Majeſty, in the Language of the Prophet *Daniel*; *Bleſſed be the Name of God for ever and ever, for Wiſdom and Might are his*; and to humble ourſelves, and ſuppreſs *every Thought* in us, *that exalteth itſelf againſt the Knowledge of God, and if we lack Wiſdom*, to repair to the ſacred Fountain, and aſk it of him, *who giveth to every one liberally, and upbraideth not*; [m] *for if thou cry after Knowledge, and lift up thy Voice for Underſtanding; if thou ſeek her as Silver, and ſearch for her as hid Treaſure; then ſhalt thou* *The Uſe of this Doctrine.*

[d] Job ix. 8, &c. [e] Chap. xxvi. 7, &c. [f] *Boyle's* Theological Works, Vol. III. [g] Pſal. civ. 24.
[h] Eph. iii. 10. [i] *Bates's* Harmony of the Divine Attributes. [k] *Bates's*, ibid. [l] *Edwards's* Body of Divinity.
[m] Prov. ii. 3.

thou understand the Fear of the Lord, and find the Knowledge of God. Above all, we must be mindful not to censure God in any of his Dealings with the Sons of Men, but, in all the *Issues* of his Providence, to place our whole Trust and Confidence in him, with a fixed Acquiescence in his good Pleasure. 'Tis a noble Saying that of *Epictetus*, (as it is recorded by *Arrian*) and bespeaks a gallant Soul: "Lift up thine "Eyes, *says he*, with Confidence to God, and say, Henceforth, Lord, deal with "me as thou pleasest; I am of the same Opinion with thee, just of the same Mind, "that thou art. I refuse nothing that seems good to thee; lead me where thou "wilt; cloath me with what Garments thou pleasest; set me in a publick Place, "or keep me in a private Condition; continue me in mine own Country, or banish "me from it; bestow Wealth upon me, or leave me to struggle with Poverty; "which of these thou pleasest, ἐγὼ σοι ὑπὲρ ἁπάντων τούτων πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ἀπο-"λογήσομαι. If Men shall censure this Providence towards me, and say, *Thou deal-"est hardly with me*, I will apologize for thee, I will undertake, and maintain thy "Cause, that, what thou doest, is best for me." What Christian could say more, or better, of a perfect Resignation to the Divine Providence? And yet this *Epictetus* had a maimed and deformed Body, was no more than a Slave, extremely poor, and very cruelly and tyrannically used; so that we can hardly imagine a Man in worse and more wretched Circumstances: All which notwithstanding, he justifies the Providence of God in all that he sent upon him; not only submits to his Condition, but embraces it with Chearfulness; and since God thought it fittest and best for him, he is of the same Mind, and thinks so too; from a wise Sense, no doubt, of a Divine Superintendency, and a firm Persuasion, that he had infinite *Wisdom*, managing and directing infinite *Goodness*, engaged to take Care of him; as he always makes *all Things work together for the Good* of them that *love* and fear *him*.

SECT. IX.

Of the POWER *of* GOD.

The Power of God, what.

BY the *Power* of God, we mean that Ability and Strength, whereby he can bring to pass whatever he pleases; whatever his infinite Wisdom can direct, or the infinite Purity of his Will resolve; provided the Thing be consistent with itself, and compatible with his Divine Nature and Perfections.

[n] To help our Conception of this sovereign Power, let us imagine a *Principle*, from which all other Power is derived, on which it depends, and to which it is perfectly subject and subordinate; a *Principle*, which can do, not only what any created Being, but infinitely more than all Beings in the World, joined together, can do; a *Principle*, which nothing can oppose; which can check, and controul at Pleasure, and bear down, and annihilate all other Powers whatever; a *Principle*, which can do all Things in the most perfect Manner, at once, in an Instant, and with the utmost Ease; and, lastly, a *Principle*, which, after we have imagined it never so perfect, can do many more Things, and in a Manner much more perfect, than we can imagine.

What God cannot do.

SUCH we may conceive the *Omnipotence* of God to be, boundless, and irresistible, and under no Limitation, except where the Thing either in its own Nature implies a Contradiction, or some plain Repugnancy to the Perfections of his Nature. [o] Where Things in themselves imply a Contradiction, as that a Body may be extended, and not extended; in a Place, and not in a Place, at the same Time; such Things, I say, cannot be done by God, [p] because Contradictions are impossible in their own Nature. Nor is it any Derogation from the Divine Power to say, *they cannot be done*: For, as the Object of the Understanding, of the Eye, and the Ear, is that which is *intelligible*, *visible*, and *audible*; so the Object of *Power* must be that which is *possible*; and as it is no Prejudice to the most perfect Understanding, or Sight, or Hearing, that it does not understand what is not *intelligible*, or see what is not *visible*, or hear what is not *audible*; so neither is it any Diminution to the most perfect Power, that it does not do what is not *possible*.

IN like manner, God cannot do any Thing that is repugnant to his other Perfections: He cannot *lye*, nor *deceive*, nor *deny himself*; for this would be injurious to

[n] *Tillotson*'s Sermons, Vol. II. *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity. [o] *Charnock* and *Wilkins*, on the Attributes. [p] *Edwards*'s and

to his Truth: He cannot love Sin, nor puniſh Innocence; for this would deſtroy his Holineſs and Goodneſs: And therefore, to aſcribe a Power to him, that is inconſiſtent with the Rectitude of his Nature, is not to *magnify*, but *debaſe* him; for all Unrighteouſneſs is Weakneſs, a Defection from right Reaſon, a Deviation from the perfect Rule of Action, and ariſes from a Defect of Goodneſs and Power. In a Word, ſince all the Attributes of God are eſſentially the ſame, a Power in him, which tends to deſtroy any other Attribute of the Divine Nature, muſt be a Power deſtructive of itſelf. [q] Well therefore may we conclude him *abſolutely* omnipotent, who, by being able to effect all Things *conſiſtent* with his Perfections, ſheweth infinite *Ability*, and, by not being able to do any Thing *repugnant* to the ſame Perfections, demonſtrates himſelf ſubject to no *Infirmity*.

His Omnipotence prov'd from Reaſon.

AS therefore himſelf is the *Fountain* of Power, and derives down Being and Abilities to all his Creatures, he muſt more eminently contain in himſelf what he communicates to others: [r] And, as he is an *abſolute* and *ſelf-exiſtent* Being, by whom all Things in the Univerſe were made, and are entirely dependent upon him; from whom all the *Powers* of all Things are derived, and muſt therefore be perfectly ſubject and ſubordinate to him; nothing can make any Difficulty or Reſiſtance to the Execution of his Will, but he muſt of Neceſſity have abſolute Power to do every Thing he pleaſes, with the perfecteſt Eaſe, and in the perfecteſt Manner, at once, and in a Moment, whenever he wills it.

AND indeed, if ſuch Power, as we are now ſpeaking of, belonged not to God, [s] all his other *Perfections* would be inſignificant and ineffectual: His *Goodneſs* would be but an empty Sound: his *Knowledge* but an idle Speculation; and *Wiſdom* to contrive, without Power to execute, a very vain and uſeleſs Thing: There would be no Reaſon to reſpect his *Juſtice*, if God were without Power to reward and puniſh; no Cauſe to depend on his *Faithfulneſs* and *Truth*, if he were not able to perform his Promiſes; nor any Occaſion to acknowledge his *Providence*, ſince a Being deſtitute of Power muſt be deem'd incapable to take upon him the Government of the World. And for this Reaſon, the wiſeſt of the *Pagan* Writers are very copious in ſuch Aſſertions as theſe: [t] *That there is nothing that God cannot do; and that, without any Kind of Labour; that all Things are equally eaſy to him, and that nothing can be ſaid to be difficult*; whereupon they juſtly concluded, that this vaſt Frame of Nature, and the upholding and preſerving of it, was a Conſequence and Argument of a Divine and inviſible Power: As who indeed can contemplate this Fabrick, and conſider the different Magnitude, Figure, and Situation of its Parts, and not draw from it the ſame Concluſion?

From the Frame of the World.

FOR how vaſt and ſtupendous is the *Maſs* of Matter that the World conſiſts of! [u] The fixed *Stars*, which to the naked Eye appear but like *Spangles*, are found by Aſtronomers to be an hundred Times bigger than the Earth. The *Sun* is by ſome eſteemed ten thouſand Times bigger; and yet, theſe great and immenſe Bodies are nothing, as it were, in Compariſon of that vaſt *Expanſe* of *fluid* Matter, which does every where ſurround them. Now, if in forming this ſtupendous Work, we could ſuppoſe God to have made uſe of any *Engines*, [x] what Notions muſt we have of the Force neceſſary to raiſe even but one of theſe fixt Stars, and to place it at a Diſtance, which is thought almoſt incredible, in its proper *Orb!* What Idea ſhall we be able to form of the Hand, which *faſhion'd it behind and before*, and gave it, in all Reſpects, the *Figure* and *Dimenſions* proper to it? Thus, if we argue, by Way of *Alluſion* to the uſual Methods of erecting any *Fabrick* built by the Hands of Men, to that glorious and amazing *Structure*, whoſe *Builder and Maker is God*, we cannot avoid forming the ſtrongeſt Apprehenſions of his Power; eſpecially when we conſider that he had no Aſſiſtant, or ſubordinate Agent in his Work, but [y] *ſtretched forth the Heavens* alone, *and ſpread abroad the Earth* by himſelf. But if, inſtead of employing any inſtrumental Means towards the Conſtruction of this Work, God *only ſpake, and it was done*, and, with Reſpect to the ſeveral Parts of it, *only commanded, and they were created*, this gives us ſtill a more lively Idea of his Power, than if he had made uſe of the moſt prodigious *Machines*, ſuppoſing there could have been found a Place for fixing them.

The Government of it.

[z] AND as none, but an Almighty *Architect*, could have form'd the World at firſt without Materials, and brought it to Perfection without the Help of Inſtruments;

[q] *Pearſon*, upon the Creed. [r] *Clarke*'s Being and Attributes. [s] *Wilkins*, of the Principles of Natural Religion. [t] Nihil eſt quod Deus efficere non poteſt. Tull. De Divin. Ῥάδια πάντα θεῷ πέλεται, καὶ ἀπήνυτον οὐδέν. Linus. [u] *Boyle*'s Theological Works. [x] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity. [y] Ibid. [z] *Edwards*'s Body, Part I.

ments; ſo none, but an Almighty *Ruler*, could have preſerv'd it in the Order wherein we ſee it. The Motion of the *Earth* about its own *Axis* is prodigiouſly ſwift, [a] ſwifter than a Bullet from the Mouth of a Cannon; and yet nothing in Compariſon to the Motion of ſome *celeſtial Bodies*, ſwimming in *liquid Æther*, which are computed to move three thouſand Times faſter than any Cannon Ball in the Air. What a large Conception muſt this then give us of the immenſe Power of their Creator, who has impreſs'd ſuch a wonderful Quantity of Motion on Matter, and maintains it ſo exactly? Who not only ſets Bounds to the Sea, and *ſays to its proud Waves, Hither ſhall they come, and no farther*, but moderates the ſtupendous rapid Motion of the *Globes*, and their intercurrent *Fluids* ſo, that, notwithſtanding the Greatneſs of their *Bulk*, and the Velocity of their Courſe, they move more *regularly* than the beſt-made Watch! Well therefore might the Royal *Pſalmiſt* cry out, in full Admiration of his Works of Creation and Providence, [b] *thou haſt a mighty Arm; ſtrong is thy Hand, and high is thy Right-Hand*; nor could we have told how to account for all theſe *Prodigies* of Divine Power, had not the Prophet took Care to inform us, that *Omnipotence* can do all Things with the moſt abſolute Eaſe, without any Difficulty in itſelf, and without any Pains or Labour in the Operation; for [c] *haſt thou not known*, ſays he, *haſt thou not heard, that the everlaſting God the Lord, the Creator of the Ends of the Earth, faileth not, neither is he weary.*

From Scripture. AFTER this, we need not purſue the Power of God, in the *ſtrange* and *miraculous* Occurrences that have happen'd in the World, and wherein [d] he is ſaid *to make bare his Arm in the Eyes of all Nations.* The holy Penmen have done it in a Manner, proper to poſſeſs our Minds with the greateſt Sentiments of the divine Majeſty, and to give us the moſt awful Impreſſions of a religious Fear and Reverence: [e] *He is wiſe in Heart, and mighty in Strength: Who hath hardened himſelf againſt him, and proſpered? He removeth the Mountains, and they know it not; he overturneth them in his Anger; he ſhaketh the Earth out of her Place, and the Pillars thereof tremble; he commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not, and ſealeth up the Stars; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting Strength.* [f] *Declare his Glory among the Heathen, his marvellous Works among all Nations; for great is the Lord, and greatly to be praiſed; he is alſo to be feared among all Gods: Glory and Honour are in his Preſence, and Strength and Gladneſs in his Place; and therefore give unto the Lord, ye Kindreds of the People, give unto the Lord Glory and Strength, give unto the Lord the Glory due unto his Name*; for this is what his infinite Power and Majeſty call upon us to do.

Affections reſulting from this Attribute. A FARTHER Effect of the Contemplation of this Attribute, is to make God at all Times the chief Object of our *Fear*, our Confidence, and Adoration. And indeed, the Fear of God is of ſo great Importance to us in the Conduct of our Lives,

Fear of God. that he himſelf ſeems to have given us a gracious Intimation of it, in every Motion of our *natural* Fears; inſomuch, that whatever a rational Creature may think himſelf concern'd to dread and be afraid of, that very Thing does properly remit him to God, as an Object much more becoming his Fear, and awful Apprehenſions. [g] Thus, if it be reaſonable to fear *Want*, much more reaſonable is it to fear him, whoſe *Bounty* is the Fountain of all our Supplies; if it be reaſonable to fear *Diſappointments*, much more to fear him, whoſe *Providence* diſpoſes the Iſſue of all we project; if it be reaſonable to fear *Pain*, and other Inconveniencies of Life, much more to fear him, whoſe Pleaſure determines all our *Eaſe*, and all our *Sufferings*: In a Word, if it be reaſonable *to fear them that can kill the Body*, much more to fear him, *who, after he hath killed, can caſt into Hell.* This then is the *Moral*, and this is the *Leſſon* of all our Fears, *fear God.* Nor do our natural Fears only remit us to God, but they remind us, at the ſame Time, to lay hold on his Almighty Power, in order to ſtrengthen and ſupport our *Imbecillity* againſt the Violence of the *Oppreſſor*, and the Tyranny of the *Proud*: For, *if God be on our Side, we need not fear what Man, whoſe Breath is in his Noſtrils, can do unto us*; he [h] *ſhall give his Angels charge over us, to keep us in all our Ways*, either *to reſtrain the Wrath of Men*, and [i] *redeem us from our Enemies*, or *cover us with his Feathers, and under his Wings*, [k] *until his Tyranny be over-paſt.*

AND

[a] *Boyle*'s Thelogical Works. [b] Pſal. lxxxix. 13. [c] Iſa. xl. 28. [d] Ibid. lii. 10. [e] Job ix. 4. [f] 1 Chron. xvi. 24, &c. [g] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [h] Pſal. xci. 11, 4. [i] Ibid. cxxxvi. 24. [k] Ibid. lvii. 1.

AND as the Conſideration of God's *Omnipotence* is of great Efficacy to excite in our Minds a *Fear* of him, and him only; ſo will it juſtify our *Truſt* and *Confidence* in him, and prove a *Baſis* for our Contentment, in all the Calamities that can befal us. 'Tis an Expreſſion, that of the *Royal Pſalmiſt*, full of Comfort and Conſolation to every virtuous Man, labouring under Affliction: *Our Help ſtandeth in the Name of the Lord, who hath made Heaven and Earth.* [l] For when we are reduced to the laſt Extremities, when Tribulation flows in upon us with an extraordinary Force, when all the Sluices are opened, and the Flood-gates broke up, ſo that we expect nothing but to be overwhelm'd; *he that made Heaven and Earth* can even *then* preſerve and protect us, and raiſe up ſuch Banks and Ramparts, as ſhall keep out the raging Waters, and reſtrain their Violence. [m] The ſame Royal *Pſalmiſt*, to excite in our Minds a lively Senſe of the Almighty Power of God, in defending his Servants in the *needful Time of Trouble*, has borrow'd Alluſions from every Thing that either Nature has made, or Art has invented, proper for Defence: [n] *The Lord is my Rock, and my Fortreſs, and my Deliverer; my God, my Strength, in whom I will truſt; my Buckler, and the Horn alſo of my Salvation, and my high Tower.* When he conſidered the Number and Power of thoſe Enemies, with whom he was to contend, he had Reaſon to be diffident of himſelf; but when he contemplated the far ſuperior Strength of his *Aſſiſtant*, all his Fears were immediately diſcarded: [o] *The Lord is my Light, and my Salvation, whom ſhall I fear? The Lord is the Strength of my Life, of whom ſhall I be afraid? Tho' an Hoſt camp againſt me, my Heart ſhall not fear; tho' War ſhould riſe againſt me, in this will I be confident.* And well he might, when the great Controller of the Univerſe had given him this Aſſurance: [p] *Becauſe thou haſt made the Lord, even the Moſt High, thy Habitation, there ſhall no Evil befall thee, neither ſhall any Plague come nigh thy Dwelling.* For, (as holy [q] *Job* elegantly expreſſes it) *He ſhall deliver thee in ſix Troubles, yea, in ſeven there ſhall no Evil touch thee; in Famine he ſhall redeem thee from Death, and in War from the Power of the Sword——at Deſtruction and Famine thou ſhalt laugh, neither ſhalt thou be afraid of the Beaſts of the Earth; for thou ſhalt be in League with the Stones of the Field, and the Beaſts of the Field ſhall be at Peace with thee.* If therefore we do but endeavour to be ſuch Perſons, as God's Omnipotence is concerned to relieve, and wait the Iſſues of his Providence with a patient Submiſſion to his good Pleaſure, we may with Safety [r] *commit our Cauſe unto him, who does great Things, and unſearchable marvellous Things, and without Number*; unto him, *who ſlumbereth and ſleepeth not, who fainteth not, neither is he weary; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting Strength.*

And Confidence in him.

SECT. X.

Of the HAPPINESS *of* GOD.

THE Notion of *Happineſs*, taken in its higheſt Senſe, (as we muſt neceſſarily do, when we apply it to God) is no other, than a fix'd and immoveable State of *Contentment* and *Satisfaction*, of *Pleaſure* and *Delight*, reſulting from the ſecure Poſſeſſion of all that is good and deſirable, *i. e.* of all Excellency and Perfection. [s] So that theſe following Ingredients muſt go to make up a compleat State of Happineſs. 1. Perfect *Knowledge*, to underſtand what it is, that conſtitutes Happineſs, and when one is really poſſeſſed of it. 2. Perfect *Wiſdom*, to concert the *Means* and Methods of compaſſing, and ſecuring ſuch a State of Happineſs. 3. Abſolute *Power*, to be able to do whatever conduces to it, and to check and controul whatever would obſtruct it. 4. Univerſal *Goodneſs*, or a generous Diſpoſition of Mind, to communicate of its Happineſs to others. 5. A ſettled and ſecure Poſſeſſion of all imaginable Excellencies, together with a free Exerciſe of them, upon all Occaſions; and from all theſe will neceſſary reſult, 6. Infinite *Contentment* and Satisfaction, and infinite *Pleaſure* and Delight, which is the very *Eſſence* of Happineſs.

The Happineſs of God, wherein it conſiſts.

Now all theſe Perfections being in God to an infinite Degree; *Knowledge*, to perceive the true Nature of Happineſs; *Wiſdom*, to direct him to the Means of attaining it; and *Power* to enable him to execute thoſe Means; and there being

Prov'd from Reaſon and Scripture.

[l] *Edwards's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [m] *Smalridge's* Sermons. [n] Pſal. cxliv. 2. [o] Ibid. xxvii. 1, 3.
[p] Ibid. xci. 9, 10. [q] Job v. 19, &c. [r] Ibid. v. 8, 9, [s] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. II.

nothing *without*, that can poſſibly hinder his Acquiſition, or diſturb his Enjoyment of it, the perfect and moſt conſummate Felicity of his Nature muſt undeniably follow.

'COULD we ſuppoſe, that the *Contemplation* or *Enjoyment* of any Thing *without* could contribute to the Happineſs of the Divine Nature, God (as the Cauſe of all other Beings, and of all their Powers and Perfections) muſt neceſſarily take all the Complacency in them, that they are capable of exciting. But the *Goodneſs of his Creatures extendeth not to him:* He is infinitely and abſolutely happy in the Perfections and internal Operations of his own Nature: He is his own *Light*, and his own *Object*; and, as nothing without is capable of acting upon him, or diſturbing his Action, he muſt be happy for ever without *Allay* or Intermiſſion, without *Mixture* or Meaſure. And, accordingly, the wiſeſt of the *Heathen* Sages (in Conformity to the Holy Scriptures, which ſtile him [u] *the bleſſed God, the King eternal, immortal, the bleſſed and only Potentate)* were always of this Opinion, [x] *that God muſt needs be happy, becauſe he is ſufficient in himſelf, and ſtands in need of nothing*; and [y] *that nothing is ſo happy, as the Divine Being, becauſe nothing abounds with all Manner of Goodneſs, but he.* Nay, they accounted Happineſs ſo eſſential to the Notion of a God, that they made this one of their Ways to find out what Properties were *fit* to attribute to him, and what *not*, even by conſidering what Things were conſiſtent with Happineſs, or inconſiſtent with it; and thence inferring what might be a ſuitable, or unſuitable Attribute to the Divine Nature: For which Reaſon *Epicurus* (as he is repreſented by *Lucretius)* excludes God from the Making and Government of the World, leſt it ſhould diſcompoſe his Eaſe, or be any Obſtruction to his Felicity. [z] *It is neceſſary*, ſays he, *that the Divine Nature ſhould be happy, and therefore altogether unconcern'd in our Affairs; free from all Grief and Danger, ſufficient for itſelf, and ſtanding in need of no Body; neither pleaſed with our good Actions, nor provoked by our Faults*; which, tho' it be a very faulty *Poſition*, confirms us in this Perſuaſion, that *Bleſſedneſs* is ſo inſeparable from the Notion of a *Deity*, that, whoever profeſſes to believe a God, muſt acknowledge him to be perfectly *happy*.

What we are to learn from this Attribute.

1. [a] 'IF the Divine Nature then be ſo infinitely and compleatly *happy*, this is a great Confirmation of our Faith and Hope concerning the Happineſs of another Life, which the Scripture deſcribes to us by the *Sight* and *Enjoyment* of God. As we are Creatures of a finite Power, and limited Underſtanding, we neceſſarily want many of thoſe Perfections, which are the Cauſe and Ingredients of perfect Happineſs; but the bleſſed God, who is infinitely happy, himſelf, can alſo make us happy according to our *finite* Meaſure and Capacity: For, as he, who is the firſt and original Being, can communicate Being to other Things, ſo he, who is the *Fountain* of Happineſs, can derive and convey Happineſs to his Creatures.

THAT he will do ſo, we have the greater Reaſon to believe, when we conſider, that *Goodneſs*, as it is the prime *Perfection*, ſo is it likewiſe the chief *Felicity* of the Divine Nature. Baſe and envious Tempers indeed are narrow and contracted; they love to confine their Enjoyments, and good Things to themſelves, and are loth that others ſhould take part with them: But the moſt noble Minds are always moſt *free* and enlarged, and cannot be happy themſelves, unleſs they find, or make others *ſo*. As therefore *to be good, and to do good*, is the ſupreme Felicity of God himſelf, we may eaſily believe, that he is very ready and forward to make us happy, by all the *Ways*, that are agreeable to his infinite Wiſdom, and to the higheſt *Degree* our Nature will reach; for [b] *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man, the Things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

2. [c] 'FROM this *Happineſs* of the Divine Nature, we may learn farther wherein our own Felicity does conſiſt, namely, in the *Image*, and in the *Favour* of God: In the *Favour* of God, as the Cauſe of our Happineſs, and in the *Image* of God, as a neceſſary Qualification for it. Unleſs God loves us, we cannot be happy; for miſerable are all they, whom he hates; and yet he himſelf hath told us, *that he hateth all the Workers of Iniquity; that the Wicked ſhall not ſtand in his Sight, neither ſhall Evil dwell with him.* Nay, even if we ſhould ſuppoſe that he could take Pleaſure in any

[a] *Fidder's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [u] 1 Tim. vi. 15. [x] *Ariſt. Eth.* Lib. VII. Cap. 15. [y] De Nat. Deor. Lib. I.

[z] Omnis enim Divûm, per ſe, natura neceſſe eſt
Immortali ævo ſummâ cum pace fruatur,
Semota à noſtris rebus, ſejunctaque longè.
Nam privata dolore omni, privata periclis,
Ipſa ſuis pollens opibus, nil indiga noſtri,
Nec bene promeritis capitur, nec tangitur irâ.

[a] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. II. [b] 1 Cor. ii. 9. [c] *Fidder*, ubi ſupra.

any Perſon of this Denomination, yet we cannot ſee how the Perſon himſelf could be happy, becauſe he would want that *inward* Frame and Diſpoſition, a Reſemblance of the Divine Holineſs and Goodneſs, which is ſo neceſſary to any one's Happineſs, that the *external* Preſence of God, and a *local* Heaven (if we could imagine ſuch an one admitted to it) would ſignify no more to make him happy, than Heaps of *Gold* and *Diamonds*, the moſt delicious *Food*, or melodious *Muſick*, would contribute to a Man's Eaſe, in the *Paroxyſms* of a *Fever*, or in a violent Fit of the *Stone*; becauſe the Man has *that* within him, which torments him, and, 'till that be removed, he cannot poſſibly be at Eaſe. In a Word, the ſureſt Foundation of *Love* and Friendſhip (we are very ſenſible) is a *Similitude* of Temper and Diſpoſition: Every Thing naturally affects its own *Likeneſs*, and gladly runs into its Embraces: God therefore and Man muſt be like one another, before they can take Pleaſure in one another. If we are unlike God, 'tis impoſſible that we ſhould be happy in one another; and therefore, either God, or we, muſt be chang'd, in order to effect this End. Now the Nature of God is *fixt* and *unchangeable*; therefore change thyſelf, *Sinner*, and endeavour to be like him: And, ſince he cannot depart from his Holineſs and Purity, thou muſt leave thy Sins, and *be holy, as he is holy*, if ever thou expect to be happy, as he is: For *every one, that has this Hope in him, muſt purify himſelf, even as he is pure.*

SECT. XI.

Of the Moral ATTRIBUTES *of* GOD: *And firſt, of his* HOLINESS.

God's moral Attributes, what.

THE true Notion of a *Moral Agent* is, that he acts, or ought to act in Conformity to ſome *Law*; the *Obſervance* whereof is attended with Honour and Satisfaction of Mind, and the *Violation* of it with Shame and Regret. God indeed, as he is the ſupreme Lord and Creator of all Things, cannot be directed in any Thing *from without*; but, as Reaſon is the Law of *Order*, determining what is right and wrong, good and evil, decent and diſagreeable, and a *Law* which God unalterably loves, and eternally delights to follow; he muſt (as he poſſeſſes Reaſon in the higheſt and moſt perfect Degree) be, in the higheſt and moſt perfect Degree, a *moral Agent*.

BUT how tranſcendent ſoever the *moral* Perfections of the Divine Nature may be, when compared with thoſe of Men, or any other *intelligent* Being; yet if the Reaſons of Right, Good, and Fit, have the ſame Foundation in the *divine*, that they have in an *human* Mind, the moral Attributes of God muſt be of the ſame *Nature* with what we perceive in Men, how much ſoever they may differ in the *Degrees* of their Perfection: Otherwiſe, we could form no diſtinct Notions of them, nor could they be propos'd as fit Objects for our *Imitation*.

The Holineſs of God, what.

NOW of all the *moral* Attributes of God, that, which naturally occurs firſt to our Thoughts, and is the preſiding Attribute, (if we may ſo call it) having the moſt general Influence and Direction over the reſt, is *Holineſs*; which (if taken in a general Senſe) denotes a Freedom from all *Impurity* and *Imperfection*; but, as apply'd to God, is [d] that peculiar Eminence of the Divine Nature, whereby it is ſeparate and remov'd, at an infinite Diſtance, from all moral *Imperfection*, or what we call *Sin*: By which we mean, that there is no ſuch Thing as Malice, or Envy, or Hatred, or Revenge, or Imperiouſneſs, or Cruelty, or Tyranny, or Injuſtice, or Falſhood, or Unfaithfulneſs in God; or if there be any other Thing which implies Sin and Vice, and moral Imperfection, *Holineſs* ſignifies, that the Divine Nature is not only devoid of *theſe*, but poſſeſſed of the contrary Perfections to an infinite Degree. And indeed we can hardly entertain any tolerable Notion of God, unleſs we ſeparate from him whatever is *impure*, and liable to pollute either his Nature or Actions. [e] We may conceive him infinite in *Majeſty*, infinite in *Eſſence*, eternal in *Duration*, mighty in *Power*, wiſe in *Counſels*, merciful in his *Proceedings* with Men, and whatever other Perfections may dignify ſo ſovereign a Being; but, if at the ſame Time, we conceive him deſtitute of this farther Perfection, and poſſeſs'd with the leaſt *Contagion* of Evil, we

Prov'd from Reaſon.

[d] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. II.

[e] *Charnock*, on the Attributes.

we make him but an *infinite Monſter*, and ſully all the other Perfections, which we aſcrib'd to him before.

'TWAS a great and laudable Saying that of *Plutarch*, "That he ſhould account "himſelf leſs injur'd, if any one ſhould ſay, that there never was ſuch a Man as *Plu-* "*tarch*, than if he ſhould ſay, there was ſuch an one indeed, but that he was a "*looſe* and *profligate* Fellow." And in like Manner, the Wrong done to God is leſs, to diſcard all Acknowledgments of his Being, than to believe his Exiſtence, and at the ſame Time pronounce him a baſe and unrighteous Deity; for he that ſays *that God is not holy*, ſpeaks much worſe of him, than he that ſays, *there is no God at all.* For this Reaſon, [f] ſome that have undertook to vindicate *Epicurus* from the Imputation of *Atheiſm*, (wherewith he was commonly charged) tell us, that he did not deny the *Being* of a God, but of thoſe wicked and *adulterous* Deities, which the *Vulgar* worſhipped, though guilty of Practices unbecoming the Nature of God. The Truth is, the wiſeſt of the *Heathen* Philoſophers always aſſerted, that Virtue was an *Imitation* of God, and the righteous Man a *Reſemblance* of him: And therefore this might be one Reaſon why *Plato* (the great Founder of a learned *Sect*) was for excluding all *Poets* from his *Commonwealth*, becauſe the *Transfigurations* of their falſe Gods, and the many Extravagancies committed by them, were, in the Opinion of all good Men, horrid *Fables*, and unfit for Modeſty either to report or hear. However this be, 'tis certain, that, being at a Loſs to account for the *Origin* of Sin, (rather than make God the Author of it) they choſe to aſcribe it to *Matter*, and ran into the abſurd Opinion of fancying *that* Matter *uncreated*, rather than that any injurious Imputation ſhould fall upon *the undefiled Governor of the World*, as they us'd to ſtile him. Nor may it be a bad Apology for ſome ancient *Hereticks*, that their aſſerting two diſtinct *eternal* Principles, one the Cauſe of *Evil*, as *God* was the Fountain of *Good*, proceeded, in ſome Meaſure, from a Dread of involving the ſupreme Deity in any Thing, that had a criminal Aſpect: So rooted was the Notion of this divine *Purity*, that none would ever ſlander Goodneſs itſelf with that, which was ſo diſparaging to it!

The Teſtimony of Heathens.

IF we look into the Holy Scriptures, [g] there we ſhall find no Title ſo frequently given God, or ſo often ingeminated, as this of his *Holineſs*. How often may we find him call'd [h] *the Holy One*, [i] *the Holy One of* Iſrael, [k] *the Holy One of* Jacob, *&c.* What other Epithet of his do we hear ſo many Times repeated in the joyful Acclamations above, [l] *where the four Beaſts reſt not Day and Night, ſaying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come?* To denote his Hatred againſt Sin, he is ſaid to be [m] *a jealous God, viſiting Iniquity*, and upon Provocation, [n] *a conſuming Fire.* To clear him of any Participation in Guilt, [o] *far be it from God that he ſhould do Wickedneſs, and from the Almighty, that he ſhould commit Iniquity!* [p] *God tempteth no Man; and therefore* [q] *ſay not thou, 'tis through the Lord that I fell away; ſay not thou, he cauſed me to err; for he hath no need of the ſinful Man.* To diſclaim any Complacency, he can take in evil Actions, he is ſaid to be [r] *a God, that takes no Pleaſure in Wickedneſs, neither ſhall any Evil dwell with him*; that *he is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*; and [s] that therefore *the Sacrifice, the Way, and the Thoughts of the Wicked, are an Abomination to him.* And laſtly, to ſhew the great Excellence and Tranſcendency of this Perfection in him, the Compariſon is taken from the loftieſt Creatures we are acquainted with, and yet we are told, [t] *that the Heavens are not pure in his Sight, and his Angels are charged with Folly*: As bright and illuſtrious as theſe *celeſtial* Beings are, yet their Holineſs grows dim and pale in his Preſence; they cover their Faces, out of Weakneſs to behold his, and hide their Feet, out of a Senſe of their *comparative* Deformity.

From Scripture.

An Objection.

THUS copiouſly have the Holy Scriptures ſet forth the Holineſs and Purity of God in all its Branches and Reſpects. "But do not the ſame Scriptures, in other Places, "repreſent him as countenancing and encouraging Sin, as promoting, advancing, "and ſometimes acting it? Are there not ſeveral Texts, in the *Old* and *New Teſta-* "*ment* both, that make him, as it were, the Author of Sin, the Cauſe and Pro- "curer of what is vicious and unlawful? How then is this conſiſtent with his pure "and immaculate Nature? And when he is *ſaid to blind Men's Eyes, to harden their* "*Hearts, to give them up to their Luſts, to make them err from his Ways, and put it* "*in*

[f] *Gaſſend.* Phyſ. Lib. IV. Cap. 2. [g] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. II. [h] Iſa. xl. 25. [i] Ibid. xli. 20. [k] Ibid. xxix. 23. [l] Rev. iv. 8. [m] Exod. xx. 5. [n] Heb. xii. 29. [o] Job xxxiv. 10. [p] James i. 13. [q] Eccleſiaſticus xv. 12. [r] Pſal. v. 4, [s] Prov. xv. 8, 9, 26. [t] Job xv. 15. and iv. 18.

" *in their Hearts to do all Manner of Wickedneſs*, what Apology ſhall we make for " his ſo much applauded Holineſs?"

NOW, for a Solution of this, it may be conſider'd, [u] that God is ſometimes ſaid to *do theſe* Things, as he *with-holds* his *Grace* from Men, and denies them the Help of his bleſſed Spirit, whereby alone they are enabled to do what is good and holy: Sometimes, as he *preſents* them with ſuch *Occaſions* and *Objects*, as are a Means to incite them to ſinful Deſires and Actions; and ſometimes, as he *ſubmits* them to the *Aſſaults* and *Temptations* of Satan, and allows them to proceed in their Iniquities, in order to make one Sin the Puniſhment of another: In all which Caſes, God is not culpable, neither is there any Blemiſh caſt upon his Holineſs, becauſe he lays no *poſitive Bias* upon their Wills, but leaves them to their own Choice. The *propoſing* of Objects deſtroys not their Liberty, but 'tis the Corruption of their Nature, which bears them down, without any other *Influx*. And though the Communications of his *preventing* Grace might be available to their Standing; yet, when Men have long ſlighted and abuſed that ineſtimable Gift, 'tis but Juſtice in him to abandon the Care and Preſervation of them, that they may *eat the bitter Fruit of their own Ways, and be filled with their own Devices.* *Anſwer'd at large.*

THIS is a *general* Solution for ſome of theſe Difficulties; but then it may be conſidered farther, that, in Actions, which have a manifeſt Depravity in them, there is a Diſtinction to be made between the *natural Act*, and the *moral Evil*, that adheres to it. For the Underſtanding of this, we muſt remember, that the general Power of Thinking and Willing, and the natural Faculty of Doing any Thing, is from God; *in him*, as the Apoſtle ſays, *we live, move, and have our Being*; are not only ſuſtain'd in our *Exiſtence*, but act and operate by his divine *Influence*. Nay, even our vicious Actions, as they are *natural* Actions, come from God, and yet, under that Conſideration, they are not *ſinful*. The *natural* Act is a Thing indifferent, and varies according to the *Object*, the Circumſtances, and Diſpoſition of the Doer: And therefore, though God determines a Man to the *natural Act*, yet it does not therefore follow, that he determines him to the *Sin*, that accompanies it: [x] For *the Act*, as an Act, is one Thing, and the *Viciouſneſs* of it is another. The *Act* is the *Efficacy* of the Faculty, extending itſelf to ſome outward Object; but the *Sinfulneſs* of it is the *Privation* of that Rectitude, which ſhould be in it, and its Deviation from the Laws of God. Though God therefore, as the univerſal *Cauſe* of all natural Effects in the World, and as the *Upholder* and *Suſtainer* of Men's Beings, *concurs* in all their Actions, whether good or bad; yet the *Evil* or *Obliquity* of theſe Actions he concurs not in: *That* ſprings from their deprav'd Wills, and the corrupt Motions of their own Minds.

TO make this more plain, we may obſerve (as I ſaid before) that the *Evil* of any Action does not attend it *ſimply* as an *Action*, but as an Action ſo and ſo *circumſtantiated*; inſomuch, that the ſame Action, done by two ſeveral Perſons, may be *good* in one, and *bad* in the other. Two *Judges*, for Inſtance, joined in Commiſſion for the Trial of a *Malefactor*, upon the Appearance of his Guilt, equally condemn him. The Action in both, conſider'd as an Action, is the ſame; and yet in him, who condemns him in pure Conſideration of the *Demerit* of his Fault, and in him, who condemns him out of ſome *private* Pique or Reſentment, it is widely different; in the one it is morally *good*, in the other morally *evil*; in the one, an Act of *Juſtice*, in the other an Act of *Murther*: Which plainly ſhews, that there is a Diſtinction to be made between the *Action* and the *Depravity* of it, and that God may concur in the *Subſtance* of the Act, without concurring in the *Sinfulneſs* of it; as the *good* Judge, that condemned the Priſoner out of *Conſcience*, concurr'd with the *evil* Judge, that condemned him out of private *Revenge*, not in the *Principle* and Motive of Condemnation, but in the *material* Part of it.

IN ſhort, ſince it is agreed on all Hands, [y] that no Creature can move, or act, or do any Thing without the Help and Co-operation of God, even Men's wicked Actions muſt be done by the ſame Concurrence with their good; but then, that Concurrence, relating only to the bare *phyſical* Act, cannot intitle God to their Sins; ſince to preſerve their *Nature*, and actuate their natural Powers (which is all that God does in the Caſe) is no more the Cauſe of their Sin, than his firſt creating them. This ſeems to be the moſt effectual Anſwer: But whatever Difficulties may ariſe farther, or in what Manner ſoever we may ſuppoſe God to act, with Reſpect to the Production of

[u] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.
[x] *Charnock*, on the Attributes, and *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity.
[y] *Sherlock*, of Divine Providence.

what is Evil; yet we are ſure that it is without any Stain or Depravity, without any Fault or Appearance of Vice, and that he, whoſe Eyes are ſo *pure*, and whoſe Nature ſo *immaculate*, whoſe Laws are ſo *ſtrict*, and Comminations ſo *ſevere* againſt Sin, cannot, by any poſitive Act, prompt to Wickedneſs, or inſtil any evil Qualities into the Minds of Men.

The Reſult of this Attribute, Reverence to God.

SINCE *Holineſs* then is ſo eminent a Perfection of the Divine Nature, the proper Reſult of this Conſideration is, that we endeavour to acquire, and fix in our Mind a ſtrong and lively Apprehenſion of it; becauſe the *clearer* our Conceptions are of this, the more *affectionate* will our Reverence be in all our Approaches to God. [a] Had thoſe Nations, which worſhipped the *Sun*, at firſt ſeen its Brightneſs maſk'd in a Cloud only, how would their Admiration have been rais'd *gradually*, as they ſaw it *ſhaking* off its Veil of Darkneſs, and chaſing away the Miſts before it! But what a profound Veneration would they have paid, when they came to behold it in its full Glory and *meridian* Brightneſs! And in like Manner, our Reverence to God, in all our Addreſſes to him, would riſe to a greater Elevation, if every Act of Duty were uſher'd in and ſeaſon'd with the Thoughts of him, as ſitting upon his *Throne of Holineſs*. We ſhould have a more becoming Senſe of our own *Vileneſs*, a more awful Reſpect to his *Preſence*, a greater Ardor to his *Service*, a greater Dread of his *Diſpleaſure*, and a more chearful Acquieſcence in all his *Diſpenſations*, had we but a competent Notion of this illuſtrious Perfection. But the Misfortune is, we firſt deface the *Image* of God in our Souls, and then frame a Repreſentation of him, according to our *Fancies*, as one winking at our Follies, and indulgent to our *complectional* Vices; and hence we loſe the Senſe of the true God, whoſe Throne of [b] *Holineſs is a fiery Flame*; and, falling in Love with the *Idol* of our own making, commit Wickedneſs with an unbounded Licentiouſneſs, and crown our Vices with the Names of *Virtues*, becauſe they are ſo like the Sentiments of that God, which we figure to ourſelves. But if ever we would have right Notions of God, we muſt repreſent him to our Thoughts, not according to our vicious Inclinations, but as he has repreſented himſelf in Scripture; [c] *glorious in Holineſs*, a Lover of Righteouſneſs, and an Hater of Iniquity, and who, for the Conſervation of the whole World, cannot *connive* at Sin, or *contaminate* the Purity of his Nature.

And Holineſs in ourſelves.

UNDER this Contemplation, our farther Care muſt be, to labour after a Conformity to God in this Perfection; [d] for *he who hath* called *us is holy, ſo ſhould we be holy in all Manner of Converſation*; and that, in Regard to our Happineſs, both *here* and *hereafter*; [e] becauſe the Capacity of all Felicity muſt be laid in the inward Frame of our Minds, in a godlike Temper and Diſpoſition. 'Till the *Image* of Holineſs, which has been *defaced* by Sin, be *renewed* in our Minds, we are utterly incapable of the Enjoyment of the *firſt* and chief *Good*, in which, all our Felicity does conſiſt; for, [f] *what Fellowſhip hath Righteouſneſs with Unrighteouſneſs, or what Communion hath Light with Darkneſs?* Our holy [g] Religion therefore, (in order to prepare us for the Happineſs of the next Life) is deſign'd to mortify our Luſts and Paſſions, and to reſtrain us from the inordinate Love of groſs and ſenſual Delights; to call off our Minds from theſe *inferior* Things, and to raiſe them to higher and more ſpiritual Objects, that we may be diſpoſed for the Happineſs of another World, and taught to reliſh the Delights of it: Whereas, ſhould we be able to taſte no Pleaſure in any Thing, but what is *ſenſual* and earthly, we muſt needs be extremely *miſerable*, when we come into the other World; becauſe we ſhould meet with nothing to entertain ourſelves withal, no Employment ſuitable to our Diſpoſition, no Pleaſure that would agree with our deprav'd Appetites, and vicious Inclinations. [h] For what Concord could there be between ſenſual and *carnaliz'd* Souls, that underſtand no other Pleaſures, but only thoſe of the *Fleſh*, and thoſe pure and *Virgin* Spirits, which never eat, nor drink, but live for ever upon Wiſdom, and Holineſs, and Love, and Contemplation? "How "can I be happy in ſeeing that God, whom I cannot love; in converſing with thoſe "Spirits, whoſe *Genius* I abhor; and in being for ever employed in thoſe *heavenly* "Exerciſes, to which I have the greateſt Averſion? No, no, till I am of the ſame "Opinion with the *celeſtial* Inhabitants, and have my Mind contemper'd to the hea-"venly State, it is impoſſible that Heaven and I ſhould ever agree; and I may as "well ſee without Eyes, or hear without Ears, as pretend to enjoy Heaven without "an heavenly Diſpoſition:" So that, by the Nature of Things, as well as by the Laws of God, it is ordain'd, that *no unclean Thing ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and that without Holineſs, none ſhall ſee God.*

SECT.

[a] *Charnock*, on the Attributes. [b] Dan. vii. 9. [c] Exod. xv. 11. [d] 1 Pet. i. 15. [e] *Tillotſon's* Serm. Vol. III. [f] 2 Cor. vi. 14. [g] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. I. [h] *Scott's* Works, Vol. II.

SECT. XII.

Of the GOODNESS *of* GOD.

OF all the *Divine* Perfections, that which repreſents God under the Notion of an *amiable*, as well as a *glorious* Being, the *Father*, as well as the *Governor* of the Univerſe, is this Attribute of his *Goodneſs*. [l] *Eternity* and *Immenſity amaze* our Thoughts: Infinite *Knowledge* and *Wiſdom* fill us with *Admiration*: *Omnipotence*, or irreſiſtible Power, is *great* and *adorable*; but, at the ſame Time, if conſidered ſingly by itſelf, 'tis alſo *dreadful* and *terrible*: *Dominion* and *Majeſty*, cloathed with perfect and impartial *Juſtice*, are worthy of the higheſt Praiſes; but ſtill to *Sinners* they appear rather *awful* and venerable, than the Object of *Deſire* and *Love*: *Holineſs* and *Purity* are inexpreſſibly *beautiful* and *amiable* Perfections, but of too *bright* a Glory for Sinners to contemplate with Delight. 'Tis *Goodneſs*, that finiſhes the Idea of God, and repreſents him to us under the lovely Character of being the *beſt*, as well as the *greateſt* Being in the Univerſe.

The Goodneſs of God, what.

NOW Goodneſs, in the *moral* Senſe, (wherein we are to conſider it) conſiſts in a *Benevolence* of Temper, [k] or a Readineſs to diſtribute the Good and Happineſs we enjoy, deſiring that others ſhould partake of it, and exerting that Deſire in kind and beneficial Actions upon all Occaſions: And, as it is applied to God, [l] 'tis a beneficent Diſpoſition of the Divine Nature, which moves him to *diffuſe*, upon all his Creatures, through the immenſe Univerſe, and through a boundleſs Eternity, every good Thing that is proper for them; every Thing that tends to their true Happineſs; every good Thing, which either they, in their own Nature, are capable of *receiving*, or which *for him*, in his all-wiſe Government of the World, is fit and reaſonable to *give*. This is that inexhauſtible Fountain of Beneficence, which, according as it terminates upon different Objects, admits of different Denominations; ſo that, [m] when it confers Happineſs without Merit, 'tis *Grace*; when it beſtows Happineſs againſt Merit, 'tis *Mercy*; when it beſtows it according to Promiſe, 'tis *Truth*; when it commiſerates a diſtreſſed Perſon, 'tis *Pity*; when it ſupplies an indigent Perſon, 'tis *Bounty*; when it ſuccours an innocent Perſon, 'tis *Righteouſneſs*; when it pardons a penitent Perſon, 'tis *Forgiveneſs*; when it bears with a criminal Perſon, 'tis *Patience*, or *Long-ſuffering*.

Proved from Reaſon.

THAT God (in all this Latitude of Acceptations) is a *good* and *gracious* Being, we may, when we pleaſe to take a Survey of the Works of *Creation* and *Providence* at any Time, convince ourſelves; becauſe [n] whatever Power and Perfection we ſee in the Creatures, proceeded originally, and with direct Intention, from God. *Inanimate* Beings, though not in their own Nature proper Objects of Goodneſs, yet, every where, in their *relative* Uſe, bear evident Marks and Signatures of it. The Powers of Life and Senſe diſcover ſtill greater Effects of Divine Goodneſs, and are, in an higher Degree, ſubſervient both to the Beauties and Advantages of human Life: But Reaſon and Intelligence is the nobleſt Inſtance of the Bounty of our Creator, becauſe we are thereby, in ſome Meaſure, made *Partakers of the Divine Nature*; are capacitated to maintain a kind of Society with God; *to draw near to him*, *to love him*, and to employ the Means that he hath made requiſite for our enjoying him, and the Things *that he hath prepared for thoſe that love him*, in a future and far happier State.

NOW it is hardly poſſible to conceive how we could have any reaſonable Motives to love God, or take Delight in his Communion, if we ſhould once ſuppoſe him diveſted of *Goodneſs*. *Power* without Goodneſs is attended with an Idea of Terror; *Juſtice* without Goodneſs puts on the Face of Rigour and Cruelty; *Wiſdom* debaſes itſelf into Craft and Diſſimulation; nor do we know of any one Quality, ſeparate from this, that can give the Heart a kindly and laſting Impreſſion: Whereas Kindneſs and Beneficence fix an Intereſt in the Minds of Men, and will procure us an *Aſcendency*, when all the Ties of Fear and Dependence fail. However this be, it certainly yields us, upon the Reflection of having done ſome good and truly generous Action, a Pleaſure and Complacency of Mind, that all the Joys of Senſuality cannot come up to.

WE

[l] *Clarke*'s Sermons Vol. I. on the Attributes. [k] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [l] *Clarke*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [m] *Charnock*, [n] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity.

[o] WE may therefore prove the Divine *Philanthrophy* from what we feel in ourſelves, or perceive in others. We find in our own Breaſts a Deſire and Readineſs to do good, and to be *beneficial* to our Fellow-Creatures, and, when we relieve their Wants, we ſeem to relieve our own *Bowels*. We obſerve others of the ſame Diſpoſition with ourſelves, *ready to give, glad to diſtribute*, and making Acts of Munificence and Charity the Study, as it were, and Employment of their Lives: And, if this be deſervedly accounted an *Excellence* in us, we may rationally gather, that it is in God, in a far more tranſcendent Degree, and that whatever Goodneſs the beſt-natur'd of the Sons of Men, or the moſt glorious Angel in Heaven is poſſeſs'd of, is but a weak and imperfect Repreſentation of that eternal Love, by which all the *Hoſt of Heaven*, and all the Race of Mankind were created.

From the Teſtimony of Heathens.

THE *Creation* and *Conſervation* of all Things, indeed, are ſuch a plain Demonſtration of infinite Goodneſs, that, even in the darkeſt Ages of the *Pagan* World, God did not [p] *leave himſelf without a Witneſs*, as the Apoſtle argues, *in that he ſent them Rain and fruitful Seaſons, filling their Hearts with Food and Gladneſs*. Nor were they inſenſible of his Beneficence: For which Reaſon, among all the Divine Titles, they gave a conſtant Pre-eminence to his [q] *Goodneſs*, and made it a fundamental Article of their Religion, [r] "That the firſt *Act of Worſhip was to believe the Exiſtence* "*of a God*; *the next, to aſcribe Majeſty or Greatneſs to him*; *and then to aſcribe Good-*"*neſs, without which there could be no Greatneſs.*"

FROM what Principle the ſeveral Acts of their religious Worſhip did proceed, we have a remarkable Paſſage in *Seneca* to inſtruct us: "He that denies the Good-"neſs of God, *ſays he*, does not ſurely conſider the infinite Number of Prayers, "that, with Hands lifted up to Heaven, are addreſs'd to God, both in private and "publick: Which certainly would not be, (for is it credible, that all Mankind "ſhould conſpire in this Madneſs of putting up their Supplications to deaf and im-"potent *Deities?*) if they did not believe, that the Gods were ſo good, as to con-"fer Benefits on thoſe who pray'd unto them." [s] Nay, the very *Idolatry*, ſo prevalent among the *Heathens*, is, in my Opinion, a clear Teſtimony of their common Sentiment of the Goodneſs of God; ſince they adored thoſe Creatures chiefly that were of moſt general Benefit, as the Sun, the Moon, *&c.* (which muſt be founded on a pre-exiſtent Notion, not only of the *Being*, but of the *Bounty* and Benignity of God) and ever placed the Perſons, who were moſt eminent for any uſeful Invention, among the Number of their Gods: And, for this Reaſon, the Men of *Lyſtra*, when they ſaw a Reſemblance of the Divine Goodneſs, in the charitable and miraculous Cure of one of their Fellow-Citizens, preſently miſtook *Paul* and *Barnabas* for Gods, and thence inferred their Right to *Divine Worſhip*; enquiring into nothing elſe, but the viſible Character of their Goodneſs and Uſefulneſs, to capacitate them for the Honour of a *Sacrifice*.

And Scripture.

WHAT Teſtimony the Word of God, in Conjunction with the common Sentiments of Mankind, gives to this bleſſed Attribute, 'tis needleſs to recite, when in every Page we read large Encomiums of the divine Generoſity and Benevolence, *viz.* [t] *that the Earth is full of his Goodneſs, and as* [u] *the Eyes of all wait upon him, he openeth his Hand, and ſatisfieth the Deſire of every living Thing*; but [x] *his Delights are with the Sons of Men*; and though the Virtuous are the peculiar Objects of his Care, [y] ſo *that he with-holds no good Thing from them,* [z] *giving them all Things richly to enjoy, and* [a] *caſting his Eyes to and fro through the whole Earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in their Behalf*; yet [b] *he giveth*, without Diſtinction, *to all liberally*; [c] *he maketh his Sun to riſe on the Evil and on the Good, and ſendeth Rain on the Juſt and on the Unjuſt*; being, in ſhort, [d] *good to all, and having his Mercies over all his Works.*

Several Inſtances, and the Reſult of it.

TO be more particular upon ſo delightful a Subject. By the *Goodneſs* of God were the Heavens framed, and all the bright Luminaries, that do ſtock and adorn it, to [e] *give Light to the Earth, and to be for Signs, and for Seaſons, and for Days, and Years:* By the ſame *Goodneſs* was that vaſt Variety of Creatures brought into Being, which of themſelves would never have exiſted, and, upon their firſt Production, in their reſpective Kinds and Degrees, pronounced to be *good:* By the ſame *Goodneſs* is a ſuitable Proviſion made for the Preſervarion of all Things, [f] *both Man and*

[o] *Edwards's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [p] Acts xiv. 17. [q] Εἷς τε μέγας τε, deus optimus maximus. [r] Primus deorum cultus eſt deos credere, deinde reddere illis Majeſtatem ſuam, reddere Bonitatem, ſine quâ nulla Majeſtas, *Sen.* [s] *Charnock*, on the Attributes, Acts xiv. [t] Pſal. xxxiii. 5. [u] Ibid. cxlv. 15, 16. [x] Prov. viii. 31. [y] Pſal. lxxxiv. 11. [z] 1 Tim. vi. 17. [a] 2 Chron. xvi. 9. [b] James i. 5. [c] Matth. v. 45. [d] Pſal. cxlv. 9. [e] Gen. i. 14, 17. [f] Pſal. xxxvi. 6.

and Beaſt, and for their proper Continuance and Well-being: By the ſame *Goodneſs* was Man [g] *made a little lower than the Angels, crowned with Glory and Honour*, and endued with a Reaſon, which enables him not only to *have Dominion* over the *Things that are put in Subjection under his Feet*, but to contemplate, adore, and imitate his great Creator himſelf: By the ſame *Goodneſs* * *was our Subſtance, being yet imperfect, faſhion'd and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt Parts of the Earth*; were we all [h] *taken out of our Mother's Womb*, nurs'd in the Infirmities of our *Infancy*, preſerv'd in the many Dangers of our giddy *Youth*, and ſecur'd from the Temptations of our more *advanced Years*: By the ſame *Goodneſs*, in the *whole Courſe of our Lives*, have we been ſurrounded with an *Ocean* of Bleſſings, both *Spiritual* and *Temporal*; protected from *Evils*, which, with all our Wiſdom and Sagacity, we could neither foreſee nor prevent; or, if they were brought upon us, either ſoon reliev'd, or greatly ſupported under them: By the ſame *Goodneſs* is the *Light of Conſcience* ſet up in our Breaſts, to diſtinguiſh between Good and Evil, as an inward perpetual *Monitor*, to put us in Mind of a future Judgment, and (what is more) the Senſe of this natural *Faculty* is confirm'd to us by an *expreſs Revelation*: By this *Goodneſs* are we poſſeſſed [i] *of the Oracles of God*, [k] *of the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the Service of God, and the Promiſes*; are admitted, in ſhort, into the *Kingdom of Grace* here, and intitled to the *Kingdom of Glory* hereafter: By this *Goodneſs*, and in Pity to loſt Mankind, God ſent his only-begotten Son into the World, that [l] *whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life*; and that [m] *being juſtified by Faith, we have Peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom we have Acceſs into this Grace wherein we ſtand*; and, laſtly, by this *Goodneſs*, the Holy Spirit, that bleſſed Comforter, was ſent down, to inſtruct and teach us, to perſuade and admoniſh us, to ſanctify our Minds, and purify our Conſciences, and thereby fit and prepare us for *the glorious Inheritance of the Saints in Light*.

THUS which Way ſoever we caſt our Eyes, whether above us, or beneath us, whether within us, or without us, we find ourſelves ſurrounded with the bleſſed Effects of God's Loving-kindneſs. That we are Men, and not Worms; that we are not Stones or Clods of Earth, utterly inſenſible of all Good, and incapable of all Felicity; that we are inſpir'd with immortal Minds, and endow'd with vaſt Capacities of Happineſs; that we have ſo many ſenſible Organs, capable of ſuch a Variety of Pleaſures, and ſo many Pleaſures to ſuit and entertain them; that we have Life and Motion, Health and Vigour, Senſe and Perception, Reaſon and Underſtanding, to guide and govern them; that we are provided for the other World as well as this; provided with an Happineſs above our largeſt Wiſhes and Deſires; and have the whole ſacred *Trinity* employed in contriving, preparing, and accompliſhing our everlaſting Felicity: [n] *Oh the Depth of the Riches, of the Goodneſs and Bounty of God; how unſearchable are thy Deſigns* of Kindneſs, *and thy Ways* of Beneficence *paſt finding out! Bleſs the Lord*, therefore, *O my Soul, and all that is within me bleſs his holy Name: Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits*; but be mindful always what ſtrong *Motives* they ought to be to thy Love and Imitation, thy Faith and Confidence, thy Repentance and godly Living, and in the Senſe of this, *fear* [o] *the Lord, and ſerve him in Truth, and with all thine Heart*; *for conſider* what great *Things he hath done for thee*.

SECT. XIII.

Of the MERCY *and* PATIENCE *of* GOD.

HITHERTO we have ſurveyed the *Goodneſs* of God, as it is extended to ſuch of his Creatures in general, as are the proper Objects of it: There are two chief Branches in it, *Mercy* and *Patience*, which reſpect Mankind in a State of *Diſobedience*, and conſequently, under the Wrath and Diſpleaſure of the *Almighty*; which ſeem to deſerve a particular Conſideration, as *Attributes*, which to ſinful Mortals are of more direct and immediate Concern.

1. NOW the Mercy of God is a Diſpoſition in the Divine Nature, whereby he is inclined to ſuccour thoſe that are in *Miſery*, and to pardon thoſe that have offended. [p] In Scripture-language it is uſually ſet forth to us by the Expreſſions of *The Mercy of God, what.*

[g] Pſal. viii. 5. * Ibid. cxxxix. 15, 16. [h] Ibid. xxii. 9. [i] Rom. iii. 2. [k] Ibid. ix. 4. [l] John iii. 16. [m] Rom. v. 1, 2. [n] Ibid. xi. 33. [o] 1 Sam. xii. 24.
[p] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. II.

Pity and *Compaſſion*; which is an Affection, that cauſes a ſenſible Commotion and Diſturbance in us, upon the Apprehenſion of ſome great Evil, either threatning, or oppreſſing another; purſuant to which, God is ſaid to be *grieved* and *afflicted* for the Miſeries of Men. But though God be pleaſed, in this Manner, to convey an Idea of his Mercy and Tenderneſs to us, yet we muſt take heed how we cloath the Divine Nature with the *Infirmities* of human Paſſions. We muſt not meaſure the Perfections of God by the Expreſſions of his *Condeſcenſion*; and, becauſe he ſtoops to our *Weakneſs*, level him to our Infirmities. When therefore God is ſaid to *pity* us, or to be *grieved* at our Afflictions, we muſt be careful to remove the Imperfection of the *Paſſion*, the Commotion and Diſturbance that it occaſions, and then we may conceive as ſtrongly of the Divine Mercy and Compaſſion as we pleaſe, *viz.* that it exerts itſelf in a very tender and affectionate Manner, and, without producing the Diſquiet, produces the Effects of the moſt *ſenſible* human Pity.

Proved from Scripture.

UNDER this Reſtriction, it may be no unpleaſing Contemplation to obſerve in Scripture, with what Pride, and ſeeming Oſtentation it is, that this endearing Attribute is diſplayed. [q] *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, abundant in Goodneſs and Truth, keeping Mercy for Thouſands, forgiving Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion, and Sin.* This is the Deſcription God gives of himſelf, and the *Name*, whereby he deſires to be called: And therefore the Holy Scriptures not only tell us, that [r] *the Lord our God is a merciful God*, but that [s] *he is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort*; that he [t] *delights in Mercy*, [u] *waits to be gracious*; [x] *rejoices over us to do Good*, [y] *and crowneth us with his Loving-kindneſs*: To denote the Greatneſs and Continuance of this Affection, they not only tell us, *that* [z] *his Mercy is above the Heavens*; but that it extends itſelf *over all his Works*, [a] *is laid up in Store for a thouſand Generations, and is to endure for ever and ever*: To expreſs the Intenſeneſs of it, they not only tell us of the [b] *Multitude of his tender Mercies*, [c] *the Swooning of his Bowels*, the Relentings of his Heart, and [d] *the Kindlings of his Repentance*; but, to give us as ſenſible an Idea as poſſible of the Compaſſions of God, they compare them to the tendereſt Affections among Men; to that of a Father towards his Children; [e] *as a Father pitieth his Children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him*; nay, to the Compaſſion of a Mother towards her Infant: [f] *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have Compaſſion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, ſhe may forget*, 'tis poſſible, though very unlikely; but though a Mother may turn unnatural, yet God cannot prove unmerciful; *Behold I have graven thee upon the Palms of my Hands. I will not forget thee.*

The various Kinds of it.

IN ſhort, the Scriptures every where magnify the *Mercy* of God, and ſpeak of it with all poſſible Advantage, as if the Divine Nature (which does in all Perfections excel every other Thing) did in this Perfection excel itſelf. And of this we may have a farther Conviction, if we lift but up our Eyes to God, and then turning them upon ourſelves, begin to conſider how many Evils and Miſeries, that every Day we are expos'd to, by his *preventing Mercy* are hinder'd, or, when they were coming upon us, ſtopped or turned another Way: How oft our Puniſhment has he deferred by his *forbearing Mercy*, or, when it was neceſſary for our Chaſtiſement, mitigated and made it light: How oft we have been ſupported in our Afflictions by his *comforting Mercy*, and viſited with the *Light of his Countenance*, in the Exigencies of our Soul, and *the Gloomineſs of Deſpair*: How oft we have been ſupplied by his *relieving Mercy* in our Wants, and, when there was no Hand to ſuccour, and no Soul to pity us, his Arm has been ſtretched out to *lift us from the Mire and Clay*, and, by a providential Train of Events, brought about our Suſtenance and Support: And above all, how daily, how hourly, how minutely we offend againſt him, and yet by the Power of his *pardoning Mercy*, we are ſtill alive: For, conſidering the Multitude and Heinouſneſs of our Provocations, [g] *'tis of his Mercy alone that we are not conſumed, and becauſe his Compaſſions fail not. Whoſo is wiſe will ponder theſe Things, and he will underſtand the Loving-kindneſs of the Lord.*

The Patience of God, what.

2. THE Patience of God is that kind Diſpoſition of the Divine Nature, whereby he is inclin'd to bear with *Sinners*, and to delay, or moderate their deſerved Puniſhment, in

[q] Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. [r] Deut. iv. 31. [s] 2 Cor. i. 3. [t] Micah vii. 18. [u] Iſa. xxx. 18.
[x] Pſal. cviii. 7. [y] Ibid. ciii. 4. [z] Ibid. lvii. 10. [a] Exod. xxxiv. 7. [b] Pſal. li. 1.
[c] Iſa. lxiii. 15. [d] Hoſea xi. 8. [e] Pſal. ciii. 13. [f] Iſa. xlix. 15, 16. [g] Lam. iii. 22.

in Hopes of their Amendment. [h] Thoſe, that have treated on the Paſſions, do generally obſerve, that nothing debaſes human Nature more, than being of a paſſionate and implacable Temper: Calmneſs and Eaſineſs of Mind, ſay they, are the Effects of good Senſe, as well as good Nature; they are the Reſult of conſcious Virtue, and flow from a juſt Security a Man has, whenever he has Occaſion to ſhew his Courage and Magnanimity: Whereas, he that is quick in his Reſentments, diſcovers his weak Side, and gives his Adverſary an Advantage againſt him. The Wiſdom of *Solomon* has happily fallen into the ſame Sentiment: [i] *He that is haſty of Spirit exalteth Folly; but he that is ſlow to Wrath, is of great Underſtanding:* [k] *He that is ſlow to Wrath is better than the Mighty; and he that ruleth his Spirit, than he that conquereth a City.* And if a *patient* and forbearing Temper be accounted ſo great an Accompliſhment in Man, a certain Elevation of Mind, whereby he is ſeated, as it were, in a ſuperior *Region* above the vain Inſults and Provocations of an Enemy; much more Reaſon is there to believe, that in God, who is the moſt powerful Being, this Perfection is infinitely more tranſcendent; and therefore the Royal Pſalmiſt not only makes ample Declarations of this Divine Attribute, but in ſome Meaſure accounts for it: [l] *The Lord is merciful and gracious,* ſays he, *ſlow to Anger, and plenteous in Mercy; he will not always be chiding, neither keepeth he his Anger for ever: He hath not dealt with us after our Sins, nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities; for he knoweth whereof we are made, he remembreth that we are but Duſt, i. e.* not worthy of Anger, nor able to bear the Expreſſions of his Indignation: And therefore he recommends his Patience, in another Place, from the Conſideration of his Power; *God is ſtrong and patient,* ſays he, *God is provoked every Day:* God is *ſtrong,* and therefore *patient,* or God is infinitely patient, notwithſtanding his Power to revenge the daily Provocations of his Creatures is infinitely great and irreſiſtible. [m] His *Patience* is an Argument of his *Power*; for nothing can declare his Power more, than that he is *able* to with-hold his Hand from deſtroying us, when he is provoked ſo grievouſly; in which Senſe is that Declaration in the Book of *Wiſdom,* [n] *Thy Power is the Beginning of Righteouſneſs, and becauſe thou art the Lord of all, it maketh thee to be gracious unto all.*

Prov'd from Reaſon and Scripture.

To give us a proper Notion then of this *adorable* Attribute, let us conſider a little, how it is we deal with God, and, notwithſtanding our Miſconduct, how it is he deals with us. Every Sin that we commit is an Affront to the Divine Majeſty, and a Contempt of his Authority. By denying Submiſſion to his Laws, we queſtion his *Omnipreſence*; or if we acknowledge it, our Provocation is ſtill the greater, becauſe then we affront him to his Face; we dare his *Juſtice,* and challenge his *Omnipotence,* and *provoke the Lord to Jealouſy, as if we were ſtronger than he.* Now if Offences are encreaſed, according to the Dignity of the Perſon injur'd, and the Meanneſs of him that does the Injury, then no Offences are ſo great as thoſe, that are committed by Men againſt God, no Affronts like thoſe, which are offered to the Divine Majeſty by the continual Provocations of his Creatures, foraſmuch as he is their Creator, Preſerver, and gracious Benefactor. And yet, [o] though he perfectly underſtands the *Greatneſs* of his own Majeſty, which is vilified, and the *Heinouſneſs* of the Offences, which diſparage him; though he be moved by his *Holineſs,* urged by his *Juſtice,* and directed by his *Omniſcience* to vindicate himſelf; yet Mercy and Patience ſtep in to with-hold his Arm, and withſtand the Aſſault of all his other Attributes: [p] *How ſhall I give thee up, Ephraim? How ſhall I deliver thee,* Iſrael? *Mine Heart is turned within me, my Repentings are kindled together: I will not execute the Fierceneſs of mine Anger; I will not return to deſtroy* Ephraim; *for I am God, and not Man,* The Prophet here ſeems to have deſcrib'd a beautiful Conflict between the Divine Attributes: Juſtice is pleading for the Deſtruction of a rebellious People, and urging the Divine Nature to execute it; the Divine Nature is almoſt drawn on by her *Importunity* to conſent, but, reflecting upon the Horror of the Work, *Pity* ſtarts up, and then ſhuddering at the Sight of it, and flying off with a contrary Reſolution, *I will not execute the Fierceneſs of mine Anger,* ſays he; *for I am God, and not Man.*

The Degree of it.

" Man may be peeviſh, and reſentive, cruel, and inexorable to his Brother, but I " am full of Patience and Long-ſuffering; *Judgment* to me *is a ſtrange Work*; my " Property is to have Mercy, to me it appertaineth to forgive Sin; and therefore I " ſpare, when Men deſerve Puniſhment, and, in the midſt of my Severity, think " upon

[h] Dr. *Adams*'s and Dr. *Moſs*'s Sermons. [i] Prov. xiv. 29. [k] Ibid. xvi. 32. [l] Pſal. ciii. 8, &c. [m] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [n] Chap. xii. 16. [o] *Charnock,* upon the Attributes. [p] Hoſea xi, 8, &c.

" upon Clemency, being [q] *unwilling that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to* " *Repentance; for I am God, and not Man.*"

Theſe Attributes encourage Hope.

AND this Conſideration may be of Uſe to rectify our Notions of the Divine Nature, with Regard to the *Forgiveneſs* of our Sins. [r] When we look into ourſelves, and conſider how void of *Bowels* and Compaſſions we are, how cruel, and hard-hearted, and inſolent, and revengeful; how many Motives are required to raiſe the leaſt Pity in our Breaſts, and, when any one has offended or provoked us, how *quick* we are to reſent, and how *ſlow* to forgive; what ſevere Upbraidings muſt precede, and vile Submiſſions be the Condition of a Reconciliation; we may poſſibly imagine (under the Senſe of our Tranſgreſſions) that there is the ſame Moroſeneſs, and Difficulty of Admittance in Almighty God, and thence juſtly infer, how ſhall we be forgiven? Nay, *how ſhall we able to ſtand in his* Sight to aſk Forgiveneſs, *if he ſhould be extream to mark what is done amiſs?* But to reſolve this Doubt, and pacify the Trouble of our dejected Minds, the Father of Mercies anſwers for himſelf, *I am God, and not Man.* God is patient and merciful to us, out of the mere Benignity of his Nature, and bears us a more hearty good Will, than any Man does to his Friend, or any Father upon Earth ever did to his deareſt Child: And therefore, if we will but comply with the gracious Intentions of his Loving-kindneſs, which ſhould *lead us to Repentance*, in all our uneaſy and gloomy Reflections, we may comfort ourſelves with this Soliloquy, [s] *Why art thou ſo vexed, O my Soul*, and why art *thou ſo diſquieted within me? Put thy Truſt in God; for I will yet give him Thanks* for his abundant Goodneſs, his gracious Promiſes, his ſure Mercies, and free Declarations of Pardon, *who is the Health of my Countenance, and my God.*

But not Preſumption.

2. BUT how much ſoever we may pleaſe ourſelves with this comfortable Contemplation, yet we are to remember, that the Mercy of God is an Enemy to Sin, as well as his Juſtice, and not in tended to encourage our Impenitence, but Repentance; that nothing is ſo provoking, as the Abuſe of his Patience, nor any Means ſo infallible to aggravate our Ruin; that the Wrath of God will make itſelf amends for its *Slowneſs*, when it comes; and his Juſtice exaſperated and ſet on by injur'd and abus'd Mercy, like a *Razor ſet in Oil*, will have the keener Edge, and be the ſharper for its *Smoothneſs*; and that thoſe, in ſhort, that [t] *deſpiſe the Riches of his Goodneſs*, and turn his Grace and Patience *into Laſciviouſneſs*, do but *treaſure up to themſelves Wrath againſt the Day of Wrath, and the Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God*, This then is the Leſſon, and only true Inſtruction we can learn from the whole: [u] *Let the Wicked forſake his Ways, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and turn unto the Lord, for he will have Mercy, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

SECT. XIV.

Of the JUSTICE *of* GOD.

The Juſtice of God, what.

THE *Juſtice* of God is that eternal *Rectitude* of the Divine Nature, whereby he orders and diſpoſes all Things, according to the *Rules*, which his infinite Wiſdom has preſcribed, and governs all Mankind with the utmoſt Exactneſs and Impartiality, in Relation to the Diſtribution of *Rewards* and *Puniſhments*. To illuſtrate this, we muſt obſerve, [x] that there is an intrinſical *Rectitude* and *Obliquity* in Things, and that the Reaſons and Relations of *moral* Good and Evil do not depend upon any uncertain and *arbitrary* Principle, but are fixt and immutable, eternal and indiſpenſable: Purſuant to this, that Goodneſs, Juſtice, and Truth, are eſſential and neceſſary Properties in the Divine Nature, antecedent to any Conſideration of his *Will*, and what he can no more alter or unſettle, than he can deny himſelf, or ceaſe to be: That, as he is the Maker and Governor of the World, he has an undoubted Authority to make *Laws*, and enforce them with proper *Sanctions:* That, when Laws are thus enacted, he ſets *Bounds*, in ſome Meaſure, to his own Authority; for Juſtice requires, that he ſhould not preſcribe what is above Man's *Strength*, or if he does, that he ſhould grant them *ſupernatural* Power to obey: That, upon obeying, he cannot deny them the promis'd *Reward*, without prejudice to his Juſtice; and upon the Violation of them, he hath a juſt Right to inflict the *Puniſhments*, which he has enacted: And from hence it will follow, that, in all his Proceedings with Man, God is *neceſſarily* obliged

[q] 2 Pet. iii. 9. [r] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, ibid. [s] Pſal. xlii. 11. [t] Rom. ii. 4, 5. [u] Iſa. lv. 7.
[x] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. II.

obliged, both by his Nature and Covenant, to act with the ſtricteſt Juſtice and Impartiality.

Prov'd from Reaſon and Scripture.

[y] MEN indeed may be ſenſible of the *moral* Obligations of Juſtice, and yet, in many Caſes, either not perceive the *Reaſons* of them, or if they do, be unwilling to be determined by them. [z] All human Juſtice finds a great deal of Obſtruction for Want of Evidence; for, many Times *Facts* are obſcure, and *Circumſtances* doubtful, and *Allegations* preſumptive, and *Teſtimonies* inconſiſtent; or where the Evidence is compleat, the *Intricacy* of the Caſe, and the ſpecious Appearance of Reaſon on both Sides, may render the Merits of it impervious: Nay, even where Men have Capacity to underſtand what the Rules of Juſtice require them to do, yet too frequently they have other Rules of their own making, which are of much more Efficacy to determine their Choice, than thoſe which Juſtice preſcribes.

Now the chief Reaſons, whereby Men are uſually carried to commit Injuſtice, being either *Ignorance*, *Prejudice*, or *Partiality*; Ignorance of the Matter under Debate; Prejudice againſt other Perſons; and Partiality to ſome Deſign or Intereſt of their own; and as none of theſe Motives are compatible to God, in him there cannot be the leaſt Tincture of *Unrighteouſneſs*. For he knows the true and neceſſary Relation of Things, their Agreement and Diſagreement, their Fitneſs and Inequality; and as his Judgments *are true and righteous altogether*, ſo his Procedure, in the Execution of them, is exactly correſpondent to that Knowledge, which has every Matter *naked and open'd* before its View. He cannot be capable of any *Prejudice* towards his Creatures, becauſe [a] *he is the Father of us all, and* [b] *loveth all Things that are, and abhors nothing that he has made; for never would he have made any Thing, if he had hated it:* Nor can he be influenc'd in the Exerciſe of Juſtice by any Conſideration of *Self-Intereſt*; [c] *for our Goodneſs extendeth not* to him; [d] *all Greatneſs and Power, all Majeſty and Glory, all that is in Heaven and in Earth is his*; and therefore [e] *doth God pervert Judgment, or doth the Almighty pervert Juſtice?* No ſurely: His abſolute and independent Power ſets him above all inglorious Ends; and therefore, *far be it from him*, from him that has no Reaſon, no Provocation to it, *to commit Iniquity; the Work of a Man ſhall he render unto him, and cauſe every Man to find according to his Ways: Yea, ſurely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgment.*

† WORLDLY Conſiderations may prevail with Men in the higheſt Authority to *pervert Judgment:* Friendſhip, or Relation, or ſome other Intereſt, the Solicitations of the *Great*, or the Faſcinations of a *Bribe*, may *blind his Eyes*, and make him *accept the Perſons of Men* in the Diſtribution of Juſtice; but [f] *the Lord our God is the God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty and terrible, which regardeth not Perſons, neither taketh Rewards*; ſo that, [g] *if it be not fit to ſay to a King*, thou art wicked, *or unto Princes*, ye are ungodly, *how much leſs to him, that accepteth not the Perſon of Princes, nor regardeth the Rich more than the Poor, for they are all the Work of his Hands.* So evident it is, [h] that he, who *perfectly* knows the Rule of Equity, and *neceſſarily* judges of Things, as they really are; who has compleat Power to execute Juſtice according to that Knowledge, and no poſſible Temptation in the leaſt to deviate from it; who can neither be impos'd upon by any *Deceit*, nor mov'd by any *Biaſs*, nor aw'd by any Power; ſo evident it is, I ſay, that ſuch a Being will always do what is *right*, without Iniquity, and without Partiality, without Prejudice, and without Reſpect of Perſons.

[y] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [z] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [a] Eph. iv. 6. [b] Wiſd. xi. 24. [c] Pſal. xvi. 2. [d] 1 Chron. xxix. 11. [e] Job viii. 3. and xxxiv. 10, *&c.*

† That the *ſupreme* Lord and Governor of all Things is, and cannot but be *juſt* in all his *Actions*, may be made appear in the following Manner, ——— "There being neceſſarily in Nature a *Difference* of Things, which is "what we call *natural* Good and Evil, and a Variety in the Diſpoſitions and Qualifications of Perſons, which is what "we call *moral* Good and Evil; from the due or undue Adjuſtment of theſe *natural Qualities* of *Things*, to the *moral* "*Qualifications* of *Perſons*, ariſe unavoidably the Notions of *Right* and *Wrong*. Now the *Will* of every *intelligent* "Agent, being always directed by ſome *Motive*, 'tis plain, that the *natural Motive* of *Action*, where nothing irregu"lar interpoſes, can be no other than this *Right* or *Reaſon* of *Things*. Whenever this Right and Reaſon are not made "the *Rule* of *Action*, it can only be, either becauſe the *Agent* is ignorant of what is right, or wants *Ability* to purſue "it, or elſe is *knowingly* and willingly *diverted* from it by the *Hope* of ſome Good, or the *Fear* of ſome Evil. But "now, as none of theſe Cauſes of Injuſtice can poſſibly have any Place in God; his Actions muſt always neceſſa"rily be directed by Right, and Reaſon, and Juſtice only. For, having all *Knowledge*, 'tis impoſſible he can be "deceived in *judging* what is right: Having no *Want* of any Thing, his *Will* cannot poſſibly be *influenced* by any "*wrong Affection*; and, having no *Dependence* on any, *his Power* can never be limited by any *ſuperior Strength*." *Clarke*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

[f] Deut. vii. 21. [g] Job xxxiv. 18, 12, *&c.* [h] *Clarke*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

An Objection. BUT if God be no Reſpecter of Perſons, [l] "*wherefore doth the Way of the Wicked* "*proſper? Wherefore are all they happy, that deal treacherouſly?* [k] *The Taberna-* "*cles of Robbers proſper, and they that provoke God are ſecure;* [l] *they come in no* "*Perils like other Folk, neither are they plagued like other Men;* [m] *their Houſes are* "*ſafe from Fear, neither is the Rod of God upon them;* for *they ſpend their Days in* "*Mirth and Wealth, and in a Moment,* with a quick and eaſy Paſſage, *go down to the* "*Grave:* Where then is the Juſtice of God? Or what are the Tokens of his *Anſwer'd.* "*Impartiality?*" The Tokens of God's Impartiality indeed are not always viſible in this World; becauſe having intended it for a State of *Trial*, wherein he is to approve the Obedience of Men, and their Inclinations to Good or Evil, he could not ſo properly make this Uſe of it, without an unequal Diſtribution of what we call *Proſperity*; nor ſhould we have that Certainty of a future *Judgment*, (becauſe there would not be that *Occaſion* for it) if every Thing were exactly adjuſted here, So that there are very good Reaſons why God defers the Puniſhment of the Wicked, and, as [n] the *Pſalmiſt* complains, makes them remarkably proſperous in the World, that ſometimes they may be Inſtruments in the Hands of Providence for the Puniſhment of others, as in the Caſe of Tyrants and publick Oppreſſors; that ſometimes he may make their Puniſhment, when it finally comes upon them, more *exemplary* and awakening, as in the Caſe of *Pharaoh*; and that, at other Times, he may ſhew his Mercy and Forbearance, and cut off all Excuſe for Impenitence, [o] by *enduring with all Long-Suffering the Veſſels of Wrath fitted to Deſtruction.* We may therefore, when we pleaſe to be fooliſh, *envy* the Felicity of the *Sinner*, and the Pride of the *Oppreſſor*; but certainly, if we retain the Senſe of another World, we cannot but believe, that there is a Time coming, when the greateſt Perſons in this, thoſe who overturn Kingdoms, and lay waſte Countries, and oppreſs and ruin Millions of Mankind to gratify their Luſts and Ambition; that there is a Day coming, I ſay, when theſe, of all others, ſhall fear and tremble moſt before the impartial Juſtice of God; [p] when *the Kings of the Earth, and the great Men, and the rich Men, and the mighty Men, ſhall hide themſelves in the Dens, and in the Rocks of the Mountains, and ſay unto the Mountains and Rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the Face of him, that ſitteth on the Throne; for the great Day of his Wrath is come, and who ſhall be able to ſtand?* Which ſingle Conſideration is enough to rectify, in our Conceptions, all the Inequality of preſent *Diſpenſations*, were it ten thouſand Times greater than it is. [q] *Let not thy Heart* therefore *envy Sinners, but be thou in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long; for ſurely there is an End, and thy Expectation ſhall not be cut off.*

The Reſult of this Attribute. Content. To juſtify therefore the Providence of God in all Events, and [r] to bring our Minds to a ſteady *Patience* and *Contentment*, we muſt urge upon them continually what the profound *Moraliſt* has taught us, *viz.* [s] "that the Deity, by its Nature, is the moſt juſt of all Beings, otherwiſe he would not be a *Deity.*" But more eſpecially we ought often to inculcate what God himſelf hath ſaid, that [t] *his Ways are equal*, and that *he hath not done without Cauſe, whatever he hath done to us.* It is not without Cauſe, that any Perſons are under Pain and Torture of Body; it is not without Cauſe, that Want and Poverty is their Portion; it is not without Cauſe, that they are brought to Shame and Diſgrace; in a Word, it is not without Cauſe, that they labour under any Sort of Calamity: The Reaſons of Providence may be *obſcure*, but cannot be trifling and defective; for he, that is Juſtice itſelf, cannot deal *unjuſtly* with any of his Creatures; he that is Righteouſneſs itſelf, cannot do them any Injury. Since *Afflictions ſpring not from the Duſt*, we muſt look into ourſelves for the Cauſe and Original of them; and, if we have any Senſe of our manifold Provocations, as we lift up our Eyes to Heaven, take up the Confeſſion of the Prophet, and ſay, [u] *Thou art juſt in all that thou haſt brought upon us; for thou haſt done right, but we have done wickedly.*

Fear. 2. THE Conſideration of the ſame Divine Attribute ſhould have a different Effect upon Mankind, according to their different Diſpoſitions, ſince it exhibits as much *Terror* to the *Wicked*, as it does *Conſolation* to the *Righteous.* [x] The Prophet *Iſaiah* has ſet forth the Juſtice of God, and the Aſtoniſhment of Sinners, in very lively Colours, when he repreſents the *Lord of Hoſts*, lifting up his Banner, muſtering all his Forces, and preparing the Weapons of his Indignation, to avenge himſelf on his Adverſaries: [y] *Howl ye, for the Day of the Lord is at Hand; it ſhall come as a Deſtruction*

[l] Jerem. xii. 1. [k] Job xii. 6. [l] Pſal. lxxiii. 5. [m] Job xxi. 9, 13. [n] Pſal. lxxiii. [o] Rom. ix. 22. [p] Rev. vi. 15, &c. [q] Prov. xxviii. 17, 18. [r] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [s] Δικαιότατον φύσει πάντων τὸ θεῖον, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ ἂν ἦν θεῖον. Porphyr. [t] Ezek. xviii. 29. and xiv. 23. [u] Nehem. ix. 33. [x] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [y] Iſa. xiii. 6, &c.

ſtruction from the Almighty. Therefore ſhall all Hands be faint, and every Man's Heart ſhall melt, and they ſhall be afraid: Pangs and Sorrows ſhall take hold on them; they ſhall be in Pain, as a Woman that travaileth; they ſhall be amazed at one another; their Faces ſhall be as Flames: And I will puniſh the World for their Evil, and the Wicked for their Iniquity; the Arrogance of the Proud I will cauſe to ceaſe, and will lay low the Haughtineſs of the Terrible. Every Word, in this pompous Deſcription, breathes Awe and Terror: Howling and Deſtruction, Fainting of Hands, and Meltings of Heart, Pangs and Sorrows, the Throws of a Woman in Labour, and Pains of an hard Travel, Amazement and Confuſion of Face, Deſolation and final Exciſion, are the ſeveral *Images*, which, put together by the Prophet, make up, in one exquiſite Piece, the frightful Scene *of the great and terrible Day of the Lord.*

And Reliance on God.

BUT ſee the bleſſed Effects of a virtuous Life! That ſame *Juſtice*, which looks ſo angry upon the *Wicked*, puts on another Aſpect, when it turns to the *Righteous*; and, like [z] the *Pillar of the Cloud*, ſheds a friendly Light upon the *one*, while, to the *other*, it portends nothing but Darkneſs and Deſpair. *The Lord is King*, (is an Exclamation of the Royal [a] *Pſalmiſt*'s, full of Joy) *the Earth may be glad thereof, yea, the Multitude of the Iſles may be glad thereof:* And he gives the Reaſon in the next Verſe; *Righteouſneſs and Judgment are the Habitation of his Throne.* And, indeed, in all the Afflictions and Oppreſſions that can befal Men, what can be a greater *Conſolation* to ſuch as *are true of Heart*, than to conſider that *the Lord is King*, whoſe Juſtice calls upon him to animadvert, and whoſe Power enables him to redreſs their Grievances; and that he is *ſeated on a Throne*, from whence he can behold the Wrongs they ſuffer, and can ſtretch out his Arm to protect their Perſons, and vindicate their Cauſe? And therefore the ſame Prophet, that juſt now repreſented to us the *Terrors of the Lord*, in order to reſtrain us from *Impiety*, does inſtruct us likewiſe in the Promiſes of the Lord, to ſuccour us in all our *Diſtreſſes*, if we adhere to him, and to our Duty: [b] *Fear not thou*, ſaith the Lord, *for I am with thee: Be not diſmayed, for I am thy God: I will ſtrengthen thee, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the Right-hand of my Righteouſneſs. Fear not; I will help thee, I will help thee, ſaith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of* Iſrael. Enough, in all Conſcience, to alleviate all Sorrows, that can befal us *here*, and *to give* us an *Hope full of Immortality hereafter.*

SECT. XV.

Of the VERACITY *of* GOD.

THE *Veracity* of God is that eternal Rectitude of the Divine Mind, [c] whereby his *Ideas* are exactly conformable to the Truth and Reality of Things, and his *Words* anſwerable to his *Ideas*, and expreſſive of the real Senſe and Intention of his Mind, ſo as to import the utmoſt *Sincerity* in ſuch *Declarations*, and the utmoſt *Fidelity* in ſuch *Promiſes*, as he ſhall, at any Time, think fit to make to the Sons of Men. Men indeed, who are far from knowing the perfect Nature of Things, are, every Moment, liable to make wrong Judgments, having (beſides their *native* Ignorance) the *Biaſs* of their Paſſions and Prepoſſeſſions always at Hand to draw them aſide, and Plenty enough of *ambiguous* Words to diſguiſe their Meaning, in caſe they are minded to impoſe upon their Hearers: But now in God there can be no Defect of Underſtanding, becauſe he perfectly knows the Nature of all Things, with all their ſeveral and diſtinct Relations; [d] *He is Light, and in him is no Darkneſs at all.* And as therefore he cannot poſſibly be deceived in the *Judgment* he makes of Things, ſo neither can he be under any Temptation to deceive us in his *Manner* of expreſſing them: Becauſe the *Motives*, upon which any rational Being may be ſuppoſed capable of *Falſification*, are infinitely removed from the known Perfections of his Divine Nature. [e] To be a *Lyar*, is eſteemed, among Men, an odious Character, and full of Reproach, becauſe it is an Argument of a baſe and ſervile Spirit, proſtitute to the Fear of loſing ſome Advantage, or incurring ſome Danger: But God has his own Fulneſs and All-ſufficiency to ſecure him, both againſt the Hopes of *increaſing*, and the Fears of *impairing* the Felicity of his Eſtate, from any Event whatever; and therefore cannot be deemed liable to any ſuch Action, as has a *moral Turpitude* in it.

The Truth of God, what.

Proved from Reaſon.

WHEN

[z] Exod. xiv. 20. [a] Pſal. xcvii. 1, 2. [b] Iſa. xli. 10, &c. [c] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity.
[d] 1 John i. 5. [e] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

WHEN Men are *unfaithful*, and break their Words, they do it, becauſe they are either *raſh* and inconſiderate in paſſing them, or *forgetful* in minding them, or *inconſtant* in keeping them, or *impotent* and unable to perform them: But none of theſe are incident to God, becauſe his infinite *Wiſdom*, and perfect *Knowledge*, and clear *Foreſight* of all Events, guard him againſt *Raſhneſs*, *Inconſtancy*, and *Forgetfulneſs*, as his infinite *Power* enables him to perform whatever his Lips have *uttered*, and his Goodneſs thought fit to *promiſe*. And this is ſo natural a Notion of the divine Excellencies, that the Heathens themſelves, in their Reaſonings upon this Argument, were conſtantly led into it: And therefore having laid it down for a Maxim, *That Lying and Falſhood are Imperfections, and odious to God and Men.* [f] *Plato* tells us, *That the Divine Nature is free from all ſuch Temptations, as ariſe either from Fear or Advantage*; and thereupon concludes, *that God is true, and deals plainly with us, both in his Words and Actions*; for *Truth* (in the Senſe of *Pythagoras*) *is ſo great a Perfection, that if the Deity were to render himſelf viſible to Men,* [g] *he would chuſe Light for his Body, and Truth for his Soul.*

From Scripture. 'TIS no Wonder then that we find the Holy Scriptures abounding with ſuch Poſitions as theſe, that *the* [h] *Paths of the Lord are Mercy and Truth*, and that his [i] *Words*, [k] *his Ways, his* [l] *Judgments are true and righteous*; to remove the contrary Quality from him, declaring that [m] *God is not a Man, that he ſhould lye, neither the Son of Man, that he ſhould repent; what he hath ſaid, he will do, what he hath ſpoken, he will make good:* And, to aſſure us of his Sincerity and Truth, averring that [n] *he will not ſuffer his Faithfulneſs to fail, his Covenant he will not break, nor alter the Thing that has gone out of his Lips*; for [o] *his Truth endureth to all Generations*, and [p] *though Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, yet his Word ſhall not.*

An Objection. [q] "BUT how can God be ſaid to be ſo true and faithful, when there are ſeveral "Promiſes made to the Godly, that are far from being fulfilled? [r] *Great Peace have* " *they that love the Law of the Lord, and nothing ſhall offend them:* [s] *He ſhall deli-* " *ver them in ſix Troubles, yea, in ſeven there ſhall no Evil touch them: In Famine,* " *he ſhall redeem them from Death, and in the War from the Power of the Sword:* " *They ſhall be hid from the Scourge of the Tongue, neither ſhall they be afraid of De-* " *ſtruction, when it cometh*; for [t] *Godlineſs is profitable in all Things, having the* " *Promiſe of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.* Theſe, and many " more of the like Nature, are the repeated Promiſes of God: But alas! how ſel- " dom are they made good to the Religious! Or how is *Godlineſs profitable to them,* " (as to the Things *of this Life*) when they are pined with Hunger and Want; when " they are expoſed to all Dangers and Calamities; when they are reviled, maligned, " and perſecuted, and many Times for Righteouſneſs Sake? An Exemption from " Danger, and the Collation of Wealth and Honour, of Peace and Safety, ſeem leaſt " of all to be the Conditions of *Godlineſs* here, whatever they may be hereafter."

Anſwered. To reſolve, in ſome Meaſure, this great Problem, we ſhould do well to conſider, that the Promiſes of worldly Happineſs are not made abſolutely to all, but to ſuch only, as are duly *qualified*, both by being truly *godly*, and by making uſe of proper *Means* to attain them. Now, ſince there is ſo much Diſſimulation in the World, and ſo many Ways of diſguiſing Men's ſecret Vices; unleſs we had the Faculty of looking into their Hearts, we cannot, with any Certainty, pronounce who are ſincerely good, and who not. A cunning *Hypocrite* may impoſe upon us, and the Want and Afflictions we perceive him labouring under, may be thought a ſevere Diſpenſation, when in Reality they are no more than a juſt Retribution for his Sin. Till therefore we have a more *diſtinct* Knowledge of Men, than our preſent Capacity can extend to, we ſhould be very cautious how we cenſure the *Faithfulneſs* of God, when 'tis a Thouſand to One, but that the Default lies originally in them, who, by not performing the Duty, that is made the *Condition* of the Promiſe, render themſelves unfit to receive the *Accompliſhment* of it.

AND, in like manner, Men cannot, upon any tolerable Ground, imagine that they ſhould enjoy the Comforts and Accommodations of Life, unleſs they apply themſelves to the proper *Methods* of attaining them. [u] For when God promiſes a good Man a plentiful Increaſe of his Subſtance, he does not immediately open the *Windows of Heaven*, and ſhower down Abundance of Gold into his Lap; nor does he ſurround him

[f] *De Repub.* Lib. 2. [g] *Porphyr. in vitâ Pythag.* [h] Pſal. xxv. 10. [i] 2 Sam. vii. 28.
[k] Rev. xv. 3. [l] Ibid. xvi. 7. [m] Numb. xxiii. 19. [n] Pſal. lxxxix. 33, 34. [o] Pſal. c. 5.
[p] Matth. xxiv. 35. [q] *Edwards's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [r] Pſal. cxix. 165. [s] Job v. 19, &c.
[t] 1 Tim. iv. 8. [u] *Young's* Sermons.

him with ſuch a diſtinguiſhing Providence, as that, whereby * he watered *Gideon*'s Fleece, while all the Ground about it was perfectly dry: But he leaves him, in a great Meaſure, to his own Care and Aſſiduity, attending his honeſt Induſtry only with his Bleſſing, and crowning it with Succeſs, which the idle and ſlothful Man muſt in vain expect. The like may be ſaid of bodily Health, of Peace and Safety, of Credit and Repute, *&c.* that the Man muſt make uſe of the *Means* conducing thereunto, he muſt addict himſelf to *Moderation* and *Sobriety*, he muſt obſerve the Laws of *Continence* and *Chaſtity*, he muſt be juſt in his *Dealings*, and curious in the Choice of his *Company*, &c. otherwiſe he fulfils not the Condition, upon which the Promiſe is ſuſpended, and devolves all the Blame upon himſelf in caſe of Non-Performance.

BUT ſuppoſe the Condition be fulfilled: Yet it is to be conſidered farther, that all Promiſes of this Kind are under certain *Limitations*, and are to be underſtood always with reſpect to God's Glory, and the Benefit of the Perſons to whom they are extended. Now it is certain, that the Glory of God is ſometimes ſerv'd, not ſo much by the *Happineſs*, as by the *Afflictions* of his Servants. In the Caſe of righteous *Job*, this is the declared End of his Suffering, that thereby he might give a Teſtimony of his Sincerity and Uprightneſs; that his Faith and Patience might be tried to the utmoſt; that he might commend theſe *Graces* to the Sufferers of ſucceeding Times; that the Devil and his Agents might be baffled and confounded; that the Divine Power and Strength might be diſplay'd in his *Weakneſs*, and, by all theſe, God's Glory manifeſted and advanc'd. And is it not evident, that, by the Sufferings and *Perſecutions* of the Faithful, by the Death and *Martyrdom* of holy Men, the Truth of the *Goſpel* is confirmed, the *Chriſtian* Faith propagated, Religion itſelf credited, and the Lord of Heaven and Earth glorified? Is it not manifeſt, that he is with his Servants in Tribulation and Diſtreſs, to guide and conduct them, to protect and defend them, to comfort and refreſh them, to ſhew his Power in their Infirmity, and oftentimes to reſcue and deliver them?

THUS their Sufferings redound to God's Glory (which is a *Limitation* not to be overlook'd in the fulfilling of Promiſes); but this is not the only Conſideration, that avails with God. He, who is ſo intimately acquainted with our *Frame* and Conſtitution, knows very well to what Uſe we ſhould apply his Bleſſings; and therefore, like a wiſe *Phyſician*, that tenders the Good and Welfare of his *Patients*, he lets us not have what we extravagantly deſire and call for. The Things of this World he beſtows not according to our *Longings* and *Appetites*, but gives us ſuch a *Portion* of them, as he knows is moſt ſuitable to our Condition, and will be moſt ſerviceable to our *ſpiritual* Health. He perceives before-hand, that we ſhould prove negligent in Health, wanton in Eaſe, proud, and haughty, and luxurious in Plenty; he foreſees that we ſhould ſtand in need of Chaſtiſements; that Afflictions and Croſſes would prove profitable to us, to ſubdue our evil Inclinations, to wean us from the Vanities of Life, and raiſe our Affections to him, and Heaven; and therefore, he refuſes *the one*, which would be ſo *pernicious*, and gives us *the other*, which are ſo very *beneficial* to us; and all this is pure Kindneſs, *that our light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment, may work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory:* Which is enough to vindicate the *Faithfulneſs* of God in all his Proceedings, ſince he with-holds nothing but what he knows would *hurt* us, and abundantly ſupplies the Want of *worldly* and *temporal*, with *heavenly* and *everlaſting* Comforts.

The Reſult of this Attribute, Reliance on God.

HERE then is a firm and laſting *Baſis* for our Truſt and Reliance on God; that how great ſoever the Bleſſings are, which he hath been pleas'd to promiſe, yet ſince he has been ſo gracious as to *promiſe*, he will think himſelf concern'd to make them good. Tho' therefore the Mercies of God be very great, and the Benefits we expect from him far beyond our Merits and Deſerts; yet, ſince we have his Promiſe, that, as long as we adhere to him, and to our Duty, *he will not leave us, nor forſake us*, we may rely upon his Word for the Continuation of his Favour, his Protection in Time of Danger, and his conſtant Proviſion for us, in Time of Want. Tho' the Senſe and Conſciouſneſs of our Sins be a *melancholy* Reflection, and, conſidering the Majeſty of him, againſt whom they are committed, and againſt what Light and clear Conviction, againſt what Entreaties and Calls to do otherwiſe, we many Times committed them, enough to ſink us into Deſpair; yet when we conſider, that God has promis'd, upon our Repentance, to *blot out our Iniquities, and remember our*

* Judges vi. 37.

Tranſgreſſions no more; to caſt them behind his Back, and throw them into the Depth of the Sea, (as he is pleas'd to expreſs himſelf for our Conſolation) we have Encouragement given us to look upon him, no longer as an angry and *inexorable* Judge, but as a tender and *reconcil'd* Father, thro' the Merits and powerful Interceſſion of his well-beloved Son. Once more, tho' the *Reward*, which God has propounded to our Hopes, be vaſt and inconceivable, and far above our largeſt Expectations; tho' we cannot conceive for what Reaſon it is, that the great God of Heaven and Earth, who is the *Center* of his own Happineſs and Enjoyment, ſhould have need of us in his *Celeſtial* Kingdom; ſhould deſire us to live with him, and to be in his Preſence to all Eternity; tho' this *eternal Weight of Glory*, I ſay, cannot enter into our Minds, for what Reaſon it can be conferr'd, and is enough to raiſe ſome Doubt and Diffidence in us, whenever we look upon our Performances to deſerve it: Yet, ſince Chriſt has aſſur'd us, that *in his Father's Houſe are many Manſions*, and that he is *gone before to prepare a Place, that where he and his Father are, we may be alſo*, our Title to the heavenly Inheritance, thro' the Purchaſe of his Blood, is confirm'd, and, in the Strength of his Merits, we may at any Time [y] *flee for Refuge, to lay hold on the Promiſe, that is ſet before us.*

A Belief of what he has revealed.

HERE again is a ſufficient Ground for our *Belief* and *Aſſent* to whatever, we are ſatisfied, is a *Declaration* of God's Will to Mankind. God does not indeed expect, that we ſhould *implicitly* believe every Thing, that goes under the Name of a *Divine Revelation:* This is a Matter that he ſubmits to our *Enquiry*, and calls upon us to uſe our utmoſt Diligence in the Search, that we may be *able to give an Account of the Faith that is in us.* But, after we have made it our Enquiry, and, upon Examination, are convinc'd, that ſuch and ſuch Things are certainly reveal'd to us by God, our Belief of them then ſtands not ſo much upon the *Credibility* of the Things themſelves, as upon the *Truth* and *Veracity* of him, who has reveal'd them. [z] If therefore we receive the Scriptures as the Word of God, and are ſatisfied of their Divine *Authority*, we ought, in all Conſcience, to believe every Thing contain'd in them, even tho' there be ſome *Points*, that to us are *unintelligible*, and wherein our deepeſt Reſearches can give us no particular Satisfaction. The Reaſon is, becauſe we are perſuaded, that they are reveal'd by God, *who cannot lye*, whoſe Knowledge is infallible, whoſe Word is Truth, and upon whoſe Teſtimony alone (if we are willing to glorify this Perfection of his, and *ſet our Seal* to his *Veracity*) we ought to give up our firm and unfeigned Aſſent; in which Senſe is that Expreſſion of the Apoſtle: [a] *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the Witneſs of himſelf; but he that believeth not God, hath made him a Lyar, becauſe he believeth not the Record, that God gave of his Son.*

THUS we have conſider'd ſome of the chief *Attributes* of God, in order to raiſe in our Minds great and worthy Conceptions of him, and to beget in our Hearts holy Affections, ſuitable to our Condition, and daily Dependence on him: And from the whole we may perceive, that the [b] *Simplicity* of his Nature ſhould teach us to have low Thoughts of our different Compoſition; his *Spirituality* ſhame our Mixture and Allay of Fleſh; his *Eternity* cauſe us to bluſh that *we are but of yeſterday*; his *Ubiquity* vilify our narrow and contracted *Locality*; his *Omniſcience* ſhew the ſhallow Reach of our Underſtanding; his *Omnipotence* expoſe our Weakneſs, and Want of Strength; his *Holineſs* command our Admiration; his *Goodneſs* our Love; his *Mercy* our Thankfulneſs; his *Juſtice* our Dread; his *Dominion* and *Happineſs* our Joy and Complacency; and his *Truth* and *Faithfulneſs*, together with his *Conſtancy* and *Unchangeableneſs*, our Faith, and Hope, and Reliance on him: And that, from a general View of his manifold Perfections, and our comparative Vileneſs and Deformity, we may be provok'd to fall down before him; and, in the Spirit and Words of holy and devout *Job*, proclaim his Majeſty, and ſay, [c] *I have heard of thee by the Hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eye ſeeth thee, wherefore I abhor myſelf, and repent in Duſt and Aſhes.*

[y] Heb. vi. 18. [z] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. II. [a] 1 John v. 10. [b] *Edwards's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [c] Job xlii. 5, 6.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the TRINITY.

HITHERTO we have treated of the *Nature* of God, *abſtractly* conſider'd, and of thoſe ſeveral Attributes, which neceſſarily ariſe from the Contemplation of it; and are now led to obſerve what it is that the Holy Scriptures teach us of the *Manner* of its ſubſiſting in a *Trinity* of *Perſons*. I ſay, *what it is the Scriptures teach us*; for it muſt be acknowledged, [a] that ſuch a *Myſtery* as this would never have enter'd into our Thoughts, had not the Spirit of *him*, who knows his own Nature and Subſtance beſt, been pleaſed to reveal it to us.

The Trinity *a Doctrine purely Chriſtian.*

SOME *Prints*, indeed, of a [b] very antient *Tradition* (as I ſhall have Occaſion to ſhew hereafter) are to be met with, concerning three *real Differences*, or *Diſtinctions* in the Divine Nature; but whence this Tradition had its Original, or whether we Chriſtians do not put that Conſtruction upon ſome obſcure *Hints*, and force them, as it were, to look that Way, has been a Matter of *Debate* among the learned World. Nay, ſome have adventured (and I think not without Reaſon) to carry the Thing ſo far, as even to deny, that the *Jews* themſelves ever had any expreſs Revelation of this Matter; and therefore they conclude, [c] that the Word *Elohim*, which is of *plural* Termination, when joined with *Bara*, which is a Verb *ſingular*, i. e. *God created*, is a common *Idiom* of the *Hebrew* Tongue, and cannot be ſuppoſed to import a *Plurality* of Perſons in the *Unity* of Eſſence; that † the Expreſſions, [d] *Let us make Man in our own Image*, and, [e] *the Man is become like one of us*, &c. imply the *Majeſty* only, (as it is cuſtomary for Kings to make mention of themſelves in the *plural* Number) and not the *Plurality* of the Speaker, nor any Conſultation among the ſeveral Perſons in the Godhead; and that the threefold Repetition of [f] *Holy, Holy, Holy*, when applied to God, inſtead of relating to the three *Hypoſtaſes* of the Godhead, expreſſes only the *Vehemence* of the Speaker, or the *Importance* of the Thing, and is a common *Form* in all Languages: So that theſe, and ſuch-like Places of Scripture, carry not in them (according to theſe Mens Sentiments) any ſuch evident Proof of a *Trinity*, as to perſuade us, that the *Jewiſh* Church could from hence attain a clear and diſtinct Knowledge of it. As for the Opinion of the *modern Jews* touching this Matter, 'tis certain, that they acknowledge no ſuch Thing as a *Trinity*, but utterly explode it; and the Followers of *Mahomet*, in all their publick Performances of religious Worſhip, are accuſtomed to repeat this Sentence with much Earneſtneſs: *There is but one God, there is but one God*; not ſo much out of *Zeal* to aſſert the *Unity* of the Godhead, as to reject the *Trinity* of *Perſons*, believed and maintained by *Chriſtians*. So that [g] this Doctrine is, as it were, the *Shibboleth* of the Chriſtian Church, and that wherein the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity are diſtinguiſhed from all other Worſhippers in the World. And as it is the *peculiar*, ſo it is the great

[a] *Burnet*, upon the Articles. [b] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [c] *Burnet*, ibid. and *South*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. Vid. Gen. chap. i.

† The *Primitive* Fathers, indeed, made Uſe of theſe Texts, to prove the Doctrine of the *Trinity* againſt the *Jews*, but then it was, becauſe they had properly no other Way of doing it; for, as the *Jews* abſolutely rejected the Authority of the *New Teſtament*, and yet allowed (from the Idiom of their Tongue very likely) that theſe Paſſages, which ſpeak in the *plural* Number, denoted *two*, if not more Perſons in the Deity, the Chriſtian Writers took Occaſion from hence to produce them againſt them; but then they produced them, rather as *Argumenta ad homines*, than any ſubſtantial Proofs. In that Form of Speech, for Inſtance, *Let us make Man*, the *Jews* admitted of a *Plurality*, but then, as the general Opinion was, that God here ſpeaks to his Angels, the Fathers here took their Advantage, and argued in this Manner: ————That, ſince Angels, or any other created Beings, could not be ſuppoſed capable of executing the Divine Commands, becauſe the Work of *Creation* was infinitely above their Ability, the Perſons, with whom God conſulted, muſt neceſſarily have been of Power equal to himſelf; and from thence they inferred, that in the Godhead there were two, if not more, *Omnipotent*, and conſequently *Divine* Perſons. For, "admitting that the "Work of Creation was too difficult for any *Creature*, and admitting, at the ſame Time, that there were other Per"ſons, beſides the God of *Iſrael*, who created the World, the Conſequence muſt be, that there are more *Divine* "*uncreated* Perſons than one;" but then it is a Conſequence, merely drawn from the Conceſſion of Adverſaries, and does not fully eſtabliſh the Doctrine of a *Co-eternal* Trinity. 'Tis an Argument, indeed, which the Fathers had no Need of, but in occaſional Diſputes, where it might be of ſome Service, and where the *New Teſtament* Proofs, on which they chiefly grounded their Doctrine, could not be admitted at all. *Waterland*'s Sermons at Lady *Moyer*'s Lecture.

[d] Gen. i. 26. [e] Ibid. iii. 22. [f] Iſa. vi. 3. [g] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

great and *fundamental* Doctrine of the Chriſtian *Syſtem*, and that which virtually comprizes all the reſt; for if God have not an *eternal Son*, and an *eternal Spirit*, the whole Myſtery of our *Redemption* by Chriſt, and of our *Sanctification* by the Spirit (which, in its Conſequences, is the *Whole* of the Goſpel, and diſtinguiſhes it from all other Religions whatever) is utterly loſt.

GREAT Care ought therefore to be had in *fixing* our Faith concerning this *Article* upon a right Bottom, and not ſo much to conſider what the Wit and Invention of Man have deviſed in order to an Explanation of it, (though this need not altogether be overlook'd) as what the *Holy Scriptures*, which are our only *Oracles* in this Caſe, have declar'd. 'Tis to them that I ſhall principally attend in this Argument, after having premiſed this one Conſideration, [h] that though neither the Word *Trinity*, nor perhaps *Perſon*, in the Senſe that *Divines* uſe them, when they treat of this *Myſtery*, be any where to be met with in Scripture; yet, ſince it cannot be denied but that *three* are there ſpoken of by the Names of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, and that theſe *three* are ſpoken of with as much *Diſtinction* from one another, as we uſe to ſpeak of three ſeveral Perſons; it will follow, that though the Expreſſions be not *ſcriptural*, yet, to avoid *Prolixity* and Circumlocution, they may very properly and innocently be uſed, ſo long as we mean neither more nor leſs by them, than what the Scripture ſays in other Words. Taking this along with us, I ſhall now proceed to the Doctrine itſelf, and ſhall endeavour to ſhew,

I. THAT the Scriptures make Mention of three diſtinct *Perſons*, equally poſſeſs'd of the Divine Nature and *Perfections*.

II. THAT theſe three Perſons, according to the ſame Scriptures, are but *one God*. And,

III. THAT this *Trinity* in *Unity*, or three Perſons in one God, is neither a *contradictory* Doctrine, nor *unreaſonable* to be believ'd.

That there are three *diſtinct Perſons mentioned in Scripture.*

I. THAT the Holy Scriptures make Mention of *Three*, by Way of great *Eminence* and *Diſtinction*, may appear from many Paſſages, out of which I ſhall only produce ſome. At the Prediction of the bleſſed Virgin's Conception, which was to be without the Concurrence of a Man, the Divine Meſſage is deliver'd in theſe Words: [k] *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the Power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee; therefore alſo that holy Thing that ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be called the Son of God.* Here are plainly diſtinguiſhed from each other, the *Holy Ghoſt*, or *Power* overſhadowing; the *Higheſt*, whoſe Power that Spirit is; and the *holy Thing*, or *Perſon*, who is *called the Son of God*, becauſe born of a Mother, impregnated by that Divine Power. At our bleſſed Lord's Baptiſm, [l] *the Spirit of God*, we read, *deſcended like a Dove, and reſted upon him, and a Voice from Heaven* declar'd him to be *the Son of God:* [m] Nothing can be plainer than three *Perſonalities* in this Tranſaction; the *Father* ſpeaking from Heaven, the *Son* coming out of *Jordan*, and the *Spirit* deſcending from above. In the Promiſe, which our bleſſed Saviour makes his Diſciples, to comfort their Hearts againſt what was coming upon them, [n] *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth*; and *when the Comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he ſhall teſtify of me*; there are manifeſtly Acts, and Perſons, and Capacities different. The *Father*, from whom the Spirit *proceeds*, whom the Son *prays*, and by whom, at the Son's Requeſt, the *Comforter was given:* The *Son*, *praying* the Father, *ſending* the Comforter from the Father, and *teſtified* of by the *Spirit* ſo ſent: And the *Spirit*, *given* by the Father, *ſent* by the Son, *teſtifying* of the Son, and, upon the Son's Departure, *abiding* for ever with the Diſciples.

THE great Apoſtle of the Gentiles, to enforce the Doctrine of the Reſurrection, tells the *Romans*, [o] *that if the Spirit of him, who raiſed Jeſus from the Dead, dwelt in them, he that raiſed up Chriſt from the Dead, would alſo quicken their mortal Bodies by his Spirit, that dwelled in them*; where he evidently refers to *Jeſus*, the Son of God, raiſed from the Dead; to the *Spirit* of God, by which he was raiſed; and

[h] *Sherlock*'s State of the *Socinian* Controverſy. [l] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [k] Luke i. 34, 35.
[l] Matth. iii. 16. [m] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. and *Stanhope* on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III.
[n] John xiv. 16. and xv. 26. [o] Rom. viii. 11.

and to *him*, that raiſed *Jeſus*, and at the laſt great Day ſhall raiſe all others, in whom his Spirit dwells. The ſame Apoſtle, to ſatisfy the *Corinthians* of the Benefits of their *Converſion*, after having enumerated ſeveral Ranks of Sinners, [p] *and* ſuch *were ſome of you*, ſays he, *but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and by the Spirit of our God*, i. e. God the Father. It cannot be denied that *Sanctification* and *Juſtification* are the Gifts of God alone; for none can abſolve us from the Guilt and Pollution of Sin, but he only: But then the Apoſtle tells the *Corinthians*, that this Benefit they received, not only from God the *Father*, but from the *Lord Jeſus* likewiſe, and from the Holy Spirit: Analogous to which is that other Paſſage in the ſame Epiſtle; [q] *There are Diverſities of Gifts, but the ſame Spirit*, (there is the *third* Perſon in the Trinity) *there are Differences of Adminiſtration, but the ſame Lord*, there is the *ſecond* Perſon) *and there are Diverſities of Operations, but it is the ſame God*, (or *firſt* Perſon in the *Trinity) that worketh all in all.* Once more, the ſame Apoſtle, in his Prayer for the *Theſſalonians*, directs his Devotion to the ever bleſſed Trinity: [r] *Now God himſelf, even our Father, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, direct our Way unto you, and the Lord, (i. e.* the Holy Ghoſt) *make you to increaſe and abound in Love one towards another:* For that by the *Lord* we are here to underſtand the Holy Ghoſt, I think is very plain from the next Verſe; *to the End that he may eſtabliſh your Hearts unblameable in Holineſs before God, even our Father, at the Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with all his Saints*; ſince he is the *Sanctifier*, and to *eſtabliſh our Hearts in Holineſs* is his proper Work and Office: And if ſo, then is there a plain *Enumeration* of the three Perſons of the *Trinity* in this Paſſage.

THE great Apoſtle of the *Jews* begins his firſt Epiſtle *General* to his *diſperſed* Brethren, with a Declaration of the ſame Article, when he calls them [s] *elect according to the Foreknowledge of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit, unto Obedience, and ſprinkling of the Blood of Jeſus*; for there we may obſerve, that the three *Perſons* are not only expreſsly *named*, but their diſtinct *Employments*, with Reference to Man's Salvation, are particularly *ſpecified*, while the Father is ſaid to *elect*, the Spirit to *ſanctify*, and the holy Jeſus to *ſhed his Blood.* The beloved Apoſtle St *John*, in his *Salutation* to the Churches ([t] *Grace and Peace from him, which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the ſeven Spirits, which are before his Throne, and from Jeſus Chriſt)* has given us a diſtinct Enumeration of the three Perſons in the Deity, if we will but admit, (as moſt Interpreters have done) that by the *ſeven Spirits*, [u] which was a *ſacred* Number among the *Jews*, that *one* Perſon *(viz.* the Holy Ghoſt) is to be underſtood, from whom all that Variety of Gifts and Operations, which were then conſpicuous in the Chriſtian Church, did proceed. But however this be, 'tis certain, that the Paſſage in his Epiſtle of [x] the *Three which bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt*, are as full and plain a *Teſtimony* and Declaration of this *Myſtery*, as can be cited in Words; and though ſome have endeavoured to invalidate the Authority of this Paſſage, as not extant in ſome antient Copies, and ſeldom appealed to by the firſt Defenders of the Catholick Faith againſt the *Arians* and *Macedonians*, yet the contrary to this is moſt evident. [y] *Tertullian*, [z] St *Cyprian*, and [a] *Fulgentius*, quote it in their Writings; [b] *Athanaſius* made uſe of it in the Council of *Nice* againſt *Arius*; and the Reaſon why it was left out in ſome antient Copies, *Socrates* acquaints us with in his [c] *Eccleſiaſtical* Hiſtory, when he tells us, "That the *Chriſtian* Church had all along com-" plain'd, that the Epiſtle of St *John* had been corrupted by the firſt Adverſaries of " the Doctrine of Chriſt's Divinity." 'Twas by their Artifice therefore that it was omitted; for ſeveral [d] learned Pens, both of our own and other Churches, have made it very manifeſt, that it was † *originally* in the Text, and that the moſt and antienteſt *Copies* always had it.

[p] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [q] 1 Cor. xii. 4, &c. [r] 1 Theſſ. iii. 11, 12, 13, &c. [s] 1 Pet. i. 2. [t] Rev. i. 4, 5. [u] *Burnet*, upon the Articles. [x] 1 John v. 7. [y] Adver. Prax. *Cap.* 25. [z] Dixit Dominus, *Ego & Pater unum ſumus:* Et iterum de Patre, & Filio, & Spiritu Sancto ſcriptum eſt, *& hi tres unum ſunt.* De Unit. Eccleſ. [a] In Hæreſiolog. [b] Lib. I. *Dial. ad Theoph.* [c] Lib. VII. Cap. 32. [d] Vid. Dr. *Smith*'s Miſcellan. *Stillingfleet*'s Vindication of the Trinity, Chap. 8. *Mills*'s New Teſtament, *Martin*'s Diſſertation, &c.

† To confirm this, we may add, that, if the Difference of Copies happened by the Negligence of Tranſcribers, ſuch a Miſtake is much more eaſily made by *omitting* a Clauſe, than by *inſerting* one, eſpecially when the ſame Words occur twice very near together, which is the preſent Caſe: And that, without this Clauſe, the next Verſe is maimed, and hardly good Senſe; the Words, *in Earth*, ſtanding disjointed by themſelves; whereas the Words, *in Heaven*, (as we now read them) make a clear, ſtrong, and elegant Antitheſis: And for theſe Reaſons, thoſe Copies, in which this Paſſage is found, are more likely to be true, than thoſe, in which it is wanting. *Trapp*'s Doctrine of the Trinity.

BUT we need not be ſo tenacious of one *Text*, when, beſides theſe already mentioned, and many more that might be produced upon a farther Enquiry, the very Form of our *Admiſſion* into the Chriſtian Covenant is [e] *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*; the Form of our *Prayers* is thus directed, that [f] *through the Son we have an Acceſs by one Spirit to the Father*; and the Form of our *Diſmiſſion* from them is, every Day, with this *Benediction*, [g] *The Grace of the Lord Jeſus, and the Love of God, and the Fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt, be with us all evermore*; as if the Wiſdom of God had intended to inculcate this Notion of the *Trinity*, and, in every Act of our religious Worſhip, to remind us of the Manner of his *Subſiſtence*.

That theſe three are diſtinct Perſons, *proved from their Relations.*

THUS it appears, that there are *Three*, very often occurring in Scripture, under the different Appellations of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*: and that theſe three are not *one* and the *ſame Being*, under *different Reſpects* and Conſiderations, but *three* real and diſtinct *Perſons*, with a *peculiar* Manner of *ſubſiſting*, is plain from the very Names of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, if we underſtand them in a proper and natural Senſe; [h] becauſe theſe are oppoſite *Relations*, which can never meet in the ſame *Subject*: For a *Father* cannot be Father to himſelf, but to his *Son*; nor can a *Son* be Son to himſelf, but to his *Father*; nor can the Holy Ghoſt *proceed* from himſelf, or (in this Senſe) be his own *Spirit*, but the Spirit of the Father, and Son, from whom he proceeds: And therefore the Father is not the Son, nor the Holy Spirit; nor the Son the Father, or Holy Spirit; nor the Holy Spirit either Father or Son. The only Queſtion is, whether theſe *Names*, when ſpoken of the Trinity, have a *proper* and *natural*, or only an *alluſive* and *metaphorical* Signification.

THE Divine Nature and Perfections indeed, (as they are far exalted above our Conception) may be brought down by *Metaphors*, taken from ſome Things, that are *analogous* in Creatures; in which Senſe we may allow *Father* and *Son* to be *metaphorical* Names, when applied to God: Not that God the Father is not, in the higheſt and moſt perfect Senſe, a Father, and his Son a moſt proper, natural, and genuine Son; but becauſe the *Divine Generation* is ſo perfect a Communication of the Divine Nature and Being from Father to Son, that *human Generations* are but obſcure and imperfect *Images* and Reſemblances of it. The Truth is, when any Thing is ſpoken *metaphorically* of God, the Metaphor and Image are always in the *Creatures*, the Truth, Perfection, and Reality of all, in *God*: And if ſo, then if God be a Father, and have a Son, an only-begotten Son, begotten eternally of himſelf; though this eternal Generation be infinitely above what we can imagine or conceive, yet it is evident, that God the Father is more *properly* and *perfectly* a Father, and God the Son more properly and perfectly a Son, than any earthly Fathers or Sons ever were. And if God the Father and his Son be truly and perfectly Father and Son, they muſt be truly and perfectly *diſtinct* Beings; [i] for the Father cannot be the Son, whom he *begets*; nor the Son the Father, that *begat* him; nor the Holy Ghoſt either the Father or the Son, from whom he *proceeds*: Conſequently, they muſt be diſtinct, and real, and proper *Perſons*; for he that *begets*, and he that is *begotten*, and he that *proceeds* from both, cannot be one and the ſame Perſon.

Diſtinct Offices. AND as this *Difference* of *Relations* makes a manifeſt Diſtinction between the three Perſons; ſo the different *Offices* and *Employments*, that are aſcribed to them in Scripture, is a farther *Note* of Diſcrimination. For who ſees not, that the Work of *Creation* of all Things at firſt, and ever ſince the juſt, and wiſe, and merciful *Diſpoſal* of them, are attributed to the *Father*; that the great Undertaking of our *Redemption* is the Care and Employment of the *Son*; and the Buſineſs of *enlightning* and *ſanctifying* thoſe, whom the Son redeemeth, the particular Province of the *Holy Ghoſt*? Without ſuppoſing them to be three diſtinct Perſons, I ſay, no ſatisfactory Solution can be given, why, in the great Work of Man's Salvation, a diſtinct Office and Operation ſhould be proper to each of them; why [k] the Father only ſhould be ſaid to *elect*; the Son only to *have ſhed and ſprinkled his Blood*, and the Holy Ghoſt only to *ſanctify* us unto Obedience. So far then as a Diverſity of Names, Offices, and Operations, diſtinguiſhes one Being from another, there is plainly a Diſtinction of Perſons ſubſiſting in the Godhead. But this is not all.

THOSE,

[e] Matth. xxviii. 19. [f] Eph. ii. 18. [g] 2 Cor. xiii. 14. [h] *Sherlock*'s State of the Socinian Controverſy.
[i] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [k] 1 Pet. i. 2. Rom. viii. 29. Heb. xii. 24. 2 Theſ. ii. 13.

THOSE, who pretend to state † the true Notion of a *Perſon*, as a Term made uſe of in this Argument, tell us, [l] that it is *a Being, which has Underſtanding, and is a diſtinct, entire Subſtance of itſelf*; [m] *an individual Subſtance of a rational Nature*, [n] *or a compleat intelligent Subſtance with a peculiar Manner of Subſiſtence*: [o] So that there is a *common* Nature, which muſt be joined by a *peculiar* Manner of ſubſiſting, to make a Perſon, otherwiſe it would be a mere *Mode*; for *we never conceive a Perſon without the Eſſence in Conjunction with it*. And this Notion may haply be of Uſe, not only to *ſtate* the true *Diſtinction* of the Perſons in the Godhead, but to account likewiſe for ſome *dubious* Paſſages in the Fathers, and reconcile the different Parties, that contend about them: Only we muſt take Care (as I ſaid before) that, when we diſcourſe of the Sacred *Trinity*, the Word *Perſon* be not conceived in the ſame Senſe as among Men. [p] The *Perſons* of Men are *diſtinct* Men, as well as diſtinct Perſons; but this is no Ground for us to affirm, that the *Perſons* in the Divine Nature are diſtinct *Gods*. The Diſtinction of the Perſons of Men is founded in a *ſeparate* and divided Subſiſtence; but this cannot be the Foundation of the *Diſtinction* of the *Divine* Perſons, becauſe *Separation* and *Diviſion* cannot belong to an *infinite* Being. In a Word, three human *Perſons* are three *Men*, becauſe, though they have the ſame *ſpecifick* Nature, yet they have not the ſame *numerical* Nature: But the three Perſons in the Godhead are not three *Gods*, becauſe they have the ſame *numerical* Eſſence, which belongs in common to them all: And ſince it is confeſſed on all Hands, [q] that *Nature* and *Subſiſtence* go to the making up of a *Perſon*, why may not the Way of their Subſiſtence be as different, as the *human* and *Divine* Natures (one *finite*, and the other *infinite*) are confeſſed to be? Though therefore in Things *created* it is neceſſary for one ſingle Eſſence to ſubſiſt in one ſingle Perſon, and no more; yet this does not at all prove, that the ſame muſt be neceſſary in *him*, whoſe *Nature* is wholly different from *theirs*, and conſequently, may differ as much in the *Manner* of his Subſiſtence. For 'tis a Thing agreeable even to the Notions of bare Reaſon to imagine, that the *Divine* Nature has a Way of ſubſiſting very *different* from the Subſiſtence of any *created* Being, and conſequently, may have one and the ſame Nature diffus'd into three diſtinct Perſons: But *how*, and in what Manner *this* is effected; how one Subſtance in the Deity is communicated to more, and becomes theirs; how of one and the ſame *Eſſence*, there can be three Perſons *numerically* different, this is the *Difficulty*; and what made the [r] holy Father (writing upon the Argument) confeſs, "That the *Myſtery* of the Trinity is *immenſe* and incomprehen-
"ſible, beyond the Expreſſion of Words, or Reach of Senſe; that it blinds our
"Sight, and exceeds the Capacity of our Underſtanding: I underſtand it not, ſays
"he, nevertheleſs I will comfort myſelf in this, that Angels are ignorant of it, nor
"do Ages apprehend it; that neither the Apoſtles enquired after it, nor the Son him-
"ſelf has thought fit to declare it."

Diſtinct Subſiſtences.

THE only valid Objection (and to which all others are reduceable) againſt theſe *Perſonalities*, ſo often occurring in Scripture, is taken from the *Simplicity* of the Divine Nature, which, in the Opinion of ſome, will not admit of any *Diſtinction*. [s] But though the Simplicity of God excludes all *Mixture*, i. e. all Compoſition of Things *heterogeneous* in the Godhead, (there being nothing in God but what is God) yet, notwithſtanding this, there may be a Diſtinction of *Hypoſtaſes* in the Godhead, provided they are *homogeneous*, and of the ſame Nature. Nay, the Simplicity of the Divine Nature, if rightly conſider'd, is ſo far from excluding, that it neceſſarily infers a Diſtinction of *Hypoſtaſes* in the Godhead: For, ſince the Simplicity of the Godhead conſiſts chiefly in this, that God is a pure eternal Mind, free from the Mixture of all Kind of Matter whatever; an eternal Mind muſt needs have in it, from all Eternity, *a Notion or Conception of itſelf*, which the Schools call *Verbum Mentis*; nor can it, at any Time, be conceived without it. Now this *Word* cannot be in God, what it is in us, a *tranſient vaniſhing* Accident; for then the Divine Nature would be compounded of *Subſtance* and *Accident*, which would be repugnant to its *Simplicity*;

An Objection anſwer'd.

† A late learned Author has given us this Definition of a *ſingle Perſon*, "That it is an intelligent Agent, having the "diſtinctive Characters of *I*, *thou*, and *he*, and not divided or diſtinguiſhed into more intelligent Agents, capable of "the ſame Characters," *Waterland*'s ſecond Defence; and thereupon he thus argues in another Place, Our Ideas of "Perſon are plainly taken from our Conceptions of human Perſons, and from them transferr'd to other Subjects, "tho' they do not ſtrictly anſwer in every Circumſtance. Properly ſpeaking, *he* and *him*, are no more applicable to "a Divine Perſon, than *ſhe* or *her*;" but we have no third Way of denoting a Perſon, and ſo of the two we chuſe the beſt, and Cuſtom familiarizes it. His Sermons at Lady *Moyer*'s Lectures.

[l] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [m] Boëtius, de Duabus Naturis. [n] *Stilling fleet*'s Vindication of the Trinity. [o] *Stilling fleet*, ibid. [p] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion, Vol. II. [q] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. [r] Hilar. de Trinitate, Lib. ii. [s] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

Simplicity; and therefore muſt be a *ſubſtantial ſubſiſting Word*, and though not divided, yet diſtinct from the eternal Mind, from whence it proceeds. This is no *novel Subtlety* of the *Schools*, but a Notion, that † runs thro' all the Fathers of the firſt Ages, and is not deſtitute of a ſufficient Foundation in Scripture. It proves indeed only two Perſons in the Godhead, not a *Trinity*; but then it proves, that a *Diſtinction* of Perſons in the Godhead is very conſiſtent with its *Simplicity*; nay, that from the true Nature of the Simplicity of the Godhead, ſuch a Diſtinction neceſſarily follows; and if there is a Diſtinction of *Two*, there may be of *Three*; and that there is of *Three*, the full Evidence of Scripture (as I have already ſhewn) abundantly aſſures us.

THE Voice of Reaſon then, confirmed by the Oracles of God, does teſtify unto us this great Truth, that there are three Perſons ſubſiſting (though the Manner of their ſubſiſting we cannot ſo well comprehend) in the *Unity of the Godhead*: And that each of theſe is a *Divine* Perſon, *co-equal* and *co-eternal*, as to their *Eſſence* and *Divinity*, is the other Part of the Propoſition, that I now come to make good.

THAT the *Father*, whom we call the firſt Perſon in the Trinity, is truly and properly God has never been once made a Matter of Diſpute, though ſome have been ſo weak as to imagine, that if they could but ſhew him frequently repreſented in Scripture under this Character, it would be enough to overthrow the Doctrine of a *Trinity* of Perſons in the *Unity* of the Godhead; [u] not conſidering, that though the Father may be *primarily*, or in a certain Reſpect, ſo repreſented, yet he is not *ſolely* ſo repreſented, nor is the Godhead aſcribed to him in a Senſe *excluſive* of the other. For the ſame Scriptures and the ſame antient Writers, which ſometimes ſtile the Father *the one God*, do likewiſe either expreſsly, or, by neceſſary Implication, make the whole three Perſons together, the *one God*. What therefore I have to do, in order to clear this Matter, will be to ſhew.

1. UPON what Account an Eminence and Priority in the Godhead is aſcribed to God the Father; and,

2. THAT notwithſtanding this, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as to the Divine Nature and Perfections, are truly and equally God.

Wherein the Father's Pre-eminence conſiſts.

1. THAT the Name of God, when taken *abſolutely*, is uſually aſcribed to the *Father*, and he, in a more *eminent* and *emphatical* Manner, frequently ſtiled [x] *the one God*, [y] *the true God*, [z] *the only true God*, [a] *the God, and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, &c. is obvious from the whole Tenor of the Scripture: And that the *primitive* Writers, though they often call the Son, and ſometimes the Holy Ghoſt, *God*, yet when they make mention of Father and Son together, do generally call the firſt God *abſolutely*, and the other either *Lord* only, or *God of God*, *Son of God*, or the like; and when they ſpeak of the *third* Perſon, do call him commonly the *Holy Spirit*, or the Spirit of God, reſerving, as it were, the Title of God more *peculiarly* for the Father, cannot be diſputed by any, that are converſant in their Writings. But then we are conſider, that the Pre-eminence, we are now ſpeaking of, conſiſts not in this, —— that the *Eſſence*, or the *Attributes* of one, are greater than thoſe of the other, (for theſe we ſhall ſhew to be alike) but only in this, that the Father has that Eſſence *of himſelf*, which the Son has only by *Communication* from the Father; and therefore himſelf acknowledges, that [b] *he is from him*, that [c] *he liveth by him*, and uſually refers all Things to him, as if they were received from himſelf; [d] whereupon ſome of the Ancients have not ſtuck, in this Senſe, to interpret theſe Words, [e] *My Father is greater than I*, of Chriſt, as the Son of God, as the ſecond Perſon in the bleſſed Trinity; but ſtill with Reference, not to his *Eſſence*, but his *Generation*, whereby he is underſtood to have his Being from the Father, who only has it of *himſelf*, and is the *Original* of all Power and Eſſence in the Son.

THERE

[t] Vid. *Bull*'s Defenſ. Fid. Nic.

† It has with good Reaſon, been ſuppoſed by the *Catholick* Writers, that the Deſign of the Word Λόγος was to intimate, that the Relation of Father and Son, bears ſome Reſemblance and Analogy to that of *Thought*, viz. that as Thought is *co-eval* with the Mind, ſo the Son is co-eval with the Father; and that as Thought is cloſely united to, proceeds from, and yet remains in the Mind; ſo alſo may we underſtand that the Son is in the Boſom of the Father, proceeding from him, and yet never divided or ſeparate, but remaining in him and with him. *Waterland*'s Sermons at Lady *Moyer*'s Lectures.

[u] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [x] 1 Cor. viii. 6. [y] 1 Theſ. i. 9. [z] John xvii. 3. [a] 2 Eph. i. 13. [b] John vii. 29. [c] Ibid. vi. 57. [d] *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [e] John xiv. 28.

THERE is a farther Foundation of the Father's Pre-eminence, that ariſes from the Order of the Perſons in the bleſſed Trinity, of which he is undoubtedly the *Firſt*. For though, in ſome Paſſages of the Apoſtles Writings, [f] the *Son*, and ſometimes [g] the *Holy Ghoſt* may chance to be firſt named; yet, where the three Perſons are barely enumerated, and delivered to us as the Rule of our Faith, (as it is in the Form of Baptiſm, which proceeds *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*) there the proper Order is always obſerv'd: And the Precedency, which is given to the Father, is not *arbitrary*, but naturally reſulting from the Divine *Paternity*; ſince the Son muſt neceſſarily be the *Second* unto the Father, from whom he receiveth his *Origination*, and the Holy Ghoſt unto the Son. For this Reaſon we find the antient Doctors of the Church ſo frequently calling the Father [h] the *Origin*, the *Cauſe*, the *Author*, the *Fountain*, the *Head* of every Thing, and even of the other two Perſons; becauſe the Divinity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, is the Father's Divinity, as being derived from him: And therefore, (according to their common Illuſtration) as the Branch is from the Root, and the River from the Fountain; but, contrariwiſe, the Root receives nothing from the Branch, nor the Fountain from the River; ſo the other two Perſons are from the Father, receiving their Eſſence either by *Generation* or *Proceſſion* from him, while he is from neither, as having his Eſſence in himſelf, and Being, what he is, from none. [i] This is the conſtant Language of *Antiquity*, always keeping up ſome Pre-eminence of *Order*, as proper to the *firſt* Perſon, along with the true eſſential Divinity of the other two. This Diſtinction of *Order*, conſiſtent with a *Parity* of Nature, they learn'd from Scripture, and inviolably maintain'd: For thus they thought, that by referring all Things to one *Head* and *Fountain*, they ſhould preſerve the *Unity* along with the *Diſtinction*, and conſiſtently teach a *Plurality* of Perſons in *one Godhead*.

THIS again is the true Reaſon, why the Godhead is ſometimes repreſented, as ſubſiſting more *eminently* in the *firſt* Perſon, with a Sort of *Subordination* in the other Two. [k] Some Sort of Subordination indeed is implied in the very Notions of *Paternity* and *Filiation*; but this, we are to obſerve, is not a Subordination of *Nature* and *Subſtance*; no, nor of eſſential *Attributes*, or natural *Properties*, but merely a *perſonal* Subordination, founded on the *perſonal* Properties: And, to be ſatisfied in this, we need only conſider, that the Communication of the Eſſence (upon which this Subordination is grounded) is only a *perſonal* Action, and not an Act or Attribute of the Divine Eſſence. To *generate*, to be *generated*, and to *proceed*, are, not *eſſential* Attributes of the Divine Nature, but merely *perſonal* Acts of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and conſequently, the ſole Foundation of this Subordination being merely in the perſonal Properties, the Subordination itſelf, founded therein, can only relate to the *perſonal*, and not at all to the *eſſential* Properties; for, notwithſtanding their *perſonal* Subordination, they ſtill continue with the Father, in *Subſtance equal, in Majeſty co-eternal*.

The Son equally a Divine Perſon from his Filiation.

2. THAT there is a Perſon, frequently occurring in Scripture, under the Stile and Title of the *Son of God*, none, I think, can deny, who has once caſt his Eye into that ſacred Volume; and [l] though we are far from having any competent Notion of the eternal *Generation*, whereby the Son was begotten, and only make uſe of that Term, to denote the ineffable Manner, in which the Divine Nature was communicated by the Father, for want of a better and more ſignificant one to expreſs it by; [m] yet thus much we may ſay is *eſſential* to the Notion of a Son, that he is *of him*, whom we call his Father, and receives the ſame Nature from him. Now if we believe that God has a Son, neither created out of nothing, nor made of any pre-exiſtent Subſtance, but eternally begotten of himſelf, we muſt acknowledge, that the Father and Son are perfectly of the ſame Nature and Eſſence. For all Men, that know any Thing of the Divine Nature, muſt know this, that God is the moſt pure, ſimple, and uncompounded Being; and if God, who has no Parts, and cannot be divided into any, begets a Son, he muſt communicate his whole *undivided* Nature to him; for to beget a Son, is to communicate his own Nature to him: And if he have no Parts, he cannot communicate a *Part*, but muſt communicate the *Whole*, i. e. he muſt communicate his whole Self, and be a ſecond Self in his Son: For which Reaſon the Son is called by the Apoſtle, [n] *the Brightneſs of his Father's Glory*,

[f] 2 Cor. xiii. 14. [g] 1 Cor. xii. 4, &c. [h] Vide *Pearſon*, on the Creed, page 41. *Bull*'s Defen. Fid. Nic. *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I, page 383. [i] *Waterland*'s Sermons at Lady *Moyer*'s Lectures. [k] *Stephens*, on the eternal Generation. [l] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. [m] *Sherlock*'s preſent State of the *Socinian* Controverſy. [n] Heb. i. 3.

Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon, i. e. of the ſame Subſtance and Majeſty with the Father, a *Beam* of the ſame Light, as it were, and an exact Reſemblance of his *original* Perfections.

His Titles. IT is therefore implied in the very Notion of a Son (ſuppoſing him to be a real Son) that he ſhould, as our Confeſſion words it, [o] *be God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, and of one Subſtance with the Father*: And tho' we cannot tell how this Subſiſtence was *eternally* conveyed to the Son, and are far from underſtanding what the Act of *Divine* Generation means; yet, ſince we read, in the *Front* of a Goſpel, written on purpoſe to confute the Error of thoſe, who denied the *Divinity* of the Son, [p] *That in the Beginning was the Word*, (whereby every one intends the *ſecond* Perſon) *and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*; and that [q] *being in the Form of God, he thought it no Robbery to be equal with God*; and find him almoſt every where, not only abſolutely called [r] *God*, but attended likewiſe with ſuch heightening Epithets as theſe: [s] *the great God*, [t] *the true God*, [u] *the Lord God*, [x] *the Lord of all*, [y] *the Lord of Glory*, [z] *the only wiſe God*, and [a] *King of Kings*, who [b] *is Heir of all Things*, and [c] *over all God bleſſed for ever, Amen*; we cannot but think, that theſe Expreſſions import ſomething more, than a *precarious* and *ſubordinate* Divinity, and that fuller Words could not have been devis'd to denote an entire *Equality*.

Honours. ANGELS, or Men indeed, acting by a *delegated* Power from God, may ſometimes receive great and honourable Appellations; in which Senſe the Apoſtle tells us, that *there are Gods many, and Lords many*: But when it is conſider'd, that, in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, the Son is not only preferr'd to Angels, but even ſet in Oppoſition to them, as one of another Order of Beings, and who [d] *by Inheritance hath obtained a more excellent Name than they*; that *Angels are but God's miniſtring Spirits, who are commanded to worſhip the Son, whoſe Throne is for ever and ever*, and *whoſe Years ſhall not fail*; it muſt needs be acknowledged again, that theſe Honours aſcrib'd to him cannot, without *Blaſphemy*, be applicable to any created Being, or *titular* God whatever.

Offices. † THE *creating*, *preſerving*, and *governing* of all Things, may juſtly be accounted a Work, that none can be thought capable of doing, but he that is truly God, and inveſted with Almighty Power; and therefore, when a modeſt ingenuous Chriſtian perceives it recorded in the ſacred Writings, that by the Son [e] *were all Things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all Things were created by him, and for him; that by him they ſubſiſt, and* [f] *by the Word of his Power he ſuſtains them*; he cannot but think, that theſe Words are to be taken in a *literal* Senſe; that they relate to the *old* Creation of the natural World, and not any *fanciful* Creation of a moral World, or Reformation of Men's Minds and Manners, under the State of the Goſpel. Nay, he thinks he has abundant Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that they import the full Power of the Godhead, operating without any ſuperior Hand to direct or over-rule it; and therefore [g] he cannot imagine, that an holy Man, ſpeaking by Divine Inſpiration, would ever addreſs himſelf to one acting in an inferior Capacity, as the *Pſalmiſt* does in that Paſſage, quoted by the Author to the *Hebrews*: [h] *Thou, Lord, in the Beginning haſt laid the Foundations of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Work of thine Hands; they ſhall periſh, but thou endureſt, and they ſhall wax old, as doth a Garment, and as a Veſture ſhalt thou fold them, and they ſhall be changed; but thou art the ſame, and thy Years ſhall not fail.* And in like Manner, when he finds the bleſſed Jeſus talking [i] *of the Glory which he had with his*

[o] The *Nicene* Creed. [p] John i. 1. [q] Phil. ii. 6. [r] Acts xx. 28. [s] Tit. ii. 13.
[t] 1 John v. 20. [u] Luke i. 16. [x] Acts x. 36. [y] 1 Cor. ii. 8. [z] Jude 4.
[a] Rev. xvii. 14. [b] Heb. i. 2. [c] Rom. ix. 5. [d] Heb. i. 4, 6, 7, 8, 12.

† The late learned Dr *Waterland*, in two moſt excellent and ſublime Diſcourſes, having abundantly ſhewn, that God the Son, a diſtinct Perſon from God the Father, is *ſtrictly* and *properly* the Creator and efficient Cauſe of all Things both in Heaven and Earth, according to what the Apoſtle aſſerts in the Paſſage to the *Coloſſians*, Chap. i. Ver. 16. and that the Work of Creation is a ſufficient Demonſtration of a Deity, draws this noble Concluſion from it: "Seeing then that the Title of *Creator* is thus magnificently and elegantly ſet forth in holy Scripture, as a "diſtinguiſhing Mark of Eminency, and the ſure and certain Character of *true* Divinity; if nothing higher or "ſtronger can be thought on, to raiſe in us the moſt ſublime, awful, and exalted Idea of the ſupreme God of *Iſrael*; "and if the Son of God be plainly and evidently ſet forth to us under the ſame high Character; if he created all "Things *viſible and inviſible*; if he *laid the Foundations of the Earth*, and *the Heavens are the Works of his Hands*; "if theſe be the Premiſes, let any Man of common Abilities, that has not his Faculties foreclos'd, or is not ſteel'd a-"gainſt Conviction, be left to draw the Concluſion. To ſay of God the Son, that he is the Maker of the World, and "of all the Kinds in it, as well as of the *grand Palace* itſelf, is to ſay as *much*, and as *high* of him, as is poſſible to ſay, "or to conceive of any other Perſon, however nam'd; becauſe the whole, that we can naturally know or apprehend of "God, his Power, or Perfections, is only what we can infer from his *Work of Creation*."

[e] Col. i. 16, 17. [f] Heb. i. 3. [g] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels. [h] Heb. i. 10, &c. [i] John xvii. 5.

his Father, before the World was, and ſtiling himſelf [k] *Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, which was, and is, and is to come*, teſtifying of himſelf, that [l] *he knoweth the Father*; that *he and his Father are one, he in the Father, and the Father in him*, and that *all Things that the Father hath, are his*. When he perceives, in the Hiſtory given of him by *authentic* Penmen, that he is able [m] *to ſearch the Hearts of Men, and know the hidden Things of God; to pardon Sins, to ſend the Spirit, to diſpenſe Grace, to give eternal Life, to raiſe the Dead*, and judge the World at laſt: When he obſerves, I ſay, that theſe *Attributes* and Operations, which are appropriated to the only *true God*, are aſcribed equally to *Chriſt*, the *ſecond* Perſon in the Trinity; inſtead of deviating into ſtrange Interpretations, in order to elude the Senſe of them, he thinks it more ſafe to affix no other Signification, than what the Words import, [n] becauſe he is ſatisfied, that a Body of honeſt and inſpired Men would never have purſued ſuch a Thread of Paſſages and Diſcourſes, as do naturally lead one to think, that Chriſt is the true God, if he were not actually ſo: And though there may be many *Queſtions* ſtarted, about the *Emanation* of the Godhead, which he is neither able to reſolve nor underſtand; yet ſtill he holds it more eligible, to adhere to the *obvious* Senſe, and to retain [o] *Myſtery* in the *Doctrine* of Scripture, where it is *venerable*, and worthy the Majeſty of God, than to place it in the *Phraſe* of Scripture, where it is *opprobrious*, and repugnant to his Sincerity.

The religious Worſhip paid to him.

THERE is not, in his Opinion, a more certain Principle in Religion, than that *the only proper Object of Worſhip and Adoration is God*. [p] The chief Deſign of the *Moſaick* Inſtitution was to baniſh *Idolatry* and *Polytheiſm* out of the Minds of the *Jews*, and to poſſeſs them with the Idea of *one* God, and one Object of religious Worſhip. The *Chriſtian* Doctrine, he obſerves, purſues the ſame Deſign: All Idolatry is there forbid; and [q] *to worſhip the Lord our God, and him only to ſerve*, is the *poſitive* Injunction of the Founder of our Religion: But at the ſame Time that he perceives this, he cannot but obſerve it left upon Record in thoſe Writings, (that are the Rule of his Faith) that [r] *all Men muſt honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*; that [s] *to him every Knee muſt bow; him the very* [t] *Angels muſt worſhip*, and all the [u] *Hoſt of Heaven fall down before him and adore*: He cannot but obſerve, that all thoſe Forms of Thankſgiving, wherein *Bleſſing and Honour*, [x] *Glory and Majeſty, Dominion and Power are aſcribed to the only wiſe God our Saviour*, and [y] *to the Lamb*, in Conjunction with him, *that ſitteth upon the Throne*, is a plain Declaration of *Co-equality*; and that all thoſe Salutations, in the *Beginning* and *Concluſion* of the *Epiſtles*, wherein *Grace*, and *Mercy*, and *Peace* are wiſhed from God the Father, and from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, are *implied* Invocations of him: He cannot but obſerve, that he is every where propoſed as the Object of our Faith, Hope, and Love; as a Perſon to whom we are devoted in *Baptiſm*, in whom we muſt *believe*, to whom we muſt give Thanks, by whom we muſt *bleſs*, to whom we muſt *pray*, and make the proper Object of our Worſhip, both *internal* and *external*: He cannot but obſerve, that the Practice of the Saints of Old was conformable to theſe Directions; that the common Denomination of a Chriſtian was, one, [z] *that called upon the Name of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*; that St *Paul*, under the [a] Temptations of the Devil, (as they are commonly underſtood) made his Addreſſes to Chriſt for Relief; and St *Stephen*, even at his Expiration, worſhipped him in two ſhort Prayers, which, upon the Matter, are the ſame with thoſe our Saviour ſent up to his Father, when himſelf was expiring, [b] *Lord Jeſus, receive my Spirit*; *Lord, lay not this Sin to their Charge*; and yet, if Chriſt was not the true God, and equal to the Father, this *Proto-Martyr* died in two Acts, that ſeem not only *idolatrous*, but *blaſphemous* likewiſe; ſince he uſed the ſame Expreſſions to Chriſt, that Chriſt had applied to his Father before. He that obſerves, and conſiders all this, I ſay, muſt either conclude, that *Jeſus Chriſt*, the ſecond Perſon in the *Trinity*, was *really* and *eſſentially* God; or that the Holy Scriptures were written on Purpoſe to draw him into that Perſuaſion, and thence into the certain Sin of Idolatry; ſince they aſcribe to him ſuch *Titles* and *Attributes*, ſuch *Honours*, and *Powers*, and *Offices*, as are peculiar and appropriate to God; ſince they enjoin ſo frequently the Duty of *worſhipping* him, and recommend it, at the ſame Time, by the Example of all the Saints and godly Men that have gone before: A Thing very inconſiſtent with the *Simplicity*

[k] Rev. i. 8, 11. [l] Matth. xi. 27. John v. 19. — x. 30. — xiv. 9. — xvi. 15. [m] Rev. ii. 23.
[n] *Burnet* on the Articles. [o] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [p] *Burnet*, ibid. [q] Matth. iv. 10.
[r] John v. 23. [s] Phil. ii. 10. [t] Heb. i. 6. [u] Rev. v. 8. [x] Jude 25. [y] Rev. v, 13.
[z] 1 Cor. i. 2. [a] 2 Cor. xii. 7, &c. [b] Acts vii. 59, 60.

Simplicity of the Scriptures, and utterly irreconcileable with the Goodneſs of God; to lay us under a Neceſſity of forming wrong Conceptions, and thence falling unavoidably into dangerous Practices, by repreſenting a Perſon always under a *Divine Character*, and inveſted with the *Fulneſs of the Godhead*, that is not really ſo.

An Objection. "BUT our bleſſed Saviour, it may be replied, is ſo far from aſſuming any ſuch "Character to himſelf, that, in the Anſwer he returns to the young Man in the "Goſpel, he ſeems to diſclaim it; [c] *Why calleſt thou me good, there is none good but "one, that is God?* And in the Prayer, that he offers up in Behalf of his Diſciples, "he bears Teſtimony of his Father's Supremacy: [d] *This is Life eternal, that they "may know thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent.* Tho' there- "fore he might be a very excellent Perſon, [e] *the Firſt-born of every Creature*, as the "Apoſtle ſtiles him, inveſted with high Powers, and taken up into Heaven, to re- "ceive from God the Inſtructions of his Miniſtry; yet all this is not enough to "perſuade us that he was the Son of the *ſupreme, eternal* God." This is the Objection of the greateſt Weight, and what comprizes moſt that has been alledged againſt Chriſt's Divinity. But,

Anſwered. 1. 'TIS a ſad Perverſion of our Saviour's Words, to ſuppoſe, that he denies himſelf to be *good*, in Oppoſition to God, when he only denies it with relation to the young Man's Apprehenſion, who took him to be a mere Man; and therefore [f] his Anſwer is what we call *Argumentum ad Hominem*, and runs in the ſame Strain, as if he had ſaid to the Perſon that called him *good*, "If I be no more than a Man, this "*Title*, that thou giveſt me, cannot, in a ſtrict and proper Senſe, be applied to me; "for none is *eſſentially* and *abſolutely* good but God: If therefore thou doſt acknow- "ledge me to be thus *good*, thou muſt, at the ſame Time, own my *Divinity*, be- "cauſe *no one*, after this Manner, is *good, but God alone.*" This is plainly the true and genuine Senſe of the Words; and our Saviour's Deſign is, not to *diſſuade*, but to *inſinuate* into this Perſon the Belief of his Godhead, or rather, by a ſkilful Way of *Addreſs*, to draw him into a Confeſſion of it.

2. THE like Miſconſtruction is made of our Saviour's Words, when he ſpeaks *of the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath ſent*, as if he meant thereby to exclude himſelf from being God: Whereas the Term *Only* is uſed merely in Oppoſition to thoſe, that *by Nature were not Gods, viz.* the falſe and fictitious Deities of the *Heathens.* In Contradiſtinction to whom, he ſtiles his Father *the only true God*, but at the ſame Time he calls himſelf ſo too; for the Conjunction καὶ ([g] according to the beſt and earlieſt Interpreters) ſignifies here, not any *Oppoſition*, but an *Agreement* of the Things ſpoken of, as in many other Places of Scripture: Thus when the Angel bids the Women, that came to our Saviour's Sepulchre, [h] *Go, and tell his Diſciples, and Peter*, we muſt not underſtand the Words, as if *Peter* were not a Diſciple; for 'tis ſuppoſed that he was one, and one of the moſt eminent: And, in like Manner, the *only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt*, does not intimate an *Oppoſition* between thoſe two, or as if Jeſus Chriſt were not alſo the only true God; but they imply that *he is*, and therefore the true Rendering will be, *that they may know thee, and Jeſus Chriſt, the only true God.* They are both, according to this Paſſage, *the only true God*, and nothing more is to be learned from it, only that it diſtinguiſhes Chriſt from the Father, and ſhews, that he is not the *ſame Perſon* in the Godhead, though he be the *ſame God.*

BUT, admitting the Paſſage in the common Acceptation: Since [i] the Nature of Language requires, that, in ſpeaking of God, we ſhall fix upon one Perſon in the Trinity, to be primarily conſidered as God, it was highly proper and decent in our Lord, to give that Appellation to the Father, who was known under that Character, before either he, or the Holy Ghoſt, were fully revealed to the World, and who, being the *Top of Unity*, and the *Head and Fountain of all* (as the Ancients uſually term him) is generally firſt in our Conception, when we ſpeak of God abſolutely conſidered. And, therefore, when our bleſſed Saviour calls his Father *the only true God*, and elſewhere declares, that [k] *he and his Father are one*, [l] *he in his Father, and his Father in him*, to make him ſpeak conſiſtently, we muſt ſuppoſe, that he is ſo far from excluding, that he muſt neceſſarily include himſelf in the Godhead; and was indeed (though there was no Occaſion to call himſelf ſo) *the only true God*, as well as his Father.

3. WHAT-

[c] Matth. xix. 17. [d] John xvii. 3. [e] Col. i. 15. [f] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. and *Whitby* on the Place. [g] Tertul. Greg. Naz. Cyril. Ambroſ. *&c.* [h] Mark xvi. 7. [i] *Waterland*'s Sermons at Lady's *Moyer*'s Lecture. [k] John x. 30. [l] Ibid. xiv. 11.

3. WHATEVER therefore the Apoſtle might mean by calling our Saviour *the Firſt-born of every Creature*, yet that he did not intend to rank him in the Order of created Beings, is manifeſt from his following Words, wherein he exempts him from that Number, by aſſuring us, that [m] *all Things both in Heaven and Earth, were created by him.* [n] Πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως therefore, in this Place, muſt evidently be rendered, as if the Words had been τεκεὶς πρὸ πάσης κτίσεως, *born* [*or begotten*] *before the whole Creation*: Nor ought it to ſeem ſtrange, that we ſhould render πρωτότοκος here in a *comparative* Senſe by *born before*; for, in Scripture-Language, 'tis a common Thing to meet with *Superlatives* that muſt be thus rendered. And if the Words will admit of this Tranſlation, then will our Saviour's eternal Godhead and Exiſtence plainly ariſe from them; both becauſe the Expreſſion *before the Creation* is well known to be the *Idiom* of the *Jewiſh* Language, in which it was a common Phraſe to denote [o] *Eternity*; and likewiſe, becauſe whatever is *prior* to all Creation, muſt neceſſarily have been from all Eternity, there being no Medium between the Being from *abſolute Eternity*, and the Being *before all Creation*; ſo that, if Chriſt exiſted *before all Creation*, he muſt neceſſarily be *uncreated*, and if he be *uncreated*, he muſt as evidently be *eternal*.

BUT there is another Meaning of the Expreſſion, that ſeems not leſs probable. [p] By this Title of *the Firſt-born of every Creature*, the Apoſtle means, that he was *Lord* and *Heir* of the *Creation*: For the Firſt-born is *natural* Heir, and *Juſtinian* tells us, *Heir* did anciently ſignify *Lord*: Therefore the Scripture uſes theſe Terms promiſcuouſly, and as if they were equivalent; for whereas St *Peter* ſays of Jeſus Chriſt, *that* [q] *he is Lord of all*, St *Paul* calls him [r] *Heir of all Things*: And then the Reaſon given by the Apoſtle, why he calls him *the Firſt-born of every Creature*, will be very fit and proper, becauſe *all Things were created by him*; for well may he be ſaid to be *Lord* and *Heir* of the Creation, *who made all Things, that were made, and without whom was not any Thing made, that was made.*

TO illuſtrate this Paſſage farther, the *antient* Interpreters of it have a Thought, that may not deſerve our Diſregard. [s] They ſuppoſe, that, when it pleaſed God to create the World, he ſent forth the *Word*, or *his only Son*, who had been always with him, to create all Things; and (becauſe nothing could be acceptable to the ſupreme Being, but through the Merits of him *in whom he is well pleaſed*) to preſent them to him, when they were created. They ſuppoſe farther, that, purſuant to his Order, the Son went out from the Father, created the World, laid it before him as his *own*, and putting himſelf at the Head of it, is called *the Firſt-born of every Creature*, [t] in the ſame Senſe, that Philoſophers uſe the Word ἀρχὴ, *i. e.* the *principal and efficient Cauſe of any Thing*: And accordingly we find that very Word, which our Tranſlation renders *Beginning*, uſed together with the Word *Firſt-born*, as if they were of the ſame Importance; [u] *the Beginning and Firſt-born from the Dead*, i. e. the *principal* and *efficient Cauſe* of the Reſurrection from the Dead.

4. IN whichſoever of theſe Senſes this Expreſſion be taken, it makes not much Matter, ſince any of them do atteſt our Saviour's *Divinity*, and do equally baffle that idle *Fiction* of his being taken up into Heaven at a certain Time, there inveſted with Power and Authority, and thence ſent down upon his *Mediatorial* Office and Miniſtry. For not to inſiſt on Scriptural Proofs to invalidate this Invention, [x] can any one imagine, that, in ſo exact an Hiſtory of our Saviour's Life, written by ſeveral Perſons, the Relation of ſo important a Matter as this, and of the Circumſtances of it, ſhould be wholly omitted? That we ſhould have a particular Account of his being carried into *Egypt* in his Infancy, and of the Time when he was brought back from thence; of his diſputing in the Temple with the *Jewiſh* Doctors, and putting them to Silence, when he was but twelve Years of Age; a punctual Relation of his being baptized by *John*, and how, after that, *he was led by the Spirit into the Wilderneſs, to be tempted by the Devil*, and was carried by him from one Place to another; but not one Word of his being taken up by God into Heaven, and of his coming down again from thence; nor the leaſt Intimation given either of the Time, or any other Circumſtance of this memorable *Tranſaction*, whereon the Authority of his *Miſſion*, and the Divinity of his *Doctrine* did ſo much depend? When ſo many Things, of ſo much leſs Moment, are ſo minutely and exactly reported, what can be the Reaſon of this deep Silence in all the *Evangeliſts* concerning

[m] Col. i. 16. [n] *Stephens* on the eternal Generation. [o] Sic mos eſt Hebræis Æternitatem populariter deſcribere. *Grotius* in John i. 1. [p] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [q] Acts. x. 36. [r] Rom. iv. 13. [s] *Fiddes* on the Creed. [t] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [u] Col. i. 18. [x] *Tillotſon*, ibid.

this Matter? But, above all, why ſhould not St *John*, who wrote his Goſpel laſt, and, as *Euſebius* tells us, on purpoſe to ſupply the *Omiſſions* of the other *Evangeliſts*, have given us ſome ſmall Hint or Intimation of it, had there ever been any ſuch Thing in Nature? The Truth is, the whole Story ſeems deviſed to ſerve an *Hypotheſis*, that could not ſo well be maintained without it, and to be a fit *Expedient* to invalidate many Texts, wherein the *eternal Generation* of the Son, his *being in the Boſom of the Father*, before the World began, his *being ſent from God*, and *coming forth from God with all Power*, and *having all Things ſubjected unto him*, are ſet out with ſuch Strength and Perſpicuity of Expreſſion, as nothing, but a bold Invention (as he that takes the Liberty to invent any Thing, may eaſily deny every Thing) could ever have the Courage to evade. But enough has been ſaid to baffle this vain Fiction.

The Teſtimony of the Ante-Nicene *Fathers.*

IN Confirmation of what has been produced from Scripture, we ſhall now proceed to the Teſtimony of the *primitive* Church; though we can only ſtay juſt to mention what the *Ante-Nicene* Writers (who are allowed on all Hands to be the beſt Interpreters of the Holy Scriptures) have ſaid concerning our bleſſed Saviour's Divine Nature and *Conſubſtantiality* with the Father. To inſtance in ſome of the Chief of them.

IGNATIUS [y] calls the Son, *the Word of God, not of his Speech, but of his Subſtance*, and farther adds, that *he is not the Sound of his articulate Speech, but a Subſtance begotten by the Divine Energy*. *Juſtin Martyr* [z] aſſerts that *he was begotten of the Father in a proper and peculiar Manner; and being the only begotten of God, is God, and was truly ſo, before the Creation of the World*. *Melito* [a] informs us, that *our Saviour manifeſted to us two Eſſences, being, in the ſame Perſon, both perfect God, and perfect Man*. Clemens Alexandrinus [b] *calls him moſt manifeſt and truly God, equal to the Lord of all Things, becauſe he was his Son*. *Tertullian* has theſe remarkable Words concerning him: [c] *Hunc ex Deo prolatum didicimus, & prolatione generatum, & idcirco Filium Dei, & Deum, dictum, ex unitate ſubſtantiæ*. *Novatian* avers, that our Saviour [d] *might well call himſelf One with the Father*, (as he has, *John* x. 30.) *becauſe he proceeded from him, and by that Means, became God*. *Hippolytus* [e] maintains, that *the Son was always God by Nature*, and, that, as *before, ſo after his Incarnation*, his Divine Nature *was a ſubſtantial Subſtance, infinite, incomprehenſible, and endowed with all the divine Perfections*. *Dionyſius* of *Alexandria* [f] aſſerts that in this Divine Generation, the Father and Son are *conſubſtantial*, partaking of the ſame Nature, as Father and Son do in an human Birth. *Gregory* of *Neocæſarea* calls the Son [g] *God of God, the true Son of a true Father*, and farther affirms, *that the Father made him one Being with himſelf*. The Fathers of the Council of *Antioch*, aſſembled to condemn the Errors of *Paul* of *Samoſata*, [h] declare the Son to *be the Wiſdom, and Word, and Power of God, exiſting before all Ages, not only in Predetermination, but by Eſſence and Perſon, God, the Son of God*. *Lucian* the Martyr [i] calls the Son *begotten of his Father before all Ages, God of God, Whole of Whole, Perfect of Perfect, the immutable Image of his Father's Godhead, Eſſence, Power, Will, and Glory*. And, to name no more, *Lactantius* [k] ſays, that *ſince the Father produced the Son, they have but one Mind, one Godhead, one Subſtance*; and again, *that they are juſtly ſaid to be* one God, *becauſe, whatever is in the Father is tranſmitted to the Son, and whatever is in the Son deſcends from the Father*.

WE have here, as it were, in one View moſt of the *Ante-Nicene* Fathers now extant (whoſe Teſtimony ſhews what the ſtanding Doctrine of the firſt Ages was) jointly and unanimouſly giving Evidence to this great Point, the *eternal* and *co-eſſential Divinity of the Son*. Let us now proceed to the third Perſon in the ever-bleſſed Trinity, which is commonly ſtiled the *Holy Ghoſt*.

The Holy Ghoſt a Perſon.

THAT the Holy Ghoſt is a *Perſon*, and not a mere *Quality* or *Operation*, we need only (when we pleaſe to be ſatisfied in the Thing) conſult our Saviour's laſt and long Diſcourſe to his Diſciples, wherein he promiſes to ſend this Bleſſed Spirit to ſupply his Abſence: [l] *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall ſend you another Comforter, who ſhall abide with you: He ſhall teach you all Things; he ſhall teſtify of me: He ſhall abide with you: He ſhall guide you into all Truth: He ſhall ſhew you Things to come: He ſhall bring all Things to your Remembrance: He ſhall convince the World of*

[y] Ignat. Epiſt. ad Magneſ. [z] Juſt. Apol. 2. [a] Vid. *Cave*'s Hiſt. Lit. Vol. II. [b] Clem. Alex. Protrep. [c] Tertul. Apol. [d] Novat. in Trin. [e] Hippolyt. cont. Ber. & Hel. [f] Dionyſ. Alex. apud Athan. de Decret. Syn. Nic. [g] Greg. Thaumat. in Exp. Fid. [h] Patres Antiocheni in Epiſt. ad Paul. Samoſ. [i] Lucian. in Sym. apud Athanaſ. de Synod. [k] Lactan. Lib. 4. [l] John xiv. 16, 26.—xvi. 8.

of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgment: [m] For all theſe Words are nothing elſe, but ſo many Deſcriptions of a *Perſon*; a Perſon *abiding*, a Perſon *teaching*, a Perſon *teſtifying*, a Perſon *ſpeaking*, a Perſon *reproving*, a Perſon *inſtructing*. [n] But when, over and above this, we read, that this [o] *Spirit* [p] *may be grieved*, that [q] *he helps our Infirmities*, [r] *ſanctifies us unto Obedience*, [s] *gives us Acceſs to the Father*, and [t] *maketh Interceſſion for us, with Groans, that cannot be utter'd*; when we read, that [u] *he ſearcheth all Things, yea, the deep Things of God*; that [x] *he ſeparated* Barnabas *and* Saul *for the Work, whereunto he had called them*; that [y] *he appointed Overſeers over the Church of Chriſt*; that he performs all Kind of Operations, and beſtows all Sorts of Gifts upon the Sons of Men; that [z] *he gives to one the Word of Wiſdom, to another the Word of Knowledge, to another Faith, to another the Gifts of Healing*; and that *all theſe worketh the ſelf-ſame Spirit, dividing to every Man ſeverally, as he will.* When we find, in the Writings of the Apoſtles, this Spirit expreſsly diſtinguiſhed from the Gifts of the Spirit, and are told by St *Paul*, that [a] *there are Diverſities of Gifts, but one and the ſame Spirit*, who doth thus diverſify and diſtribute them to ſeveral: When with honeſt and unprejudiced Minds we read theſe Paſſages, and regulate our Belief by what we read, taking them in that Senſe, which, at firſt reading, they naturally convey to our Thoughts, we can hardly form any Doubt or Scruple, but that the bleſſed Spirit, who is thus ſpoken of, as real Perſons are wont to be ſpoken of; to whom ſuch *Actions* are aſcribed, as do not uſe to be aſcribed to any but *Perſons*; and of whom the like Things are ſaid, as are ſaid of the Father and the Son; is as properly a Perſon, as the Father or Son. For in that abovementioned Promiſe of our Saviour, what impartial Thinker can perſuade himſelf, that the Father, to whom Chriſt pray'd, that *he would ſend another Comforter*, is a Perſon; that he, who prays the Father to ſend another Comforter, is a Perſon; and yet, that this other Comforter, *ſent* by the Father, through the Interceſſion of the Son, is not a Perſon, but a *Quality*; not the *Giver* of Comfort, but the *Gift*; not another Comforter beſides the Father and the Son, but the *Conſolation* beſtowed by the Father on Believers, at the Requeſt of the Son. *Origen*, I am ſure, (whom I chuſe to ſingle out from numberleſs more of the antient Fathers of the Church) was quite of a contrary Opinion: "The Holy Spirit, *ſays he*, is not, as ſome imagine, an *Operation* of God, not having, in their Opinion, a proper Subſiſtence: "For the Apoſtle, having enumerated the Gifts of the Spirit, immediately ſubjoins; "*that all theſe worketh that one and the ſelf-ſame Spirit, dividing to every one ſeverally, as he willeth*; but if he wills, and operates, and divides, he is therefore an "operative Subſtance, not a mere Operation;" and in another Place the ſame Author is more expreſs; where, arguing againſt thoſe, that maintained the Holy Ghoſt not to be a diſtinct Perſon; he declares, *We (i. e.* the *Catholicks) are perſuaded that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt* are τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις *three Perſons.*

IT muſt be acknowledged indeed, that ſeveral Things in Scripture are aſcribed to the Holy Ghoſt, that do not ſo properly belong to a Perſon; [b] but at the ſame Time it ought to be obſerved, that, according to an uſual *Metonymy of the Effect for the Cauſe*, the Holy Ghoſt is ſometimes put for its *Operations*, and for thoſe *Gifts* and *Graces*, whereof it is the Diſpenſer. When therefore we find the bleſſed Spirit ſpoken of as *increaſed* or *diminiſhed*, as *poured out*, *removed*, or *extinguiſhed*, as *given in Meaſure*, or *without Meaſure*, to different Perſons, in different Ages of the Church; ſuch Paſſages as theſe are to be underſtood of the *Gifts* and *Effects* of the bleſſed Spirit, which are capable of Increaſe or Diminution, of Variety and Change; but not of the *Author* and *Giver* of them, who always was, and always will be, what he is, incapable of all Change, and never to be extinguiſhed, as being the ſame God, *To-day, Yeſterday, and for ever.* For,

A divine Perſon, from his Titles, Honours, and Offices.

THAT the Holy Ghoſt is not only a Perſon, but a *Divine* Perſon, of the ſame Subſtance, Glory, and Majeſty, with the Father and the Son, may be proved in the very ſame Manner, that we ſhewed the Divinity of the Son: [c] And therefore, when we find in Scripture the ſame *Titles* given to the Holy Ghoſt, as are due only to God; the ſame *Attributes* aſcribed to him, as are peculiar to God; the ſame *Works* done by him, as can be performed by none but God; the ſame Worſhip paid to him, as (without Idolatry) can be paid to none but God: how can we make any Queſtion, but that he, to whom theſe diſtinguiſhing Titles are given, theſe peculiar Attributes

[m] *Pearſon* on the Creed. [n] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [o] John xv. 26. [p] Eph. iv. 30. [q] Rom. viii. 26. [r] 1 Pet. i. 2. [s] Eph. ii. 18. [t] Rom. viii. 26. [u] 1 Cor. ii. 10. [x] Acts xiii. 2. [y] Acts xx. 28. [z] 1 Cor. xii. 8, &c. [a] Ibid. Ver. 4. [b] *Pearſon* on the Creed. [c] *Smalridge*'s Sermons.

tributes are aſcribed, theſe Divine Works and Offices are aſſigned, and this incommunicable Worſhip is paid, muſt be properly and truly God? It is not to be imagined, [d] that the *Supreme Being* ſhould diſtinguiſh any Perſon, that is not truly God, not only with the *Collation* of his eſſential Attributes, but permit him likewiſe to ſhare the Honours of Divine Worſhip, and to be joined in common with him and his Son, in the Form of *Baptiſm*, in the *Doxologies*, and in the *Apoſtolical* Benedictions, ſome of which, in the natural Senſe of them, imply an *Invocation* of him. What poſſible Grounds can we have to believe, that God, who is ſo *jealous* of his Honour, who has ſo expreſsly declared that he *will not give his Glory to another*, and who cannot, conſiſtently with the Perfections of his Nature, *give it to another*, ſhould yet admit any Perſon, who is not truly God, to an equal Participation with him in the moſt ſolemn Rites and Expreſſions of Divine Worſhip? [e] When therefore we conſider, that, in the Name of the Holy Ghoſt, as well as of the Father and the Son, at our Admiſſion into Chriſt's Church, we were *baptized*, and expect from the Holy Ghoſt, as well as from the Father and Son, the *Benedictions* of Heaven; when we conſider, that [f] *the miraculous Conception of the Son of God in the Womb of a Virgin*, the impowering him [g] *to caſt out Devils*, the conferring on the Apoſtles that amazing [h] *Gift of Tongues*, the raiſing Jeſus Chriſt [i] *from the Dead*, and raiſing us alſo [k] by *quickening our mortal Bodies*, are declared *Operations* of the Holy Ghoſt; when we conſider, that our Bodies are therefore ſaid to be [l] *the Temples of God*, becauſe *the Spirit of God dwelleth in them*; that our Saviour hath taught us, [m] *that Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt is not to be forgiven in this World, nor in the next*; and that St *Peter* accuſed *Ananias* with [n] *lying unto God*, becauſe *he lyed unto the Holy Ghoſt*; we cannot conceive how he could be able to perform ſuch miraculous Works, as nothing but a Divine Power could do; or why we ſhould be dedicated to him at firſt, bleſſed in his Name, conſecrated by his Inhabitation, and utterly condemned for tranſgreſſing againſt him, if he were not a *Divine Perſon*, and of the ſame Eſſence, Power, and Majeſty, with the *Supreme God*.

Particularly from his Government of the Church.

I SHALL mention but one Argument more, to prove the Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt, taken from the *Offices* he bears in the Adminiſtration of the Church. [o] Our Saviour, being about to leave the World, promiſed his Diſciples that he would ſend them *another Comforter*, who *ſhould abide with them*, and take Care of the Affairs of the Church, until his Return; that, purſuant to this, he ſhould *ſet apart fit Perſons* for the Office of the *Miniſtry*, ſhould give a Bleſſing and Efficacy to every Inſtitution of God; making the *Sacraments* available to our Regeneration, and the *Diſpenſation* of the Word conducive to our godly Living; that he ſhould [p] *enlighten the Eyes of our Underſtanding, that we may know what is the Hope of our Calling*; [q] *ſhould ſhed the Love of God abroad in our Hearts, and fill us with Joy and Peace in believing*; *ſhould purify our Souls in obeying the Truth*; [r] *ſtrengthen us by his Might in the inward Man*, and ſo lead, direct and govern us in all our Words and Works, that we may do what is acceptable and well-pleaſing in God's Sight. This is the ſtanding Office of the Bleſſed Spirit: But what leſs than an Almighty Power can we conceive ſufficient for theſe Things? Since the Souls and Hearts of Men are the *Subjects* of his Government, a perfect Intimacy, and thorough Acquaintance with our Thoughts and Intentions, is indiſpenſably requiſite in him, who, by his Office, is to guide and conduct them: For this Purpoſe he muſt be *Omniſcient*, to know how to execute the ſeveral Branches of his Office; he muſt be *Omnipreſent*, for otherwiſe, how can he rule and govern all thoſe external Events, by which our *Paſſions* are moved, and our *Deſires* regulated? And, what leſs than an *omnipotent* Power can diſpoſe ſuch a vaſt Variety of Accidents, as relate to ſuch infinite Numbers of Men, ſo diſtant and remote from one another, in Time, Place, Circumſtance, and Temper? He that performs this Office, muſt, doubtleſs, be poſſeſſed of the *Divine Perfections*; and therefore the Divine Perfections belong to the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe the Scriptures inform us, that he does perform it.

And the Teſtimony of the antient Fathers.

NAY farther; would it be any additional Weight to the Authority of the Scripture, I might ſubjoin the Teſtimony of the earlieſt Ages of the Church, in Confirmation of this Doctrine: For, beſides their profeſſing to believe in the Holy Ghoſt, which is owning him to be God, as all [s] their *Creeds* do witneſs; beſides their joining his Name with thoſe of the Father and the Son, in their Form of Baptiſm,

[d] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity. [e] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [f] Matt. i. 18, 20. [g] Matt. xii. 28.
[h] Acts ii. 4. [i] 1 Pet. i. 21. [k] Rom. viii. 11. [l] 1 Cor. iii. 16. [m] Matt. xii. 31.
[n] Acts v. 3, 4. [o] *Stephens*, on the Perſonality and Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt. [p] Eph. i. 17, 18.
[q] Rom. v. 5. and xv. 13. [r] Eph. iii. 16. [s] *Vid.* Sir *Peter King*'s Hiſtory of the Creed.

Baptiſm, as is evident from their common Practice; beſides their aſcribing to him ſuch *Attributes*, as none but a Perſon of a Divine Eſſence can be poſſeſſed of, as appears every where in their Writings, and their honouring him with ſuch Worſhip as is not *communicable* to any but God alone, as ſeveral of their Forms of Prayer, ſtill extant, do teſtify; beſides all this, I ſay, we find the Fathers, in many Paſſages of their Writings, aſſerting his Divinity, in expreſs Words, by beſtowing on him the Name of God.

To this Purpoſe *Athenagoras* refutes the Calumny thrown on the Chriſtians, *that they were Atheiſts*, by ſaying, [a] *Who would not wonder to hear thoſe called Atheiſts, who affirm the Father to be God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghoſt God? Irenæus*, under the *one God, who is above all, and through all, and in all*, comprehends the Son and the Spirit with the Father; and [x] where he ſtates the Difference between the Spirit of God, and that *vital Spirit*, which makes Man a living Creature, he tells us, that the latter is a *created* Being, the former the *Creator* of it; the one *temporal*, the other *eternal*. *Origen* aſſerts, that the *Holy Spirit is joined with the Father and Son, in Honour and Dignity*, and [y] mentions, in ſome Places, the *Godhead of the adorable Trinity*, and in others, *the Godhead of the Holy Ghoſt*. *Gregory* of *Neocæſarea* [z] declares, that *the Trinity is perfect, undivided in Glory, Eternity, and Dominion*; that *in it there is nothing created*, and that *it was always one immutable, invariable Trinity*; and to conclude with *Tertullian*, he tells us, not only, [a] *that there is one Subſtance in three coherent Perſons*, and that *the Name of God and Lord belongs to the Father, Son, and Spirit*; but that the Deſign and Subſtance of the New Teſtament *is to teach us, that the Father, Son, and Spirit, being three* Perſons, *make one God*, and that thoſe People *differ not from the* Jews, *who believe one God, in ſuch a Manner, as to exclude the Son and Spirit*.

THUS we have endeavoured to make it appear, that there are three diſtinct and equally Divine Perſons ſubſiſting in the Godhead, and come now to conſider,

II. THE other Part of this great Myſtery, *viz. that theſe three diſtinct Perſons are but one undivided God*; [b] for we muſt not omit to obſerve, that the Scriptures, which are ſo clear in the Trinity of Perſons, are not, in any Point whatever, more expreſs, than in the Unity of the Godhead. Hence we read ſo much of [c] *one Lord, one God*, and *none other but he*, who is therefore ſtiled *the only true God*; that although the Heathens had *Gods many, and Lords many*, yet, *to us* Chriſtians, [d] *there is but one God the Father, of whom are all Things, and we in him*; that, though we are baptized in the Name of Three, we are bound to profeſs but [e] *one Lord*, and *one God*, even as *one Faith*, and *one Baptiſm*; and that though [f] we are aſſured of *Three, that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt*, yet there is no *Inconſiſtency* in ſaying, *Theſe Three are One*.

The Unity in Trinity ſhewn.

HERE then the Streſs of the Queſtion begins, and I know no other Way of reſolving it, but either, 1. From the peculiar and tranſcendent Nature of the Deity; or, 2. From the Manner of the Son and Holy Ghoſt's partaking of the Divine Nature.

From the peculiar Nature of the Deity.

1. THOSE that attend at all to the *Dignity* of the Divine Nature, may eaſily be induced to believe, that the *Godhead* is not like other Beings, even in its Manner of Subſiſtence. [g] Created Beings ſubſiſt *ſingly*, and have nothing more in their Nature; but it is the tranſcendent Property of the Divine Nature to reſide in more Perſons than one: Its *Fecundity* and *Exuberance* is ſuch, that it cannot exiſt alone, but neceſſarily produces a Divine Iſſue. But even while it does thus, it has this farther inherent Excellency, that it cannot *multiply* itſelf, becauſe it is of a Nature that is infinite; for what is infinite is incapable of Multiplication, and can admit of no more than one of its Kind. The unparallelled Excellency of the Divine Nature therefore leads us directly to own, that the three Perſons of the Godhead are the ſame God, becauſe the Divinity cannot produce any Thing from itſelf, *i. e.* from its Divine Eſſence, but what is ſuch; and therefore the Divinity being of an immenſe and infinite Nature, what it produces muſt needs be but *One*.

To illuſtrate this another Way, [h] we muſt all grant what we feel in ourſelves, *viz.* that every *Mind* has its *Word* and *Spirit*, and cannot be conceived without them; and therefore it may be preſumed that the eternal Mind has its eternal

[a] *Stephens*, on the Perſon and Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt. Cap. 12. [b] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſt. and Goſp. Vol. III. [c] Deut. vi. 4. [d] 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. [e] Eph. iv. 5. [f] 1 John v. 7. [g] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [h] *Sherlock*'s *Socinian* Controverſy. Cap. ii. 13, 31. [x] *Irenæus*, Lib. 5. [y] *Origen* Comment. in Johan. & in Rom. [z] *Greg.* in Exp. Fid. [a] *Tertul.* adv. Prax.

Word and Spirit too: And the Reaſon why this Notion did not lead all Mankind into the natural Belief of a *Trinity* of Perſons, *Mind*, *Word*, and *Spirit*, in the *Unity* of the Godhead, was plainly this, becauſe they perceived that their own Word and Spirit were not *permanent* and ſubſiſting *Perſons*, but the periſhing Creatures of their Mind, which no ſooner were produced, but they died and vaniſhed, as our Thoughts do; which is not ſo in God. Now, if it be eſſential to an eternal Mind to have an *eternal*, *living*, *ſubſiſting* Word and Spirit, by an eternal *Generation* and *Proceſſion*, then this eternal Word and Spirit are eſſential to an eternal Mind, not as eſſential Parts or Perfections, but as eſſential *Productions* or *Proceſſions*, in the Unity and Identity of Nature. Thus the Scripture repreſents this Myſtery, that there is one God, who has an eternal Word, and an eternal Spirit; and the Catholick Fathers inſiſt on this, as a *natural* Demonſtration of the Trinity †, *viz.* that an eternal Mind muſt have its eternal Word and Spirit. If then the eternal *Word* and the eternal *Spirit* are eſſential to the eternal *Mind*, it is certain, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, the eternal *Mind*, its *Word*, and *Spirit*, are but one *individual* Divinity; ſince every Thing, that is *eſſential*, is included in the Notion of an individual Nature; for that is not a compleat and perfect Nature, nor an adequate Notion of Nature, that wants any Thing that is eſſential.

Now, though we may have a general Notion and Idea of a God, as of a Being abſolutely perfect, without knowing any Thing of the Son, or the Holy Ghoſt; yet if we conſider this abſolutely perfect Being, as an eternal, *ſelf-originated* Mind, with its eternal *Word* and *Spirit*, as eſſential *Productions* or *Proceſſions*, we can conſider them no otherwiſe, than as one *individual* Divinity; ſince this eternal Word and Spirit are eſſential Proceſſions of the eternal Mind, which can never be ſeparated from it: For ſuch eſſential *Proceſſions* are not only *co-eval* and *conſubſtantial* with the Nature from whence they flow, but whatever Diſtinction there is between them, they are one *individual* Nature; ſince, whatever is eſſential to a Being, is indiſputably of the ſame Nature with it.

From the Manner of the Son and Holy Ghoſt's partaking of the Divine Nature.

2. BUT, for a farther Conception of this great *Myſtery*, we muſt obſerve, that ſince the Father is the *Root* and *Fountain* of the Deity, in what Manner it is, that the other two Perſons partake of the Divine Nature. We are apt, indeed, to run into a groſs Notion, that it muſt be by *Diviſion*, becauſe we ourſelves cannot beſtow any Part of our Being any other Way; but the Divine Nature, if we think rightly, is not capable of it. *Unity* is its eſſential Attribute; and therefore the Writers on this Argument make Uſe of the Word *Communication*, whereby they underſtand that the Divine Nature is the *ſame*, and *entire* in all the three Perſons; that the Father, from all Eternity, gave his Divine Nature and Eſſence to the Son and Holy Ghoſt, and yet ſtill continued to have it in himſelf *undiminiſhed*, and *unimpaired*. [i] And if the Matter be thus; if the Divine Eſſence remains *undivided*, and yet it is *communicated* to three diſtinct Perſons; then all the Perſons, though they have their proper Subſiſtence, are but the ſame Divine Eſſence. It muſt needs be ſo, becauſe the Communication of the Divine Nature and Eſſence from the Father to the Son, and from both to the Holy Ghoſt, is without *Diviſion* and *Separation* of the Divine Subſtance and Eſſence; and therefore theſe two Perſons muſt have the ſame Divine Eſſence with the Father. [k] If then the Father communicates his whole Nature without Diviſion or Separation to the Son, and Father and Son communicate the ſame whole Nature to the Holy Ghoſt, they are, in the moſt perfect Notion, *One*; ſince there is one and the ſame, whole, entire, and perfect Divinity in all Three. *A Whole*, *a Whole*, and *a Whole*, are three in Number, but are but one *identical* Nature; for a *Whole* of a *Whole* muſt be the ſame *Whole*; and in this Unity of Nature conſiſts the Unity of the Godhead.

To help our Apprehenſions a little farther in the Conception of this great Myſtery, let us (with the *Schoolmen*) ſee, whether, upon the Grounds and Notions of Reaſon, we can frame to ourſelves any Thing, that may carry in it ſome *Shadow* and Reſemblance of one ſingle *undivided* Nature's caſting itſelf into three *Subſiſtences*,

† This Kind of Reaſoning the *Sabellian* Hereticks took from the *Catholick* Fathers; but then they abuſed it, and carried it quite beyond its Bounds. They obſerved, that the *inward Word*, or Thought, was no *real* ſubſtantial Thing, diſtinct from the Mind itſelf; and from hence they took Occaſion to miſinterpret the Apoſtle very widely, as if the Λόγος, or Word, which he ſpeaks of, *John* i. 1. were nothing really diſtinct from the Father, nor a *Second* Perſon, any more, than a Man's Thought, or Word, is another Perſon from the Man; and thus they *confounded* the Perſons in the Godhead. *Waterland*'s Sermons at Lady *Moyer*'s Lectures.

[i] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [k] *Sherlock*'s *Socinian* Controverſy.

Subſiſtences, without receding from its own *Unity*. [l] And to this Purpoſe we may repreſent to ourſelves, 1. An infinite rational Mind, which, conſidered under the firſt and original Perfection of *Being* or *Exiſtence*, may be called the *Father*. 2. In the ſame infinite Mind we may conſider the Perfection of *Underſtanding*, as immediately reſulting from the Perfection of Exiſtence, which may be called the *Son*: And then, 3. When that infinite Mind, by its *Underſtanding*, reflects upon its own eſſential Perfections, and cannot but love and take Pleaſure therein, that Act of Love and *Volition*, ariſing from an *intellectual* Reflection upon them, may be called the *Holy Ghoſt*. Here then we ſee, that one and the ſame Mind is both *Being*, *Underſtanding*, and *Willing*; and yet we can neither ſay, that *Being* is *Underſtanding*, nor *Underſtanding*, *Willing*; nor, on the contrary can we ſay, that *Underſtanding* is merely *Being*, or that *Willing* is *Underſtanding*. But all this, as we ſaid, is but a diſtant *Reſemblance*; nor is there any Inſtance in Nature indeed ſufficient to repreſent the *Unity* and *Diſtinction* of the three Perſons of the holy and *undivided Trinity*. The Light and Rays of the ſame Sun is an Inſtance, which the *Fathers* applied as more expreſſive than the other, and therefore they ſaid, that, as the Sun, with his undivided Light and Rays, is one individual Sun; ſo the Father, with the other two Perſons, proceeding from him, and inſeparably exiſting with him, and in him, is one individual Subſtance, one God. [m] A Triangle, conſiſting of equal Sides, whoſe Subſtance or Matter is the ſame, (ſuppoſing it Gold, or any other Metal) is thought a tolerable Similitude: For as, in Reſpect of their common Matter, *Gold*, each Angle is the *ſame*, but each of them *different*, as to their Poſition; ſo each Perſon in the Trinity, as to their common Nature, is the ſame God, and that, wherein they differ, is the Manner of their Subſiſtence in that Godhead. The Father, in this Reſpect, is not the ſame with the Son, nor the Son with the Holy Ghoſt, any more than the Angle, which points to the Right-Hand, is the ſame with that, which points to the Left; but then, as the Triangle is the ſame with the three diſtinct Angles, ſo God is the ſame with the three diſtinct *Perſonalities*. This ſeems to be ſome ſmall *Illuſtration* of the Matter; but I mention it not as an *adequate* Similitude, nor with an Intent to bring down the *Myſterioufneſs* of the Doctrine to our Apprehenſion, which muſt always be acknowledged to be above the Reach and Ken of human *Intellect*; but only to ſhew, that it is not ſo abſurd a Doctrine, as ſome would imagine, ſince a faint Reſemblance and Adumbration of it may be borrowed, even from the Things, that are before our Eyes daily. And this leads me on to the

III. AND laſt Propoſition I advanced in this Argument, *viz.* that a *Trinity in Unity*, or three Perſons in the Godhead, is a Doctrine, neither *contradictory* in itſelf, nor *repugnant* to right Reaſon. [n] Before we charge any Doctrine with Contradictions, 'tis not enough for us to ſay that we do not underſtand it, or cannot reconcile it, but we ſhould be ſure that we underſtand and comprehend it fully; otherwiſe, the Contradiction may not be in the *Doctrine*, but in our Manner of conceiving it, and a thouſand *Abſurdities* we may imagine in it, when, in Reality, they are all owing to our own *Ignorance*. Now, if we conſider how few Things (even the moſt obvious to our Senſes) we perfectly underſtand; how the *Eſſences* of Things more eſpecially, and the *Philoſophy* of their Natures, the *Reaſons* of their Powers and Properties, and the *Manner* of their Productions and Operations, are all a mere *Myſtery* to us; we cannot but imagine, that, in the Divine Nature, there muſt be many Things ſurpaſſing our Comprehenſion, and yet we muſt not immediately pronounce them *Contradictions*, for fear the Default ſhould be in our Capacity. [o] Whoever therefore, oppoſes the Doctrine, we are now conſidering, muſt prove, that the three Perſons in the Trinity cannot be as really diſtinct, as the Perſons of three Men are (though being but one God, they cannot, in this Reſpect, be like the Perſons of Men). And to prove this, he muſt underſtand the Nature of God, as well as he underſtands the Nature of Man; for otherwiſe, he can never be able to prove that three *divine* Perſons may not be one God, though three *human* Perſons cannot be one Man. † Were they indeed affirmed to be *Three* and *One* in the ſame Reſpect, this would be an undeniable Contradiction; but, [p] ſince they are ſaid

The Doctrine not chargeable with Contradictions.

[l] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. [m] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [n] *Sherlock*'s Vindication of the Trinity. [o] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, Vol. II.

† To ſay that three Gods are one God, or that three Perſons are one Perſon, is indeed a Contradiction: But to ſay, that there are three Perſons in the Godhead, is no more a Contradiction, than to ſay, that there are three Lines in a Triangle, or that three Men are one Company. *Trapp*'s Doctrine of the Trinity.

[p] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III.

ſaid to be *One* in *Subſtance*, and *Three* in the different *Manner* of having, and communicating that Subſtance; *One* in all Perfections eſſential to the Godhead, and *Three* in their mutual *Relations* and *Capacities*; in this there is no Contradiction, nor any Abſurdity in affirming, 'that each Perſon in the Trinity is truly God, when, at the ſame Time, we maintain, that there is but one *God*; becauſe the Term *God* importing the *Divine Nature*, which equally, and in common, belongs to the three Perſons, remains *numerically* one, and no more, notwithſtanding the Attribution of it to each of them; for their partaking of one and the ſame Divine Nature does not render them three diſtinct *Gods*, but only one and the ſame God, under three diſtinct *Modes* of Exiſtence. Theſe Modes of Exiſtence indeed are not ſo agreeable to our natural Ideas, but then we are to conſider, that they relate to the Divine Nature, and that every Thing, we know of the Divine Nature, contradicts our natural Ideas. 'An *uncreated* and *created* Nature, an infinite and finite Nature, are direct Contradictions to each other. *Eternity* without Succeſſion, *Omnipreſence* without Extenſion, Parts, or Place; a *pure ſimple Act*, which is *all in one*, without Compoſition; an *omnipotent Thought*, which thinks all Things into Being, and into a beautiful Order; theſe and ſuch like Ideas of God, are direct Contradictions to all the Ideas we have of Creatures; and why then ſhould a *Diſagreement* with the Ideas of created Nature be thought a reaſonable Objection againſt believing any Thing, that God reveals to us concerning himſelf?

The Myſteriouſneſs of a Doctrine makes it not incredible.

THAT there muſt of Neceſſity be ſomething *Eternal*, is evident to every one that underſtands the Signification of the Word; and yet what apparent Contradictions may a Man fancy to himſelf in the Notion of Eternity? 'For what is eternal can never be capable either of a ſhorter or longer Duration, than it always had; ſo that, Millions of Ages to come, it will not have continued longer, than it had done as many Millions of Ages paſt. But now how ſtrange and contradictory does this ſeem to be, that not only ten Ages and one ſhould be the ſame, but that there ſhould be no Manner of Difference between an Hour and an Age, a Moment and a Myriad of them! And yet we aſſent to this, though there are certainly greater Difficulties in the Notion of it, than can be raiſed from the Doctrine of the Trinity.

HOW *any Thing can be made out of Nothing*, is another Baffle to our Imagination; 'and yet we are forced to believe it, both from the Authority of the Report, and the many apparent Abſurdities, that neceſſarily follow from the Suppoſal of the contrary; though human Reaſon could never yet form an Idea, whereby to conceive the Poſſibility of ſuch a Production, nor can any one ſay whether it be harder to believe, *that the Divine Eſſence did, from everlaſting, emanate, or flow into three ſocial and co-eternal Subſiſtences*, than to believe, that *in the Beginning of Time all Things were made out of nothing*.

To exemplify the Power of God, Holy *Job* pitches upon the Inſtance of [x] *his hanging the Earth upon nothing*. Now, when we find it impoſſible for the utmoſt Art of Man to make a ſmall Clod of Earth hang in the Air, it is naturally impoſſible to conceive, how the whole Maſs ſhould *ſtand firm without a Foundation*; nor could we ever believe it, but from a Submiſſion of our Faith to the Divine *Omnipotence*, or from a Submiſſion to our Senſes, even while they controul the *Reluctancy* of our Reaſon.

ONCE more, to illuſtrate the ſame Power of God, the ſame holy Penman inſtances, [y] *in the Bars and Doors, that he hath ſet to the Sea, and how he hath ſaid to it, Hitherto ſhall thy proud Waves come, and no farther:* Which Obſervation is founded upon the Convexity or Roundneſs of the Surface of its Waters; in Reſpect of which, [z] *they ſtand upon an Heap*, (as the Pſalmiſt expreſſes it) *and turn not again to cover the Earth*; which, by the common Laws of Motion, they otherwiſe muſt neceſſarily do, and inſtead of a Tide, pour in upon every Shore a Deluge. And yet Reaſon, uninform'd by Experience of this State of Things, could not poſſibly believe this, tho' the Man would be thought wild, that would undertake to gainſay it.

FROM theſe few Inſtances we may perceive, that it is not repugnant to Reaſon to believe a great many Things, of the Manner of whoſe Exiſtence we are not able to give a diſtinct Account: And much leſs then is it repugnant to Reaſon, to believe that thoſe Things belong to God, which we are very well aſſured he hath declared

[r] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. [s] *Sherlock*'s Vindication of the Trinity. [t] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II.
[u] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [x] Job xxvi. 7. [y] Ibid. xxxviii. 10, 11. [z] Pſal. civ. 9.

declared concerning himſelf, though the Things by our Reaſon ſhould be *incomprehenſible*. [a] And this is truly the Caſe of the Matter now before us. We are ſufficiently aſſured that the Scriptures are a Divine *Revelation*, and that this Myſtery of the Trinity is therein declared to us: Now that we cannot comprehend it, is no Reaſon why we ſhould not believe it; for if this were a Reaſon, it would equally hold good in the myſterious Things of Nature, which we confeſſedly cannot comprehend, and yet make no Scruple to believe. [b] Theſe Things of Nature, 'tis true, we believe, becauſe we ſee them: But may not our Ears bring in as good Evidence as our Eyes? And is not our Liableneſs to Deception leſs, in *hearing* what God ſpeaks, than in *ſeeing* what Nature exhibits? The Truth is, we have all imaginable Reaſon to be ſatisfied (upon the Suppoſition that we believe the Divinity of the Scriptures) that there is ſufficient Evidence of this Doctrine's being delivered therein, and that, what is there declared concerning it, does not imply a Contradiction. For why ſhould our finite Underſtanding pretend to comprehend that, which is infinite, or to know all the real *Differences* which are conſiſtent with the Unity of the Divine Nature, when, with all our Search and Labour, we are ſo little acquainted with the Eſſence, Power, Operations, and Productions of the moſt common Beings, that are daily and hourly before our Eyes?

The Doctrine of the Trinity credible.

LET Reaſon, I grant, in this, and all other Myſteries of our holy Religion, have its proper Work, but then let it withal be conſidered, what the proper Work of Reaſon is. [c] By Divine Revelation in the Scriptures, we are informed concerning the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt*; and at the ſame Time are aſſured by this *ſupernatural* Teſtimony, that theſe *Three are One*. Now it is the immediate Suggeſtion of our Reaſon, that we ought to believe this; for nothing is more *rational*, than to give Credit to him, that cannot, and will not deceive us. Though there are great Difficulties in this Myſtery, and ſuch as we cannot comprehend; yet *Reaſon* ſtill bids us believe it, becauſe God hath ſaid it, who is Truth itſelf. Nay, upon the moſt *mature* Deliberation, Reaſon will not be averſe to the Myſtery itſelf, becauſe 'tis congruous to think, that there is a great and vaſt Difference between an *infinite* and *finite* Being; and conſequently, that we may believe, and aſſert *that* concerning the *One*, which is not to be admitted concerning the *Other*; and that it may be true of an *infinite* and *uncreated* Being, *that there is a Diſtinction of Perſons, where there is no Difference of Eſſence*, though this be not true of a *finite* and *created* One: Reaſon, I ſay, teaches us to make this Diſtinction between theſe two Sorts of Beings; and therefore we need leſs wonder that there is in God the ſame common Nature *perſonally diſtinct*, or (as others love to expreſs it) in one *Eſſence* a Plurality of *Subſiſtences*. [d] Without acknowledging ſuch a Plurality of Subſiſtences in the Godhead, we cannot ſo well conceive that αὐτάρκεια, which we attribute to God, *i. e.* his *Self-Sufficiency*, and moſt perfect Bliſs and Happineſs in himſelf alone, before, and without all created Beings. But by admitting of this, it plainly appears, that himſelf alone is a moſt perfect and bleſſed *Society, the Father, Son, and the Spirit, eternally converſing with and enjoying each other*.

WITHOUT entring into any Diſquiſition then, whether natural Reaſon, even improved by Philoſophy, ever found out the Traces of this Doctrine; whether [e] the *Egyptians* of Old, or [f] the *Americans* of later Years, had any Notion of it, becauſe they worſhipped God under the Picture of a Sun with three Heads; or whether [g] *Plato*'s three *Hypoſtaſes* of *eſſential Goodneſs, Mind*, and *Spirit* in the Deity, bore any true Reſemblance to the Chriſtian Doctrine of the *Trinity*; this we may ſay upon clear Grounds, that, when once we are perſuaded that this Doctrine is contained in the Scriptures, and that the Scriptures are of Divine Revelation, Reaſon then pleads for its Reception; and even make it's *Incomprehenſibility* an Argument for our embracing it. When it appears (as I have already ſhewn in part, and ſhall hereafter ſhew more largely) [h] that this was a Doctrine univerſally received over the whole Chriſtian Church, even before there was either a Chriſtian *Prince* to ſupport it by his Authority, or a *Council* to eſtabliſh it by Conſent, Reaſon then bids us reverence its *Antiquity*; and when it appears, [i] that, for the few learned Men, that have rejected it, forty Times as many, equally learned and ſincere, equally ſagacious and inquiſitive, that have ſtudied the Point, conſidered the Text and examined it by the

[a] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [b] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [c] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.
[d] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [e] Vid. Jamblic. de Myſt. [f] Vid. Joſ. Acoſta. [g] Vid. Plat. in Gorgiâ.
[h] *Burnet*, on the Articles. [i] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. IV.

Principles of Reaſon, have lived and died in the Profeſſion of this Article, Reaſon bids us adhere, and in ſome Meaſure ſubſcribe to the *greater* Number of Profeſſors, when, in Point of *Ability*, they ſtand upon equal Ground with the *leſs*.

THE Doctrine of the Trinity then being founded upon the Authority of the Scriptures, the Voice of Reaſon, the Teſtimony of Antiquity, and the Number of its Profeſſors, it may be no improper Enquiry, in the Concluſion of this Argument, to obſerve,

1. WHAT have been the Cauſes, that have at firſt unſettled, and afterwards deſtroyed the Belief of this Doctrine in ſome. And,

2. WHAT may be the beſt Means to ſettle and preſerve the Belief of it in ourſelves and others.

NOW there are three Things, in my Opinion, that have greatly contributed to ſome People's Defection from the Belief of this Article.

The Cauſe of Mens Diſbelief of this Doctrine.

1. [k] THAT bold and abſurd Cuſtom in attempting to paint and repreſent the Trinity in Figures, which ſome have done by one Head carv'd into three Faces; others, by the *Picture* of three Men of equal Pitch, ſitting together at one Table, and on one Seat; and others again, by the Image of an *Old Man*, a *Child*, and a *Dove*, one ſignifying the Father, another the Son, and the third the Holy Ghoſt. Now all theſe Things, being ſo contrary to the natural Notions, which Reaſon has of God, have brought many ſober Parts of the World to *nauſeate* our whole Religion, and reject Chriſtianity, as a new *Scheme* only of the old *Gentile* Idolatry, and have encouraged *Hereticks* in the Uſe of all thoſe vile and abominable Appellations (ſuch as *Idolum Trifrons*, *Monſtrum Triforme*, *Antichriſti Cerberus*, &c.) wherewith they have beſpattered this Divine Myſtery.

2. ANOTHER Cauſe of the ſame Evil is, the equally bold, and inſignificant Terms, wherein ſome Schoolmen have expreſs'd this Article. It was a good and pious Saying of an antient Writer, *Periculoſum eſt de Deo etiam vera dicere*; no Wonder then, if theſe Men, diſcourſing of the Nature and Subſiſtence of God, in a Language neither warrantable nor intelligible, have, by their *Modalities*, *Suppoſitalities*, *Circumince ſſions*, and twenty ſuch other Chimeras, ſo miſrepreſented this adorable Article of the Trinity to Mens Reaſon, as to bring them firſt to diſguſt, and at length to deny it.

3. I MENTION but one Thing more, that has much weaken'd Mens Belief of this Article, and that is, the imprudent building it upon ſuch Texts of Scripture, as are not ſufficient to evince any ſuch Thing; concerning which I ſhall only make this obvious Remark, That whatever is produced in Behalf of any great and momentous Point of Religion, if it comes not fully cloſe and home to the ſame, is always found much more effectual to *expoſe* the *Truth*, it is brought for, than to *ſupport* it, and to *confirm* the *Hereticks*, it is brought againſt, than to *convince* them.

The Means of preſerving it.

THESE are the chief Cauſes that undermine Mens Belief of the Article of the Trinity; and the Means, that may be conduceable to ſettle and continue it in ſuch Minds, as have already embrac'd it, are briefly theſe two.

1. To acquieſce in the bare Revelation of the Thing itſelf, and in thoſe Expreſſions, under which it is revealed. As for the Thing itſelf, God has expreſſly ſaid, that there are Three, above the Rank of created Beings, the *Father*, *the Son*, *and the Holy Ghoſt*: And as for the Words, in which he has conveyed this to us, they are few, eaſy, and intelligible, and to be believed juſt as they are propoſed, *i. e. ſimply* and in *general*, and without entring too far into Particulars.

2. To ſuppreſs all nice and over-curious Enquiries into the peculiar Nature, Reaſon, and Manner of this Myſtery; for when we are once aſſured, that the Thing itſelf *is*, for us to amuſe ourſelves and others, *how*, and which Way it comes to be ſo, (eſpecially in Matters relating to Almighty God) muſt needs be both *irreverent* and *impertinent*; and therefore let this, in all our Enquiries, be remember'd, that there is no Obedience comparable to that of the *Underſtanding*; no *Temperance*, which ſo much commends the Soul to God, as that which ſhews itſelf in the Reſtraint of our *Curioſity*.

BESIDES theſe two important Conſiderations, let us conſider alſo, that an *over-anxious Scrutiny* into ſuch Myſteries is utterly uſeleſs, as to all Purpoſes of a rational Enquiry. It wearies the Mind, but not informs the Judgment. It *makes us conceited* and *fantaſtical* in our Notions, inſtead of being ſober, and *wiſe to Salvation*.

It

[k] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. IV.

It may provoke God alſo, by our preſſing too much into the Secrets of Heaven, and the concealed Glories of his Nature, to deſert and give us over to ſtrange *Deluſions*. They are only [l] *the Things that are revealed* (as *Moſes* told the *Iſraelites*) *that belong to the Sons of Men* to underſtand and look into, as the ſole and proper Privilege allow'd them by God, to exerciſe their nobleſt Thoughts upon; but for ſuch high Myſteries as the Trinity, *as the Subſtance of one Nature in three Perſons*, or *of three Perſons in one and the ſame individual Nature*, theſe are to be reckon'd in the Number of ſuch *ſacred* and *ſecret* Things, as belong to God alone perfectly to know; but to ſuch poor Mortals as we are, humbly *to fall down before, and adore*.

An Hiſtorical [m] *Account of the DOCTRINE of the TRINITY.*

THUS far we have conſidered the Doctrine of the ever-bleſſed Trinity, as it is delivered in Scripture, and agrees with the Doctrine of the *antient* Fathers; and come now to take an *Hiſtorical* View of it, as a *Controverſy*, that was all along agitated in the Chriſtian Church. The Form of Admiſſion into the Chriſtian Covenant, at the Time of Baptiſm, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*, ſeems to comprize the Doctrine of this great *Article*, and was an explicit Declaration of it by every Perſon, that came to be baptized, profeſſing his Belief in the Divinity of three Perſons, *co-equal* and *co-eternal*. This being the common Manner of Admiſſion, it is not to be queſtioned, but that it contained the received Doctrine, was very probably Part of [n] *that Form of ſound Words, mentioned by the Apoſtle as delivered to the Saints*, and one of thoſe firſt *Principles*, which all ſuch, as were initiated into the Chriſtian Covenant, were bound to profeſs: And as the other Articles are but *declaratory* of what the Church believes concerning each Perſon, *the Creation* of all Things by the Father, the *Redemption* of Mankind by the Son, and the Benefits of our *Sanctification* by the Holy Ghoſt; ſo this Acknowledgment of three Divine Perſons in one and the ſame Eſſence, was always look'd upon as a *Summary* of the Chriſtian Faith, and the main Article of the *baptiſmal* Creed, which the Church continued in quiet Poſſeſſion of, until the Enemy came, and ſowed *Tares in the Field*, and cauſed *Hereſies* to ſprout up.

SIMON MAGUS (whoſe Hiſtory we have among [o] the Acts of the Apoſtles) was the firſt that diſturbed the Peace of the Church in this wiſe; for, being rejected by the Apoſtles for his *Hypocriſy* and other vile Practices, he ſet up for himſelf, and ſo far deluded the People of *Samaria* with his *Sorceries*, that he paſſed among them *for the great Power of God*. So many and monſtrous were the Deluſions which he advanced, that he is juſtly eſteemed to be the Head *and Founder of every Hereſy*, as being not only *firſt* in Time, but as having ſown the Seeds of *all* the reſt. He gave out that himſelf was the *Supreme God*, who had appeared in *Samaria* as the *Father*, in *Judea* as the *Son*, and in other Nations as *the Holy Ghoſt*. The firſt Production of his Mind, as he pretended, was a *female* Spirit, called *Eunæa*, who having (as the Mother of all Things) produced thoſe Angels and inferior Powers, whom he called the *Creators* and *Governors* of this lower World, did, at that Time, actuate and dwell in the Body of that *Helena*, whom he entertained as his inſeparable Companion: And upon this Fiction, he, or his immediate *Diſciples*, formed thoſe extravagant Conceits of their *Æons*, or *Genealogies of Gods*, which, in the next Age, began to appear with more Popularity. His Continuance in *Paleſtine* was not long; for the Apoſtles ſo oppoſed and over-powered his Sorceries by the *mighty Hand of God*, that he took his Journey to *Rome*, there to ſpread the Poiſon of his Hereſy; and though, by the Arrival of St *Peter*, he himſelf was effectually ruined and expoſed; yet the Seeds of his Doctrine ſtill continued and revived, and according to the different Humour of his Followers, branched themſelves out into ſeveral Sects. From this Impoſtor's Pretenſions however, of being Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, we may learn this one Thing, *viz.* that the eternal Divinity of theſe three Perſons was, at that Time, the received Doctrine of the Church; otherwiſe he had expoſed and ruined his own Cauſe, in aſſuming to himſelf the Characters of all Three.

Simon Magus, *A. D.* 34.

A. D. 64.

MENANDER,

[l] Deut. xxix. 29. [m] *N. B.* This Account is chiefly extracted from the learned Dr *Berriman's* Sermons, preached at the Lecture, founded by the Lady *Moyer*. [n] 2 Tim. i. 13. [o] Acts viii. 9.

Menander, *MENANDER*, who was his immediate Succeſſor, not able to digeſt the Notion of a God incarnate, acknowledged the *Divine* Nature of our Saviour Chriſt, but denied the *Reality* of his *human*, pretending, that his Aſſumption thereof was no more than *Phantaſm* and outward Shew, from whence his Followers were
Cerinthus, called Φαντασιαςαί. *Cerinthus*, on the other Hand, allowed that *Jeſus* was a real Man, born of a Woman, and that he ſuffered in the Manner, that the Goſpel relates; but then he pretended, that *Chriſt* was a diſtinct Being, a *Divine Power*, or one of his inviſible *Æons*, that deſcended upon him, at the Time of his Baptiſm, that enabled him to work Miracles, and revealed to him the Doctrines he taught;
And Ebion, but, at the Time of his Crucifixion, forſook him. *Ebion*, a Diſciple of *Cerinthus*, (from whom a large Sect in the next Century took their Name) agreed with his Maſter in acknowledging Jeſus to be *merely Man*, but gave not into that Fiction of *Chriſt*, as another Perſon, deſcending on him, at his Baptiſm; nor did he concur with him in his Notion of *Æons*, or aſcribing the Creation of the World to any inferior Being.

Oppoſed by St John. St *JOHN* was alive when theſe different Opinions ſprung up in the Church, and it is obvious to obſerve, both in his Goſpel and Epiſtles, (which were wrote at the Requeſt of the Biſhops of *Aſia*, to be a Remedy againſt theſe growing Hereſies) how he ſets himſelf to confute them. Againſt that Opinion, which denied the Incarnation of the Son of God, he maintains, that the [p] *Word was made Fleſh*, and *pitched his Tabernacle among Men*, ſo that they *beheld his Glory*; they *heard*, they *ſaw*, they *handled* him, and therefore he pronounces, that *whatſoever Spirit ſhall not confeſs his coming in the Fleſh*, could not be *of God*, but was *the Spirit of Antichriſt*. Againſt the other, which denied the Divinity of our Bleſſed Saviour, he maintains, that the ſame *Word*, which in Time became incarnate, did nevertheleſs [q] *exiſt in the Beginning*; that he was the *Word of eternal Life*, was *with God the Father*, and was *God* himſelf; ſo that whoſoever ſhould deny *Jeſus to be Chriſt*, *the Son of God*, was likewiſe to be eſteemed *Antichriſt*, *denying* both the *Father and the Son*, and having no true Communion with them. Laſtly, in Oppoſition to the common Opinion of all *Simon*'s Followers, that the World was created, not by the ſupreme God, but by certain inferior Beings, the ſame Apoſtle aſſerts, that by this [r] *Word were all Things made*, *and without him was not any Thing made*, *that was made*; and more particularly, *that the World was made* by him, and therefore when he came into *the World*, *he came unto his own*.

And Ignatius. *IGNATIUS* was the Diſciple of St *John*, and by him conſtituted Biſhop of *Antioch*, in the Reign of *Veſpaſian*; but his *Epiſtles*, which are ſtill extant, were not
A. D. 107. wrote until a little before his *Martyrdom*, which happened in the Reign of *Trajan*; at which Time the aforeſaid Hereſies were mightily increaſed, by *Cerinthus* in *Aſia*, by *Menander* in *Samaria*, and by *Ebion*, very probably, in *Judea*. No Wonder therefore that this holy Writer, in his Epiſtles to the Churches of *Aſia*, as well as *Rome*, ſhould caution them ſo ſtrictly againſt Deceivers, that brought in damnable Doctrines, and [s] *mixed Poiſon with the ſweet Wine of the Goſpel*; that he ſhould aſſert *Chriſt to be God*, aſcribing unto him [t] *Omniſcience*, and an Exiſtence [u] *without Beginning of Time*; and withal maintain the Certainty of his Incarnation and Death, againſt ſuch Deceivers as would deny their [x] *Reality*, and affirm that he only ſuffered in Appearance, [y] which this zealous Father looked upon as horrid *Blaſphemy*. Thus careful was the bleſſed *Martyr* (as well as the *Apoſtle* was before him) to aſſert both the divine and human Nature of Chriſt, only with this Difference, that St *John* reſiding in *Aſia*, where *Cerinthus* had chiefly broach'd his Opinions, enlarges moſt upon the Proof of his *Divinity*; whereas *Ignatius*, being Biſhop of *Antioch*, where *Menander* had ſpread his Poiſon, is moſt full and expreſs in the Doctrine of his *Incarnation*.

The Gnoſtick *Hereſy*. IT was not long before the Abetters of theſe Opinions fell under the Denomination of *Gnoſticks*, as Men, that pretended to more *Knowledge* in Divine Matters, than any other Chriſtians; and their Hereſy came in Time to be drawn up into a Kind of regular Syſtem, by *Valentinus* and his Followers, the chief of whoſe Poſitions (ſo far as they affected the Doctrine, we are now conſidering) were ſuch as theſe: "That "*Demiurgus*, or the Creator of this World, is not the ſupreme God, nor indeed of "a *ſpiritual*, but *animal* Nature, inferior to that *Plerôma*, or Plenitude of the Deity,
"in

[p] John i. 14. 1 John i. 1. Chap. iv. 2, 3. [q] John i. 1, 2. 1 John ii. 22, 23. Chap. iv. 15. Chap. v. 5, 10, &c. [r] John i. 3, 10, 11, 17. [s] Ad *Epheſ.* xvii. [t] Ibid. xv. [u] Ad Polycarp. 3. [x] Ad Magneſ. 9. [y] Ad Smyrn. 5.

" in which the whole Race of *Æons* is contained: That Λόγος, or the Word, is not " the immediate Son of *Bythus*, or the Father, but of *Nûs* or *Monogones*, the only- " begotten; ſo that they are reckoned as two diſtinct *Æons*: That there is a ſupe- " rior or *heavenly* Chriſt, diſtinct from the Λόγος, and that he and the *Holy Ghoſt* " were poſterior to the *Æons*, which they made in Number to be thirty. That " Jeſus, or the Saviour, was diſtinct from Chriſt, and the Product of all the *Æons* " jointly; who, together with the Angels, concluded all the Productions within " the *Plerôma*: That Chriſt, who appeared here upon Earth, was the Son of *De-* " *miurgus*, or the Creator, and had a Body of a more ſubtile and artificial Kind of " Matter than ours; ſo that he did not receive the Subſtance of his Fleſh from the " bleſſed Virgin: And, laſtly, that, after his Baptiſm, *Jeſus* deſcended upon him " from the *Plerôma*, and left him again, before his Paſſion."

THESE, and others of the like *Abſurdity*, were the Doctrines, which *Valentine* *A. D.* 120. firſt broach'd in *Egypt*, and afterwards at *Rome*; from whence they were, by his Followers, propagated through many Provinces, till they became the moſt conſiderble and prevailing Hereſy of the *ſecond Century*. Againſt theſe monſtrous Opinions, *Oppos'd by* *Irenæus*, who was an Hearer of St *Polycarp*, the Diſciple of St *John*, and afterwards Irenæus. promoted to the Biſhoprick of *Lyons* in *France*, a Man of great Integrity and Accuracy of Judgment, declares himſelf in very ſtrong and ſignificant Expreſſions; not only where he aſſerts, that the *Word* did always *exiſt*, did always [z] *co-exiſt with the Father*; equal to him in Immenſity, and, as it were, *meaſuring him out, who is unmeaſurable*; but where he affirms likewiſe, that the Father has always with him [a] *the Word and Wiſdom, the Son and the Spirit*, who concurred with him *in the Creation*, and do ſtill in the *Conſervation and Government of the World*; ſo that there is [b] *one God the Father, one Son, and one Divine Spirit* properly diſtinguiſhed from each other, although inſeparably united in that Divinity, which is but one.

BEFORE the Death, or certainly ſoon after the Death, of *Irenæus*, *Clemens*, the 192. *and* Clemens Alexandrinus. celebrated School-maſter and Catechiſt of *Alexandria*, whoſe Books are ſtored with great Variety of Learning, and digeſted with the niceſt Judgment, undertook, not only the Confutation of *Pagan* Superſtition, but of *heretical* Perverſeneſs likewiſe; and, to this Purpoſe, is full of very high and lofty Deſcriptions of the Son of God, calling him the *Almighty One with the Father, without Beginning, and without End*, to *whom the Inſpection of our Hearts*, and of all Things in the Univerſe, *belongs*, as he ſays the ſame Things of the Holy Ghoſt; and therefore, in his [c] famous Doxology joins him with the Father and the Son, as entirely one with them, the *Upholder of Eternity, and the Author of all Good*.

ABOUT thirty Years before the Concluſion of the ſecond Century, *Montanus* 172. appeared in the World, pretending to a Divine Authority; and, by a ſpecious Shew of Piety and great Auſterity, making many Proſelytes, and gaining himſelf a conſiderable Reputation. After ſome Time, however, his Followers were excluded from the Communion of the Church, for aſcribing their pretended Revelations to the Impulſe of the Holy Ghoſt: And though, in the Controverſy about *Eaſter*, they took Occaſion to court the Favour of Pope *Victor*, and ſo far inſinuated themſelves into his Eſteem, as to obtain Letters of *Communion* from him; yet, when *Praxeas* came from *Aſia* to *Rome*, and gave the *Pope* a different Notion of the Men, he ſoon revoked the Letters, and withdrew the Countenance, he had given them. *Praxeas*, however, was not himſelf clear from the Charge of *Hereſy*, whilſt, for *Praxeas's Hereſy*. fear of deſtroying the Unity of the Divine Nature, he acknowledged no more than a *nominal* Diſtinction in it, believing the Father to be expreſsly the ſame with the Son and the Holy Ghoſt, and differing no otherwiſe, than as he was conſidered under different Views. *Tertullian* was the firſt who wrote profeſſedly againſt this *Oppos'd by* Opinion. The main Scope of his Book againſt *Praxeas* is to prove a real Diſtinc- Tertullian, 209. tion of the *Sacred Three*, which he expreſſes in ſuch high Terms, as to call the Son *another* from the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt *another* from both. But as this Manner of Expreſſion might ſeem a little *unguarded*, he therefore adds, that he was forced to make uſe of it, not to intimate any real *Separation* in the [d] Perſons of the Godhead, but to guard againſt the captious Diſpoſition of his Adverſaries; who, attending only to the *Monarchy* or Unity of the Godhead, did highly pre-

[z] Lib. II. Cap. 55. Lib. IV. Cap. 12. [a] Lib. IV. Cap. 37. Lib. I. Cap. 19. [b] Lib. IV. 14.
[c] Ἐυχαριςῶμεν αἰνοῦντες, αἰνῶμεν εὐχαριςοῦντες, τῷ μόνῳ πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ καὶ παρακλήτῳ —— σὺν καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι, &c. Lib. III. Cap. 12. [d] *Tertullian* ſeems to be the firſt that introduced the Term *Perſon*, in Contradiſtinction to *Subſtance*. *Adverſ. Praxeam*, Cap. 12.

judice, if not deſtroy, the ſacred *Oeconomy*, or *Perſonality* thereof. And therefore he tells us farther, [e] that they were *Three, not in Dignity, but Order; not in Subſtance, but Form; not in Power, but Manifeſtation:* Though really *diſtinguiſhed*, they were, at the ſame Time, inſeparably *coherent*; though *ſubſtantially* united, they were diſtinctly *enumerated*; their *Number* was no leſs certain, than their *Inſeparability*; and therefore he made no Scruple to attribute the Title of God to every one of the Three, though ſtill he was determined to acknowledge no more Gods, or Lords, than *One*.

138. BUT notwithſtanding the Oppoſition which *Tertullian* made to the Hereſy of *Praxeas* in *Africa*, he could not hinder it from ſpreading in *Aſia*, by the Induſtry and Cunning of *Noëtius*, an Inhabitant of *Smyrna*, and from whom the Men of that Principle, in thoſe Parts, went under the Name of *Noëtians*, as in *Africa* they were called *Praxeans*. There ſoon appeared, however, a ſeaſonable *Antidote* againſt it, written by *Hippolytus*, Biſhop of *Porto* in *Arabia*; wherein he aſſerts the Unity of the Godhead with all Strenuouſneſs, but at the ſame Time maintains that [f] myſterious *Oeconomy*, as he calls it, whereby a Plurality of *Perſons* ſubſiſted in a proper Order, the Father having always his *Word* and *Wiſdom* in himſelf, which were manifeſted in due Time, to perform his wondrous Operations.

Hippolytus, 240.

And Origen. CONTEMPORARY with *Hippolytus* was *Origen*, who has expreſſed the Diſtinction of the three Divine Perſons in Terms ſtill ſtronger, and more ſignificant. The Word Πρόσωπον, which ſometimes ſignifies no more than a *bare Appearance*, had very likely, at this Time, been perverted by the Hereticks, being willing to own three *Perſons* in the Godhead in this Senſe, but not according to the Acceptation of the *Catholicks*, who thereby intended three *Perſons*, *really ſubſiſting*; and 'twas for this Reaſon, that *Origen* ſubſtituted the Word Ὑπόστασις in its room, which, beſides a bare Appearance or Manifeſtation, conveys a Notion of ſome Subſtance under it, and was afterwards a Term of eſtabliſhed Uſe and Approbation.

The Sabellian *Hereſy*, 258. NOT many Years after *Origen* aroſe *Sabellius* in *Africa*, a Diſciple (as ſome have reported) of *Noëtius*, but, to be ſure, a ſtrenuous Aſſertor and Propagator of his Principles. He broached his Doctrines at *Ptolemais*, a City of *Pentapolis* in *Africa*, which were greedily imbibed, not only by the common People, but by many of the *Biſhops*; [g] and as his Error conſiſted in denying a Plurality of Perſons in the Divine Nature, and aſſerting, that in the Godhead there was no more than one individual and ſingular Subſiſtence; that conſequently, the Titles of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, were no more than different *Names* for one and the ſame Perſon, or ſeveral *Modes* belonging to the ſame *Hypoſtaſis*; ſo, in Proceſs of his Error, the Father was declared to have taken on him human Fleſh, and in ſeveral Churches there was no Mention made of the Son of God. This raiſed the Zeal of *Dionyſius*, who had formerly been *Origen*'s Pupil, and was then Patriarch of *Alexandria*, inſomuch that he wrote ſeveral Epiſtles, aſſerting the *real* and *neceſſary* Diſtinction between Father and Son: But, as it uſually happens in the Heat of Controverſy, he let fall ſome Expreſſions, not ſufficiently guarded againſt the contrary *Extream*, which gave an Umbrage to the *Orthodox*, as well as *Sabellians*, and occaſioned their Complaints againſt him to his Name-ſake *Dionyſius*, then Biſhop of *Rome*. The Patriarch defended himſelf againſt his Accuſers with great Force of Argument, and to the entire Satisfaction of Pope *Dionyſius*, and the *Synod* aſſembled under him upon this Occaſion; yet the great Zeal, which was ſhewn in that Age againſt the *Noëtian* and *Sabellian* Hereſies, gave Riſe to two different Errors, which *Dionyſius* of *Rome*, in a Letter, very probably wrote while the Affair of his Name-ſake of *Alexandria* lay before the *Synod*, takes Notice of. For he tells us, That there were ſome, that overthrew the Doctrine of the Church, by dividing the *Monarchy*, or Divine Unity, into three Powers, three ſeparate *Hypoſtaſes*, foreign to each other, which was the ſame Thing, in his Opinion, as making *three Gods*; while others thought them, not only *ſeparate* in Subſtance, but even *inferior* in Nature, eſteeming the Son, and, by Conſequence, the Holy Ghoſt, to be no better than created Beings: And therefore he tells us, that, to ſteer between theſe Extreams, the Method is, [h] not to deny that there are three *Hypoſtaſes*, but to maintain that they are by no Means ſeparate, or divided from each other, but perfectly joined together by *Unity of Eſſence*.

Oppoſed by Dionyſius.

NOT

[e] Cap. 2. [f] Hippol. contra Noët. [g] *Stephens*, concerning ſeveral Heterodox Hypotheſes. [h] Dionyſ. Rom. apud Athanaſ. de Decr. Syn. Nic.

NOT long after *Sabellius* aroſe *Paulus Samoſatenus*, Biſhop of *Antioch*, who (according to ſome) denied that Chriſt came from Heaven, aſſerting, that he was a *mere Man*, and thereupon prohibited all *Hymns* to be ſung to his Honour; though others will have it, that he did not actually deny the *Divine* Nature in Chriſt, but only ſo far ſeparated it from the *human*, as to deſtroy the *Unity* of Perſon. However this be, he was ſummoned before two ſeveral Councils at *Antioch*; in the firſt of which he behaved with ſo much Art and Sophiſtry, that, though his *Tenets* were condemned, himſelf eſcaped without any Sentence paſſed upon him; but, in the next Council, he was depoſed from his *See*, and *Domnus* was nominated to ſucceed him. 263, *The* Samoſatenian,

IT was not long after the Depoſition of *Paulus Samoſatenus*, that the *Manichean* Hereſy began to grow conſiderable, which, beſides denying the Reality of Chriſt's Body, ſeems to have eſpouſed the *Sabellian* Principle, by repreſenting Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, as one God under three Names: But, as their Scheme contained likewiſe a Collection of the moſt deteſtable Abominations of the *Heathens*, and worſt of *Hereticks*, they are to be looked upon as *Pagans*, rather than Chriſtians, and fall not ſo properly under our preſent Conſideration. *And* Manichean *Hereſies.*

THUS we have taken a View of the Doctrine of the Church, with Relation to the ever-bleſſed Trinity, for the three firſt *Centuries*, and of the moſt conſiderable *Hereſies*, that raiſed themſelves up againſt it. The antient Liturgies, which might be a farther Illuſtration of this Matter, are in a great Meaſure loſt: But, from the Remains of what we have of them, we may perceive, that though the Father was conſtantly acknowledged for the *Fountain of the Deity*, and had conſequently moſt of the Prayers and Praiſe of the Church offered unto him; yet ſome Parts of Divine Worſhip, as well *Hymns* as *Doxologies*, were immediately addreſſed to the Son and Holy Ghoſt, in Terms the moſt *expreſs* and *particular*; which would never have been allowed, had not the Divine Nature and *Co-eſſentiality* of theſe two Perſons with the Father been, at that Time, the received and *Catholick* Doctrine.

AFTER this Period of Time, the outward Face of the Church began to change; and, inſtead of Poverty and Perſecution, Riches and Honours, and civil Emoluments were introduced; but together with them, Diſcord and Contention. The See of *Alexandria* being made vacant by the Martyrdom of *Peter*, in the Time of the tenth Perſecution, *Achillas*, his immediate Succeſſor, did not long ſurvive him; when *Alexander*, who had been diſtinguiſhed for his Chriſtian Zeal, was deſervedly promoted to the *Patriarchal* Dignity. *Arius*, at this Time, was one of the *Preſbyters* of *Alexandria*, and thinking himſelf ſlighted to have a Brother ſet over his Head, he entered into a *fatal* Reſolution to oppoſe him, and it was not long before he found an Occaſion. The Biſhop had been treating, ſomewhat curiouſly, concerning the *Trinity*, and, in his Catholick Manner of explaining it, had aſſerted the inſeparable *Unity of Subſtance:* This gave *Arius* an Handle to charge him with *Sabellianiſm*, and to ſet himſelf up as a Patron of the oppoſite Extream, by declaring, *that there was a Time when the Son was not*; that he was a *Creature*, and made out of nothing, *mutable* in his Nature, and like the created Angels, liable to fall into Sin; that, being united to human Fleſh, he ſupplied the Place of the human Soul, and was conſequently ſubject to *Sufferings* and Pain. The Patriarch, at firſt, uſed gentler Means to reclaim him from theſe *blaſphemous* Opinions, but when nothing of this Kind would avail, he and his Adherents were, by a Council of an hundred Biſhops of *Egypt* and *Lybia*, not only degraded from their *Orders*, but *anathematiz'd* likewiſe, and caſt entirely out of the Church. *Arius*, after this, applied himſelf to other Biſhops, and under Pretence of being reconciled to *Alexander*, endeavoured to fortify his Intereſt againſt him; while *Alexander*, on the other Hand, was not negligent to juſtify his Conduct to other Churches: And in this Condition continued the *Diſpute*, each labouring to ſtrengthen his own Party, until *Conſtantine*, for the Conſervation of the Peace of the Church, thought it expedient to call a *General* Council at *Nice*, in *Bithynia*, where three hundred and eighteen Biſhops, from all Parts of the Chriſtian World (beſides Prieſts and Deacons almoſt innumerable) met, and were firſt, to deliberate about the Particulars of that Faith, which was delivered to the Church, and then conferring with *Arius* himſelf, to require, at his own Mouth, an open Declaration of his real Sentiments. *The* Arian *Hereſy.* 317. 319. *The firſt general Council held at* Nice.

1. IT was, at firſt, the Intention of the Council[i] to declare the *Catholick* Faith in the Words of Scripture, and in the moſt plain and ſimple Manner of Expreſſion; but, as the *Arians* had learned to elude the Senſe of all Scripture Phraſes by *evaſive* Explanations, the Council was obliged to proceed in another Method. The grand Point was to bring them to a Confeſſion of Chriſt's Divine Nature: And therefore they explain'd his *Generation* to be *very God of very God*; they diſtinguiſhed between Generation and Creation, aſſerting, that the Son was *begotten, not made*; and to preclude all poſſible Subterfuge, they affirmed, that he was ὁμοούσιον τῷ Πατρὶ, of one *Subſtance with the Father*, i. e. of the ſame Nature *with the Father*, in Reſpect of his Godhead, as he was *with us*, in Reſpect of his Humanity.

To this Character of the Son of God, there were but five, out of the hundred and eighteen Biſhops, that, with any *Pertinacioufneſs*, refuſed to ſubſcribe; and the Reaſon they alledged for ſo doing was, the *Novelty*, the *Unſcripturalneſs*, and the Incongruity of the Term. But, after ſome Debate, when the Creed was drawn up by *Hoſius*, the famous Biſhop of *Corduba* in *Spain*, and the Term inſerted in it, as the beſt Fence againſt *Arian Prevarications*, there were but two Biſhops, *viz. Euſebius* of *Nicomedia*, and *Theognis* of *Nice*, that perſiſted in their Refuſal to ſubſcribe it.

2. WHEN *Arius* was called to a Conference before the Synod, he maintained his Aſſertions with all Boldneſs and Obſtinacy imaginable; nor did he want ſome to extenuate his Fault, and patronize his Cauſe, though they did it *covertly*. The *Anathema*, however, that *Alexander* had denounced againſt him, was confirmed by the *Synod*, and the two Biſhops, which finally adher'd to him, were concluded in the ſame Sentence; which Sentence was followed by another from the *Emperor*, excluding the condemned Perſons from *Civil*, as well as *Eccleſiaſtical* Rights, and condemning them to Baniſhment.

328. BUT this Severity of the Emperor's did not laſt long. In about three Years Time the Biſhops were recalled, and reſtored to their *Sees*, and admitted to a conſiderable Intereſt at Court. Nor was it long before the Emperor was perſuaded to recal *Arius* likewiſe; who, to juſtify the Repreſentation his Friends had made of him, preſented him with a *Confeſſion* of his Faith in Writing, drawn up in *Terms*, that had a *latent* Reſervation, yet, at the ſame Time, an Appearance ſo entirely *Catholick*, that they ſatisfied the Emperor. But, notwithſtanding this, *Athanaſius*, who was now advanced to the See of *Alexandria*, and better acquainted with his *Prevarications*, refuſing to admit him to *Communion*, enrag'd the Party ſo, that they rais'd many Calumnies, and formed an Accuſation againſt him, which, by the Intereſt they had at Court, procur'd firſt his *Depoſition*, and afterwards his *Baniſhment*. The People of the Church of *Alexandria*, however, ſtill refuſed to admit *Arius* into their Communion, which made the Emperor ſend for him to *Conſtantinople*, where, upon delivering in a freſh *Confeſſion* of his Faith in Terms leſs offenſive, and appealing to the *Searcher of Hearts* for his Sincerity, the Emperor commanded *Alexander*, the Biſhop of that Church (who was reſolutely bent againſt doing the Thing) to receive him next Day into his Communion: But that very Evening, *Arius* dying a very remarkable Death, (as Hiſtorians tell us, *for he burſt aſunder in the Midſt, and his Bowels guſhed out*) Providence put an End to the Contention.

Athanaſius baniſhed.

Arius dies. 336.

337. THE Party, however, continu'd ſtill in great Credit at Court; and though, upon the Death of *Conſtantine*, the Affairs of *Conſtantius* were a little too much embarraſs'd, to oppoſe his Brethren, in recalling *Athanaſius*, and the other Biſhops from their Baniſhment; yet, in a ſhort Time after, *Athanaſius* was again removed; and, to juſtify ſuch Proceedings, the old *Calumnies* were reviv'd, and an Accuſation ſent againſt him, and the other *depriv'd* Biſhops, to Pope *Julius*; who in a full Synod, after a juſt Examination, acquitted them of the Charge, and pronounc'd them *innocent*. But the *Arian* Faction *cared for none of theſe Things*, having the Countenance of the Government, and making, or depoſing Biſhops, as it beſt ſerv'd their Purpoſes.

The Photinian *Hereſy.*

BEFORE the Middle of the *fourth Century*, there was ſome Diſturbance in the *Eaſtern* Parts of *Europe*, occaſion'd by *Photinus*, formerly of great Reputation among the *Orthodox*, and promoted to the See of *Sirmium* in *Illyricum*, to their general Satisfaction; but now fallen into a *Set of Opinions*, that gave a general Diſguſt. The Antients have not given us a diſtinct Account of the *Hereſy* he advanc'd, but in this they ſeem to agree, that he denied the real *Diſtinction* of *Perſons* in the Godhead; that

[i] Athanaſ. de Decr. Syn. Nic.

that he denied the *perſonal* Union of the divine and human Natures in Chriſt; and ſuppoſed the *eternal* Word to be no more than a Divine *Power*, or *Virtue* of the Father, himſelf inſpiring, and operating upon *Jeſus*: Which, among others, were accounted *Poſitions* ſo groſs, that the *Arians* themſelves, in a Council held in his own City of *Sirmium*, publickly depos'd him.

WHILE this Affair of *Photinus* was depending, the Emperor *Conſtans* prevail'd with his Brother *Conſtantius* to have a *General* Council call'd, which met at *Sardica*: But the *Arians*, perceiving that they could not carry every Thing as they deſired, withdrew by Night to *Philippopolis*, which was under the Juriſdiction of *Conſtantius*, and there held a *ſeparate* Aſſembly of their own, but ſtill calling themſelves the Council of *Sardica*. In Conſequence of which, it came to paſs, that both Councils *anathematiz'd* each other; what the one did, the other as ſurely revers'd; and no ſooner was *Athanaſius* reſtor'd at *Sardica*, but he was immediately depos'd again at *Philippopolis*. 347.

THIS Proceeding *Conſtans* (who had occaſion'd the meeting of the Council) thought himſelf concern'd to reſent; and therefore ſent immediately to his Brother to demand the Reſtoration of the depos'd Biſhops, which, as Things then ſtood, was readily complied with: But, upon the Death of *Conſtans*, the Defeat of *Magnentius*, and the Acceſſion of the whole Empire to *Conſtantius*, all was revers'd again. *Athanaſius* was condemn'd in a Council held at *Arles*, and thoſe that adventur'd to oppoſe the Sentence, or ſpeak in Vindication of him, underwent the ſame Fate. Under this Encouragement, the *Arians* pull'd off the Maſk, and avow'd their Doctrines; and, having the *ſecular* Power on their Side, rais'd a terrible *Perſecution* all the Empire over, againſt thoſe, that refus'd to conform; in the Violence of which, many great Names fell away from the right Faith, and embrac'd the *Arian* Communion; though there wanted not others, of Honeſty and Conſtancy enough, to reject all ſuch Overtures, and *deſpiſe all Terror*, in Atteſtation of the Truth. 348. 350. 353. 357.

THE *Arians* had hitherto been *unanimous* in the Deſign of pulling down the Church, and had well nigh accompliſhed their End; when (as the Effect of Proſperity is) they fell a quarrelling and diſputing with one another. Some of them diſlik'd the Term ὁμοούσιος, of *the ſame Subſtance*; and yet were willing to come as near it as poſſible; and therefore aſſerted of the Son, that he was ὁμοιούσιος *of the like Subſtance* with the Father; though this *Term*, in the Opinion of others, border'd too much upon the *Catholick* Senſe. Among theſe *Aëtius*, who had been formerly a *Deacon* of the Church of *Antioch*, reviv'd the old Tenets of *Arius*, and declar'd openly, that the Son was not only ἑτερούσιος, of *another Subſtance* from the Father, but that he was ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων *made out of nothing*, and ἀνόμοιος τῷ Πατρὶ *unlike the Father*; from whence the Followers of his Opinions were for ſome time called *Anomæans*. Theſe *Poſitions* he had Intereſt enough to get ratified both at *Sirmium* and *Antioch*; though others immediately condemned them, and, in a *Synod* at *Ancyra*, drew up a Declaration of *Anathemas* againſt them, which they ſent to *Conſtantius*, then at *Sirmium*; and he thereupon order'd two Councils to be called, one at *Rimini*, in *Italy*, for the *Weſtern*, and the other at *Seleucia*, in *Cælo-Syria*, for the *Eaſtern* Biſhops. *The Arians diſagree among themſelves*; *Whereupon two Councils are call'd*, 359.

THE Council of *Rimini* did moſtly agree to condemn the *Arian* Hereſy, depoſing thoſe that patronized it, and ratifying the *Confeſſion* of *Nice*. Some *Arians* however among them propoſed a different *Confeſſion*; and both Sides ſent Deputies to the Emperor to notify what they had done. But the *Catholick* Deputies being Men of no great Experience, were, by the Artifice of the *Arians*, prevailed to revoke what had been done at *Rimini*, and to ſign a new *Confeſſion*, wherein the Word *Subſtance* was omitted, and the Son declared to *be like the Father, according to the Scriptures*: Which the Emperor underſtanding, ſent his Orders to the other Biſhops of the *Council* to do the ſame; and they, partly thro' Fear, and partly thro' a Miſrepreſentation of the Caſe, were induced to do it.

THE Council of *Seleucia*, conſiſting chiefly of *Semi-Arians*, i. e. ſuch as aſſerted the ὁμοιούσιον, or *Likeneſs of the Son with the Father*, from the Averſion they had to the *Anomæans*, were become almoſt *Catholicks*, and approved of the Council of *Nice* in every Thing, except the Word ὁμοιούσιος: But, by the Management of the Party, they too were perverted, in the like Manner as the *Catholick Deputies*; ſo that the greateſt Part, both of the *Weſtern* and *Eaſtern* Biſhops, were by one Stratagem or other brought over to the *Anomæans*.

The Macedonian *Hereſy.*

ALL this while, the *Divinity* of the third Perſon in the ever-bleſſed Trinity had been very little diſputed. The Council of *Nice* had declared their Belief in the *Holy Ghoſt*, without any farther Explanation, and the *Arians* ſeemed not to oppoſe
358. it; until ſome, that pretended to deteſt the *Arian* Hereſy in Reſpect of the Son, ventured even to exceed it in Reſpect of the Holy Ghoſt; aſſerting, that he was no more than a *Creature*, and one of the *miniſtring Spirits*, that differed from the holy Angels in *Degree* only. The Sect was from their Doctrine called at firſt *Pneumatomachi*, or *Fighters with the Spirit*, but after that *Macedonius* embraced the ſame Opinion, they generally took their *Denomination* from him.

The Hiſtory of ſucceeding Times.

UPON the Death of *Conſtantius*, *Julian* the Apoſtate, thinking to deſtroy *Chriſtianity* by increaſing the Diſputes among its *Profeſſors*, recalled thoſe that had been baniſhed, of whatever Denomination they were, and gave a free Toleration to all Parties; whereupon thoſe of the *Catholick* Communion gained Ground viſibly: The Belief of a *conſubſtantial Trinity* was openly profeſs'd, in a Council held by *Athanaſius* at *Alexandria*;
362. and many, that had apoſtatized, retracted their Error, ſubſcribed the *Nicene* Confeſſion, and were received into their reſpective Stations in the Church.

BUT this Lenity of *Julian* did not laſt long: He ſoon began a *Perſecution* againſt Chriſtians of all Characters; harraſſing the People with Bonds and Impriſonments, and Deaths of all Kinds; baniſhing the Biſhops, and driving away the Clergy from their Churches, that the Knowledge of Religion might by Degrees be loſt and extirpated. In which ſad Period of Time, it cannot but be ſuppoſed, that the Heat of religious Controverſies was allayed, when all Parties equally ſuffered, and made it Matter of their Prayer to be reſcued from the common Oppreſſion.

363. *JOVIAN*, his Succeſſor, reigned ſo ſhort a while, that, though he favoured, he could do no great Service to the *Catholick* Cauſe; only, in his Time, two Councils were held, one by *Athanaſius* at *Alexandria*, and the other by *Meleſius* at *Antioch*, wherein the Article of *Conſubſtantiality*, and other Points, contained in the
364. *Nicene* Creed, were openly profeſſed. His Succeſſor, *Valentinian*, contented himſelf with the *Weſtern* Empire, and committed to his Brother *Valens* the Government of the *Eaſt*; who, by the Perſuaſion of his Empreſs being prepoſſeſſed in Favour of the *Arians*, put the *Macedonians*, in common with the *Catholicks*, under Perſecution; whereupon they ſent *Deputies* to the *Weſtern* Biſhops, teſtifying their Readineſs to ſubſcribe to the Confeſſion of *Nice*, which the Biſhops accepted, and thereupon admitted them to Communion. But, upon the Return of the *Deputies*, there happened a Diviſion among the Party, ſome diſliking, and others approving the Accommodation; ſome denying the proper *Divinity* of both *ſecond and third Perſons*; while others embraced all the Articles of the *Nicene* Faith, only with ſome Difference in their Explication of what related to the Holy Ghoſt; which laſt were properly called *Semi-Arians*. The *Weſtern* Churches in the mean Time enjoyed great Peace and Tranquillity in the Profeſſion of the *Catholick* Doctrine, under the
375. Government of *Valentinian*, until the Death of that Prince left his Brother *Valens* at Liberty to continue his *Barbarities*.

The Apollinarian *Hereſy.*

APOLLINARIS, Biſhop of *Laodicea*, was a Perſon of great Parts and Learning, but delighting to argue from human Reaſon, more than the Authority of the Scripture, he fell into ſome ſtrange Notions about the *Incarnation*. He aſſerted, that there was but *one* Nature in Chriſt; that the *Deity* was inſtead of a *rational* Soul; and though he ſometimes allowed him to have an *animal* Soul, yet all his *intellectual* Faculties he ſaid were ſupplied by *the Fulneſs of the Godhead*, that dwelt in him. Nay, according to ſome, he proceeded ſo far as to teach, that the very *Fleſh* of Chriſt was not taken from the bleſſed *Virgin*, but brought from Heaven with him, being either a Portion of the Divine *Word*, converted into that Form, or ſo *mixt* with the Godhead itſelf, as to have its Subſtance altered, and become Divine.

THE Author of theſe groſs Opinions (though anſwered by ſeveral Hands) was for ſome Time concealed; but when he began to declare himſelf, and to ordain Biſhops of his own Party, they were condemned by *three Councils* ſucceſſively, and at laſt himſelf was cenſured for them by that general One of *Conſtantinople*: But the Seeds of many fatal *Diviſions*, that he left behind him, were of a much longer Continuance.

378. UPON the Death of *Valens*, *Gratian* and *Valentinian* the Younger, who ſucceeded their Father in the *Weſt*, were now left in full Poſſeſſion of the whole Empire: But *Valentinian* being too young for Action, *Gratian* committed the Government

vernment of the *Eaſt* to *Theodoſius*, and contented himſelf (as his Father had done before him) with the *Weſt*. They both, in their ſeveral Dominions, gave great Encouragement to the *Catholicks*, recalling the *Exiles*, and reſtraining the *Hereticks*, and prohibiting them to hold Congregations in Towns and Cities. And becauſe the Confuſions of the *Eaſt* had been of ſo long Continuance, it was thought expedient, for the Reſtoration of Peace and Order, to convene a free and *general* Council; which accordingly met at *Conſtantinople*, to the Number of an hundred and fifty Biſhops, to re-eſtabliſh and explain the antient and *Catholick* Doctrine of the Church, and to find out *Remedies* againſt the growing Errors. For this Reaſon, becauſe the *Apollinarian* Hereſy denied the *Reality* of Chriſt's human Soul and Body, it was thought proper to have ſome expreſs Declaration againſt it; and therefore the *Nicene* Article, which only ſaid conciſely, that *he came down, and was incarnate, and was made Man*, they enlarg'd with this Clauſe, taken from a ſhort Creed of *Epiphanius*, *that he came down from Heaven, and was incarnate, by the Holy Ghoſt, of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man:* And becauſe the *Pneumatomachi*, or *Macedonian* Hereticks, denied the Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt; inſtead of the Name *Paraclete*, *which ſpake by the Prophets*, (as the *Nicene* Creed expreſſes it) they inſerted (again from *Epiphanius*) theſe more auguſt Characters, *the Lord, and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father, and the Son, and who, with the Father and the Son, together is worſhipped and glorified*; whereby they aſſerted the full Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt, and an *Equality* of Honour, and Worſhip, which theſe *Heretitks* denied, when they excluded him from their *Doxologies*. Thus the Council of *Conſtantinople* determin'd the antient Doctrines of the Church, which the Emperor added the Sanction of *penal* Laws to enforce; and 'tis from this happy Union and Concurrence that we may date the Downfal of *Arianiſm* in the *Eaſt*, after it had ſtood about fifty Years; and the great Peace and Proſperity in the Church, for ſo many Years after.

The ſecond general Council held at Conſtantinople, 381.

IT was in the Reign of the Junior *Theodoſius*, and after *Neſtorius* (a Man of great Parts, but ſtrong Paſſions) was made *Patriarch* of *Conſtantinople*, that *Anaſtaſius*, a *Preſbyter* of that Church, in a publick Sermon, caution'd his Hearers againſt calling the Virgin *Mary* Θεοτόκον, or *the Mother of God*; it being impoſſible, as he ſaid, for God to be born of one, that was only poſſeſs'd of human Nature: And when many of the Clergy and People were not a little ſurpriz'd at his Doctrine, *Neſtorius*, was ſo far from cenſuring the Preacher for it, that he himſelf avow'd and maintain'd the ſame. He acknowledg'd indeed the *Divinity* of the *Word*, but made it intirely *ſeparate* from Chriſt, in whom it dwelt only as an *Inmate*, as the Holy Ghoſt did in the antient Prophets; and therefore he affirm'd, that the bleſſed Virgin could no mre be deem'd *the Mother of the Word*, than her Couſin *Elizabeth* could be called the Mother of the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe her Son, the *Baptiſt*, is ſaid to have *been filled with it from his Mother's Womb*. St *Cyril*, Patriarch of *Alexandria*, was the moſt zealous of his Oppoſers, *impugning* his Principles, and *anathematizing* thoſe that were his Abettors; which the other returned in much the ſame Language: So that the Quarrel went ſo high between them, and their Adherents, that a *general Council* was thought expedient to allay the Diſturbance; which accordingly was appointed to meet at *Epheſus*; where *Neſtorius*, refuſing to appear himſelf, was *depos'd*, his Doctrine cenſured, and that of his Adverſaries confirmed to be true and *Catholick*.

The Neſtorian *Hereſy.*

430.

The third general Council held at Epheſus.

IN the Heat of this Controverſy, *Eutyches*, an Abbot of *Conſtantinople*, and a ſtrenuous Aſſertor of the Doctrine of the Church againſt *Neſtorius*, had run into the contrary Extream; affirming, that the Godhead did not only inhabit, but was actually converted into the Manhood, or, (as he ſeemed rather to maintain) that the Fleſh itſelf was *Deified*, and made, not by Way of *Appropriation*, but ſubſtantially, *divine*. This was a *Scheme* of ſuch dangerous Conſequences, that *Flavian*, who was then Patriarch of *Conſtantinople*, thought it a Matter deſerving the Animadverſion of a *Synod*; where though it was twice condemned, and the Author of it *anathematiz'd*, yet ſuch was his Intereſt at Court, that the Emperor granted him a Re-hearing in another *Council* called at *Epheſus*; where he was abſolved, and *Flavian*, for his ſuppoſed Inveteracy againſt him, depoſed from his *Patriarchal* See. Under this hard Uſage he appealed to a general *Synod*, but it was not till after the Death of *Theodoſius*, that *Valentinian*, the ſurviving Emperor of the *Weſt*, and *Marcian*, who ſucceeded in the *Eaſt*, agreed to appoint ſuch a *Council:* Which accordingly aſſembling at *Chalcedon*, confirm'd the *Depoſition* of *Eutyches* and his Adherents; *anathematiz'd* the *Hereſies*, which the three former general Councils had condemn'd; ratified the ſame Doctrines, that they had approved; and what *Neſtorius* and *Eutyches* had lately advanced

The Eutychian *Hereſy.*

449.

The fourth general Council held at Chalcedon.

vanced concerning the *Incarnation*, utterly rejected and declar'd againſt. But this *Deciſion* of the Council had but ſmall Influence upon others: The Catholicks indeed held themſelves determined by it, but the *Neſtorians* and *Eutycheans* (who were now become the only conſiderable Sects in the *Eaſt*) purſued the *Schemes* they had eſpouſed, and, as the *latter* increaſed under the Countenance of ſome ſucceeding Emperor, they came in Time to fall into very various and inconſiſtent Notions. From their great Doctrine *of the Unity of Nature*, they were induced to aſſert ſometimes, that the Deity itſelf is *paſſible*, becauſe Chriſt ſuffered on the Croſs; ſometimes, that the *Divine Word*, by reaſon of that Mixture, which they ſuppos'd, loſt its *Omniſcience*; and at other Times that the Humanity of Chriſt, by reaſon of the ſame Change, was not ſubject to Pain, or any other Infirmities; while others among them maintain'd, that the three Divine Perſons were three diſtinct Natures or Subſtances, from whence they had the Name of *Tritheiſts*. To ſuch wild Extravagancies did their wanton Fancies run, until God thought fit, for the Puniſhment of their *Blaſphemies*, to let looſe the Succeſſors of *Mahomet* upon the *Eaſtern* Empire, and ſo *remove the Candleſtick out of its Place*.

The ſucceeding Hiſtory of the Church.

IN the *Weſt*, the *Goths* and *Vandals*, which were now making large *Inroads* into ſeveral Countries, brought in *Arianiſm* along with them; and, as they eſtabliſhed their Conqueſt, ſettled their Religion by the Strength of their Sword. In *Spain* and *Italy*, and eſpecially in *Africa*, ſeveral Perſecutions were carried on againſt the *Catholicks* for a whole Century: And even in Places, where they were beſt uſed, no more than a bare *Toleration* was granted them, while the *Arians* had Poſſeſſion of the Churches, and the conſtant Countenance of the civil Government; until the Em-

553. 496. peror *Juſtinian* compleated, in *Africa* and *Italy*, what *Clovis*, King of the *Franks*, after his Converſion from *Paganiſm* to the Chriſtian Faith, had begun in *Gaul*, half a Century before the Expulſion of the *Goths* and *Vandals*, and the Reſtoration of the

586. Catholicks to the Protection of the *Civil* Powers. In the mean Time, in *Spain* and *Languedoc*, (by the prudent Management of King *Recarede*, who declared himſelf a *Catholick*) a Reformation of Religion was carried on gradually, and without any

589. great Diſturbance, and was afterwards confirmed by a Council aſſembled at *Toledo*.

WHILE *France* and *Spain* were thus happily reformed, it pleaſed God to ſuffer *Italy* once more to fall a Prey to *Arian* Conquerors, which happened upon this Occaſion. The *Imperial* General, who had expelled the *Goths*, was made Governor of *Italy*, and had enjoy'd that Station almoſt fifteen Years, when, upon ſome Account or other, he was removed from that Dignity, and another appointed. This pro-

568. voked the General to that Degree, that he invited the *Lombards*, a *Northern* warlike People, and moſt of them *Arians*, to penetrate *Italy*, which they readily did, and, in the Space of three Years, making an entire Conqueſt, eſtabliſhed their own Religion; and, for above an hundred Years, treated thoſe that differed from it very

73. roughly; until their King *Bertaride*, who was a zealous Convert to the *Catholick* Cauſe, took ſuch prudent Meaſures for the Converſion of his People, that the *Arian* Hereſy was by Degrees utterly extinguiſhed among the *Lombards*, and the Catholick Religion profeſs'd, without Interruption, for about an hundred Years more: When, by the Victories of *Pipin*, King of *France*, and his Son *Charles* the *Great*, the whole Nation of the *Lombards* was extinguiſhed, and *Italy*, except what was granted to the Pope, was annexed to the Dominions of *France*, together with the Title of

800. *Roman* Empire.

The Inſtitution of School Divinity.

AFTER the Extirpation of the *Arian* Hereſy, Learning began to decline apace, and the Diſputes in the *Trinitarian* Argument, for above three hundred Years, were very few, and moſt of them about *Words*, more than any real Difference of *Sentiment*; until, about the Beginning of the *twelfth Century*, *Petrus Abelardus*, a Man of great Learning for his Age, and much addicted to a *metaphyſical* Way of Writing, was

1120. by St *Bernard*, his Contemporary, as likewiſe by two *Gallican* Councils, accuſed of ſeveral *Hereſies*, as favouring of *Arianiſm*, when he treated of the *Trinity*; of *Pelagianiſm*, when he treated of *Grace*; and of *Neſtorianiſm*, when he treated of the Perſon of *Chriſt*: But, in his Conference, he acquitted himſelf ſo well, that he was both reconciled to St *Bernard*, and abſolved by the *Pope*.

1150. IN Imitation of him, *Peter Lombard*, the fam'd Maſter of the *Sentences*, who was firſt *Profeſſor* of Divinity, and afterwards *Biſhop* of *Paris*, improved the Method of *metaphyſical Divinity*, which, for ſome following *Centuries*, much perplexed the Doctrines of the *Trinity* and *Incarnation*, as well as other Articles of Religion; but nevertheleſs was held in great Eſteem and Reputation, until the Corruptions of the Church of *Rome* put ſome upon looking back into Scripture and Antiquity, as a

ſurer *Guide*, than what had, for ſome Time, been followed, and this occaſioned a *Revival* of the *Trinitarian* Controverſy.

IN the Beginning of the *Reformation*, one *Michael Servetus*, a *Spaniard* by Birth, and who had applied himſelf to the Study firſt of the *Civil Law*, and afterwards of *Phyſick*, began to enquire into the Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, and, among other Subjects, pitched upon this Article of the *ever-bleſſed Trinity*. In the Proceſs of his Enquiry, he fell into Notions that were ſomewhat ſingular and unintelligible: He acknowledged, indeed, a Trinity of Perſons, but 'twas in the Senſe of a *theatrical* Character, and Manifeſtation only; the *Divine Word* he held to be a certain *Emanation* from God, but ſuch as had no real *Exiſtence* before the Beginning of the World; and that, at his *Incarnation*, his Fleſh itſelf was not like ours, but taken from the Subſtance of God, upon which Account he might, as he ſaid, with the greateſt Propriety, be ſtiled the *Son of God*. The great Zeal he employ'd in the Propagation of his impious Opinions, occaſioned many bold *Speculations* in Matters of Religion, and might poſſibly give Encouragement to a *Club* of above forty Perſons of Learning and Diſtinction, among whom *Lælius Socius* was one, which uſed to hold Aſſemblies in the Country of *Venice*, debating about Points of *Faith*, and more eſpecially what related to the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, and the *Satisfaction* of Chriſt. They were not, however, long indulged in theſe *licentious* Meetings: Two of them were apprehended, and put to Death: Some of them fled to *Geneva*, (where *Servetus* had been but lately burnt for *Hereſy*) and there, meeting with the Severity of the Law, were forced to *recant* their Opinions; while others betook themſelves into *Poland*, where one *Spiritus*, a *Dutchman*, had, ſeveral Years before, ſtarted ſome Difficulties about the Subject of the Trinity, which made ſo great an Impreſſion upon the Mind of *Modrevius*, a *Poliſh* Knight, that, by his Example, many Perſons of Diſtinction had eſpouſed the ſame *Principles*, and obtained a general Connivance, which was afterwards improved into a publick Toleration of them. So that the *Italian* Refugees, meeting here with Encouragement, ſoon augmented their Numbers, and grew conſiderable enough to be diſtinguiſhed by a Name: Accordingly they were called either *Pinczovians* or *Racovians*, from the *Poliſh* Cities they chiefly inhabited; or *Arians* and *Photinians*, from their Reſemblance to thoſe antient *Hereticks*, in Point of their Opinions; and ſometimes *Anabaptiſts*, from their diſallowing the Form of *Baptiſm* publickly eſtabliſhed.

Servetus's *Hereſy*, 1528.

1546.

1553.

1546.

1562.

FROM *Poland*, the *Hereſy* travelled into *Tranſilvania*: For *Blandrata*, one of their Party, being choſen chief Phyſician to *John Sigiſmond*, Prince of that Country, made uſe of this Opportunity to poiſon the Minds of the People, while he preſcribed Remedies for their bodily Diſeaſes; and, in a ſhort While, prevailed ſo far, as to obtain the Countenance of the Government in Favour of his Sentiments. It was not long, however, before a warm *Diſſenſion* happened among his Followers: Some of whom, from the Doctrine that was advanced of *Chriſt's being no more than Man*, were ready to infer, that he could not then be the Object of religious Worſhip, and conſequently, that all *Prayers* and *Invocations* to him were as unwarrantable, as thoſe offered up to *Saints* and *Angels*. This Concluſion *Blandrata* laboured to oppoſe, and called in *Fauſtus Socinus*, and his Nephew *Lælius*, already mentioned, to aſſiſt him in it: But the *Inference* was too juſt and well founded, not to find Countenance and Abettors, both in *Poland*, where *Budnæus*, and in *Tranſilvania*, where *Franciſcus Davidis* were warm Aſſertors of it. *Socinus*, however, was a Man of that Art and Addreſs, had ſuch a Command of his Temper, ſuch an Appearance of Modeſty, and withal, ſuch a ſtudious Application, both to refine his own Scheme, and oppoſe all thoſe that appear'd againſt it, that, in the End, the various Sects of *Anti-Trinitarians* were combined in One, and fell under the general Determination of *Socinians*, though their own Writers affected rather to be called *Unitarians*. They *methodized* and digeſted their Doctrines by Degrees into a regular *Syſtem*, though intirely repugnant to the whole Tenour of the Goſpel; maintaining, "That the Su-
"preme Deity is *perſonally* but *One*; that our bleſſed Saviour is not God *over all*;
"that he had no *Exiſtence* before his Birth of the Virgin *Mary*; that whatever is
"ſaid of his Merit and Satisfaction, his Sacrifice for Sin, and Redemption of Sin-
"ners, *&c.* is certainly to be underſtood in a *metaphorical* Senſe; and that the Holy
"Ghoſt is no more than a Divine *Influence*, without any *perſonal* Subſiſtence at all:
"Together with many more Errors, about the Conſtitution of the *Chriſtian Church*,
"the Appointment of its *Miniſters*, the Efficacy of its *Sacraments*, about the *Inter-*

1563.

The Socinian *Hereſy*.

" *pretation* of Scripture, the *State* of ſeparate Souls, the *Reſurrection* of the Body, " and the *Nature* of a future Judgment, too tedious here to be related."

BUT how well ſoever they had dreſs'd up their *Scheme*, upon the Death of *Sigiſmond* the Third, the Countenance of the Government was withdrawn from them,
1633. and *Uladiſlaus*, who ſucceeded to the Crown of *Poland*, upon ſome Offence or other, denied them the Liberty of the Preſs, the Uſe of their Church, and the Govern-
1638. ment of their Univerſity at *Racovia*. In the ſucceeding Reign of *Caſimir*, when the King of *Sweden*, taking the Advantage of the *Diſtraction* of the Country, invaded
1655. *Poland* with an Army like a Torrent, the *Unitarians* too readily ſubmitting to the Conqueror's Protection, and expreſſing ſome indecent Zeal upon that Occaſion, (when *Caſimir* recover'd his Loſſes) were, by a *Royal Edict* confirm'd by the Diet of *War-*
1658. *ſaw*, baniſh'd the Kingdom upon Pain of Death; whereupon ſome renounced their former Errors for Fear of Baniſhment, and others were diſpers'd through *Hungary*, *Holland*, and any other Places, where they could find a favourable Reception.

1609. IN *Holland*, the Notions of the *Calviniſts*, about the Doctrines of *Grace*, and the *Decrees* of Almighty God, had given ſuch Diſguſt to *ſome* of a contrary Perſuaſion, that they preſented to the States the Reaſons of their Diſlike of them, (for which they were called *Remonſtrants)* and, in the Heat of the Diſpute, fell a little too unwarily into the Reaſonings of *Socinus*; which, when the *Synod* of *Dort* cenſured with great Rigour and Severity, they were provoked to ſuch a Degree, that
1618. they rejected the *Synod*'s Authority; and, though of different Perſuaſion in Point of
1656. the *Trinity*, entered into *Communion* with the *Socinians*. In *England*, the Doctrine
1547. of the *Trinity* was, at the Beginning of the Reformation, as much enquired into, as in other Nations; but the Number of the *Arians* was but few, and their *Principles* ſo generally deteſted, that (though the Diſcipline of thoſe Times was certainly very rigorous) we meet but with two Perſons, that were executed for *Hereſy*; one for denying the *Divinity* of Chriſt, and the other for aſſerting, that his Fleſh was not of the *Subſtance* of the bleſſed Virgin. What the ſubſequent Sentiments of the Nation were, the Church's Liturgy, ſo often reviſ'd and examin'd, and ſtill retaining its *Collects* and *Doxologies* entirely repugnant to the *Arian* Hypotheſis, as well as the *Articles* of Religion, drawn up by the *Biſhops*, ratified by *Parliament*, and required to be *ſubſcribed* by the *inferior Clergy*, are a certain and ſtanding Monument. And though there was, no doubt, a great Mixture of *Arianiſm* among the Tenets of the *Anabaptiſts* and *Browniſts*, and other wild *Sectaries*; yet it never much appear'd, till within or near the Time of *Cromwell*'s Uſurpation.

1644. IT was much about this Time, that *John Biddle*, a School-Maſter in *Glouceſter*, began to make an open Profeſſion of his *Hereſy*; which, in a great Meaſure, agreed with the *Socinian* Scheme, except that, with the *Pneumatomachi* of Old, he denied the Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt, aſſerting, that he was no more than *Chief* among the Angels: But the Impiety of his Opinions was, even by thoſe Times, accounted ſuch, that he was twice committed to Priſon for them; and when, upon his ſeveral Releaſements, he ſtill continued to propagate his *Hereſy*, he was, after the *Reſtoration*, once more committed for them, and died under his Impriſonment, leaving behind him a *Sect*, who took, from him, the Name of *Biddellians*, though that was ſoon loſt in the more common Appellation of *Socinians*, or, what they rather chuſe to be called, *Unitarians*.

1669. IT was not long after this, that *Sandius* publiſhed his *Eccleſiaſtical* Hiſtory, manifeſtly calculated for the Service of the *Arian* Cauſe, and to perſuade his Readers, that, till the Time of the *Nicene* Council, the *Catholicks* were of the ſame Sentiments with *Arius* and his Followers, and ſuch as differed from them were account-
1685. ed *Hereticks*; which gave Occaſion to an excellent *Defence of the* Nicene *Faith*, drawn up by the learned Biſhop *Bull*, and was followed by his other Treatiſe *of the Judgment of the Catholick Church, concerning the Neceſſity of believing Chriſt's Divinity*, in Oppoſition to *Epiſcopius*, and his *Remonſtrant* Brethren.

1690. THE Boldneſs and Increaſe of Hereſy, ſoon after the Revolution, gave Occaſion to [k] a *great Divine* to write his *Vindication of the Doctrine of the holy and ever-bleſſed Trinity*; but, by uſing ſome *novel* Terms in Explication of this great Myſtery, he was, in the Judgment of ſome, chargeable with *Tritheiſm*; nor did [l] the other *eminent Divine*, that animadverted upon him a little too *ſeverely*, eſcape, in the Opinion of others, (though he certainly made uſe of *Catholick* Expreſſions) the Imputation of *Sabellianiſm*. However this be, 'tis certain that the *Socinians* made great Advantage of

[k] Dr. *Sherlock*. [l] *South*'s Sermons.

of this Contention, boaſting that the Church was divided between *real* and *nominal Trinitarians*; the latter of which agreed ſo well with their Sentiments, that they offered themſelves ready to ſubſcribe to Doctrines thus expounded. And in this Situation continued the Controverſy, until the *Arian* Scheme, a very few Years ago, was *revived* again with great Freedom and Aſſurance: But what Topicks have been uſed to recommend and enforce it, as well among the Members of the eſtabliſhed Church, as thoſe that diſſent from it; and what Arguments have been employ'd to beat it down and deſtroy it, ſo that it ſeems now to lie as it were expiring; theſe are Matters of Fact too freſh in every one's Memory to need a particular Recital. 1708.

THUS we have brought down the *Trinitarian* Controverſy to our own Times: And from the whole Account may obſerve, that the Church has all along aſſerted the *real* and *diſtinct* Subſiſtence of *three Perſons* in the Godhead; that each of theſe, by himſelf, has been always acknowledged to be *truly Divine*, and poſſeſſed of Perfections, that are inſeparable from the Nature of God; that notwithſtanding this, the *Unity* of the Godhead has been conſtantly maintained, and therefore accounted for in this wiſe, *viz.* by referring the ſecond and third Perſons to the firſt, as their *Head* and *Origin*, from whom they are eternally derived, and with whom they are *eſſentially* and *indiviſibly* united. This is the *Catholick Faith:* And though in ſeveral Ages of the Church, it has met with ſtrong Oppoſition, yet ſuch has been the Force of Truth, and the clear Evidence of Scripture on its Side, that it has every where prevail'd and prov'd victorious: And 'tis no ſmall Argument of its being a Doctrine *ſent from God*, and bleſſed by his Protection, that it has all along maintained its Ground, though it has had the Wit and Malice of Men combined againſt it. It is a Matter therefore deſerving our higheſt Gratitude, that this Knowledge of the Divine Nature has deſcended to us pure and uncorrupted, and what ought to be our utmoſt Care and Concern, [m] *to preſerve this moſt valuable Depoſitum, which has been delivered to us, through the Ages that are paſt, worſhipping the Unity in Trinity, and collecting the Trinity into the Unity; all royal, all adorable, poſſeſs'd of the ſame Throne and Glory, above all Worlds, and before all Times, uncreated, inviſible, inacceſſible, incomprehenſible, which alone can underſtand its own Nature and* OEconomy, *but is equally by us, and without any Difference, to be worſhipped and adored.*

[m] Greg. Naz. Orat. 12.

A COM-

A

COMPLEAT BODY

OF

Speculative and *Practical* DIVINITY.

PART II.

Of the Decrees of GOD, and the Works of Creation and Providence.

CHAP. I.

Of the DECREES *of GOD.*

WE have hitherto conſidered the *Exiſtence* of God, his *Nature*, and *Attributes*, and the Manner of his *ſubſiſting* in a *Trinity of Perſons*; and come now to contemplate him in his *Works*, his *viſible* Works of *Creation* and *Providence*, which comprehend all the reſt. But becauſe it is reaſonable to believe, that God does nothing, without previouſly *deliberating* and thence *reſolving* upon what his infinite Wiſdom perceives to be beſt; which Reſolves have obtained among *Divines* the Name of *Decrees*; it may not be amiſs (before we proceed to the Conſideration of his *outward* Actions) to premiſe ſomething concerning theſe *Decrees*, which are accounted the *inward* Operations of the Divine Mind. I ſay, *premiſe ſomething*, [a] for I take it to be great Folly to pry too buſily into the *Counſels* of God, which we call *hidden*, and yet ridiculouſly confute that *Epithet*, by pretending to know them.

The Decrees of God, what.

THE *Decrees* of God [b] then (according to the Definition of ſome, that have treated on the Subject) are the *Acts* of his Free-Will, or the wiſe and immutable *Purpoſes* of his Mind, concerning ſuch *future* Things, as are Subject to his *Power*, and may either be done, or left undone, accordingly as he thinks fit. For this Reaſon, they are called [c] ſometimes the *Will*, and ſometimes the [d] *Counſel* of God, a Term, that is never applied to *natural* and *neceſſary* Things, but ſuch only as proceed from the Efficacy of *free* Agents: And they are ſo called, with *Analogy* to the Counſels and Determinations of Men, only with this Difference; [e] that whereas the

[a] Cauſes of Decay of Chriſtian Piety, by the Author of the *Whole Duty of Man*. [b] *Vid.* Curcell. Limborch, &c.
[c] Acts xxi. 14. Eph. i. 5, &c. [d] Luke vii. 30. Eph. i. 11, &c. [e] Curcell. Inſtit.

the Reſolves and Counſels of Men, by reaſon of the Blindneſs and Impotence of their Underſtanding, are attended with long and tedious *Diſquiſitions*, before they come to a *final* Concluſion, the Purpoſes of God ſpring from his Mind, in one ſingle Act, and are all conſidered and concluded on in an Inſtant.

THOSE indeed, that would make the Decrees of God (as moſt of the *Schoolmen* do) entirely and *identically One* with his Eſſence, deſtroy his Freedom in ſuch *Decrees*, and make them the Effects, not of *deliberate Choice*, but of the moſt *abſolute Neceſſity*; ſince, if God's Eſſence be neceſſary, (as all, that think worthily of him, muſt allow it is) and his Decrees be the *ſame* with it, then muſt they both have abſolutely one and the ſame *neceſſary* Foundation. 'Tis no hard Matter, however, to diſtinguiſh between the Decrees and the Eſſence of God, ſince *theſe* are the *free* Effects of the Divine Will, various, and different from one another, and when once executed, *ceaſe to be*; whereas the Divine Nature is not only *One*, in the moſt ſimple Manner, but eternally *the ſame*, without the leaſt Change or Contrariety. *That they are not the Eſſence of God.*

FOR the ſame Reaſon ſome have imagined that the Decrees of God are not *eternal*, in the ſame Senſe that his Eſſence is; becauſe they are the Effects of the Divine Will, and, conſequently, muſt be *poſterior* to their Cauſe. Though therefore they allow, that God, before the Foundation of the World, did determine to create, conſerve, and govern it, in the Manner we now perceive he does; that he did determine, from all Eternity, to ſend Chriſt upon Earth, to be a *Propitiation* for the Sins of Mankind; to preſcribe them *Laws* for the Government of their Lives, and to eſtabliſh theſe Laws upon the Sanction of Rewards and Puniſhments, which they call *general* Decrees; yet they cannot but believe, that God, as a wiſe Governor, reſerved to himſelf a Liberty of determining ſome Things *ſpecially*, as Occaſions preſented themſelves: And therefore they ſay, that, ever ſince the Foundation of the World, he has been making *freſh* Decrees, as he ſees Mankind *behave*; or (what is the ſame Thing) applying his *general* Decrees to *particular* Purpoſes; for if every Thing were *eternally* determined, without any Poſſibility of Variation, *what Profit have we if we pray unto him*, ſay they, upon any Occaſion; ſince he himſelf, like the *Jupiter* of the *Poets*, is unhappily bound up by an inſuperable Neceſſity? *Whether they are eternal.*

WHETHER the *Decrees* of God are all *abſolute*, or whether ſuch, as relate to his Dealings with Mankind, have a *Condition* annexed, on the doing or neglecting of which their Execution is ſuſpended, has been a Matter of great Debate among *Divines*. The *Lutherans*, and others, who plead for *conditionate* Decrees, tell us, that the Scriptures abound with Examples in Favour of their Opinion; that God's Words to *Cain*, [f] *If thou doeſt well, ſhalt thou not be accepted? But if thou doeſt not well, Sin lieth at thy Door*; that his Words to the People of *Iſrael*, [g] *If ye will obey my Voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then ſhall ye be a peculiar Treaſure unto me above all People*; and thoſe, by the Mouth of his Prophet, [h] *If ye be willing and obedient, ye ſhall eat the Good of the Land; but if ye refuſe and rebel, ye ſhall be devoured by the Sword*, imply, at leaſt, thus much, that God's Intentions of Love or Hatred to Mankind, depend upon their good or ill Behaviour. In the Caſe of *Eli*'s ſinfully indulging his Sons, [i] *I ſaid, indeed, that thy Houſe, and the Houſe of thy Father, ſhould walk before me for ever; but now the Lord ſaith, be it far from me; for them that honour me, I will honour, and they that deſpiſe me ſhall be lightly eſteemed*; In this Caſe, *Saul*'s ſacrificing contrary to God's Command, [k] *Thou haſt done fooliſhly*, ſays *Samuel* to him; *for the Lord would have eſtabliſhed thy Kingdom upon Iſrael for ever, i. e.* by a former Decree, *but now thy Kingdom ſhall not continue:* In both Caſes, *ſay they*, 'tis apparent that the Decree was conditional, and that God reverſed it upon their Diſobedience and Miſbehaviour: [l] *If the Wicked will turn from all the Sins that he hath committed, all his Tranſgreſſions ſhall not be mentioned unto him; in his Righteouſneſs, that he hath done, ſhall he live*; and, on the other Hand, *if the righteous Man turn from his Righteouſneſs, all his Righteouſneſs ſhall not be mentioned unto him; in his Sin, that he hath ſinned, ſhall he die.* This is the ſtanding Condition, *ſay they*, of Man's Predeſtination in the Old Teſtament, and in the New: [m] *If ye live after the Fleſh, ye ſhall die, but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye ſhall live*; [n] *if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy Mouth the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and believe with thine Heart, that God hath raiſed him from the Dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved*; [o] *if we be dead with Chriſt, we ſhall alſo live with him; if we ſuffer, we* *Whether abſolute or conditional.*

[f] Gen. iv. 7. [g] Exod. xix. 5. [h] Iſa. i. 19, 20. [i] 1 Sam. ii. 30. [k] Ibid. xiii. 13, 14. [l] Ezek. xviii. 21, &c. [m] Rom. viii. 13. [n] Ibid. x. 9. [o] 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

ſhall alſo reign with him; if we deny him, he alſo will deny us; the Conditions are much the ſame. So that the Decrees of God, relating to Man, depend always upon a certain *Condition*, and the Performance of it is the Cauſe of their *Execution*.

THE *Calviniſts*, who, on the contrary, are great Advocates for the *Abſoluteneſs* of God's *Decrees*, tell us, in Anſwer to this, [p] that theſe Paſſages in Scripture, which, they acknowledge, imply a *Condition*, do not relate to the *Decrees*, but only to the *Threats* and *Promiſes* of God, which are quite different Things; and thence they proceed to blame the contrary Opinion, as reflecting Diſhonour upon the Divine Attributes, by leaving God in *Suſpence*, as it were, and waiting to ſee what the Man will do, before he paſſes a firm and *irrevocable* Decree; which, according to them, implies a Want of *Power* and *Preſcience* in God, and bears very hard upon ſome other Divine Perfections.

TO this the Maintainers of the former Opinion reply, that [q] it makes no great Difference, whether the foregoing Teſtimonies of Scripture relate to the *Decrees*, or only to the *Threats* and *Promiſes* of God. The Difference between God's Threats and Promiſes, *ſay they*, and what we call his Decrees, is chiefly this,——That the *latter*, for the moſt part, are *ſecret* and *unknown*, whereas the *former* are *open* and *revealed* to all, that are acquainted with the Word of God. A Promiſe, *ſay they*, is nothing elſe, but the Declaration of a Man's *Will* to confer ſome Good; and a Threat is likewiſe a Declaration of his Will to inflict ſome Evil upon another Perſon. Now *Will* and *Decree* in God is, in a Manner, one and the ſame Thing; and therefore if his *Threats* and *Promiſes* (by which we come acquainted with his *Will*) do not give us true Intelligence of the Purport of his *Decrees*, we are utterly at a Loſs to come to the Knowledge of them any other Way; for, [r] *who hath known the Mind of the Lord? Or, who hath been his Counſellor?* But now, if his Promiſes and Threats (in Conjunction with his *Precepts*) are the *true* Indications of his *Decrees*, then muſt it follow, that *conditionate* Threats and Promiſes are no ways conſiſtent with an *abſolute* Decree; ſince, upon the Suppoſition that they *are*, God muſt neceſſarily offer Salvation to ſome, under the Condition of *believing*, whom he had *reprobated* by his abſolute Decree; and threaten others with Death and Damnation, upon the Account of *Infidelity*, whom, by the ſame Decree, he had *elected* to Salvation; neither of which can have any favourable *Aſpect* upon the Truth and Sincerity of God, beſides the Inſignificancy which they give to all the *ſolemn Sanctions* of his Will. They own therefore, that, when God preſcribes a Law to Men, under the Sanction of Rewards promiſed, and Puniſhments threatened, he does place himſelf, as it were, in *Suſpence*, expecting whether Man will obey the Law or not, before he decrees to him either Reward or Puniſhment; but then they think, that they have the Countenance of Scripture for this, and even that God intimates as much himſelf, when he tells us, [s] *I looked that it ſhould bring forth Grapes, and it brought forth wild Grapes*; [t] *I ſtand at the Door and knock, if any Man hear my Voice*; and again, [u] *O that there were ſuch an Heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my Commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with all their Children for ever!* For, tho' theſe Places are not to be underſtood of *Expectation* or *Waiting*, properly ſo called, which always implies an *Uncertainty* in the Event; yet thus much they evince, that there is ſomething in God *analogous* to ſuch an Expectation; which could never be, unleſs he could be ſaid to *ſuſpend* his irrevocable Decree concerning a Man, whoſe Obedience he waited for: And this they imagine (beſides its Conſiſtency with the Power, and Preſcience, and Majeſty of God) is ſuch a glorious Manifeſtation of his Goodneſs, and Long-ſuffering, and other endearing Attributes, as deſerves to be admitted into their *Hypotheſis*.

The Order of them.

WHETHER of theſe Opinions come nearer the Truth, we ſhall have Occaſion to determine hereafter: At preſent we have nothing more to remark concerning the Divine *Decrees*, as they relate to *Mankind*, but only the *Order*, into which ſome have thought fit to digeſt them. [x] They ſuppoſe then, that when God was about to create a World, he took into his Conſideration the *Ideas* of all *poſſible* Worlds, and at laſt concluded upon the preſent *Syſtem*, as, taking it all together, the moſt perfect: And, upon this Suppoſition, they proceed and tell us, that the *firſt* Decree concern'd the Creation of the World, and Man more eſpecially, as the *Head* and *Governor* of all other Creatures; the *ſecond*, the *Conſervation* and Government of the World, and particularly of Man, together with the Law proper to be preſcribed, for the Trial of

[p] Vid. Van Maſtricht-Theolog. [q] Vid. Curcell. & Limborch. [r] Rom. xi. 34. [s] Iſa. v. 2.
[t] Rev. iii. 20. [u] Deut. v. 29. [x] Vid. Leibnitz Theodicée & Curcellæi Inſtitut.

of his Obedience; the *third*, the Permiſſion of Man's *Fall*, or God's not preventing it by his Almighty Power; the *fourth*, the Miſſion of *Chriſt* into the World, in Caſe *Adam*, or any of his Poſterity ſhould tranſgreſs the appointed Law; the *fifth*, the various *Diſpenſations* of Divine Grace, from *Adam* to *Moſes*, and from *Moſes* to JESUS CHRIST; the *ſixth*, the *Call* of Mankind by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and other Preachers of the Goſpel, thro' Faith unto *Salvation*, and the Aſſiſtance of *Grace* ſufficient for that End; the *ſeventh*, the *Election*, *Juſtification*, *Adoption*, and (upon their Perſeverance) *Glorification* of the Faithful; and, on the contrary, the *Reprobation* of Unbelievers, their *Dereliction* in Blindneſs and Ignorance, and (upon their final Impenitence) everlaſting *Perdition*. As to the *ſpecial* Decrees, comprehended under this laſt general one, there is no Reaſon (as ſome imagine) to believe, that they were made before the Creation of the World; it being much more equitable to ſuppoſe, that God defers making any *fixt* Decree concerning particular Men, until he ſees the *Thread* of their Lives, either in a Courſe of Obedience or Diſobedience, quite run out.

AFTER all, it is to be obſerv'd, that there is no *firſt* or *laſt* in the Mind of God; and therefore this *ſuppos'd Order* of his Decrees is only accommodated to the Method of our conceiving them: [y] Nor can their Opinion be much amiſs, who ſuppoſe, that God, having view'd and examin'd all poſſible *Syſtems*, came at length to approve of the preſent; and thereupon made one Decree *once for all*, viz. a Decree to create ſuch a World, as he had then in his Thoughts, which equally includes all *particular* Decrees, and puts an End to that *imaginary* Order, which ſome Men ſo zealouſly contend for.

SECT. I.

Of the DOCTRINE *of* PREDESTINATION, *and an Hiſtorical View of the* CONTROVERSY.

"PREDESTINATION, according to the Senſe of the Church of *England*, is "the *everlaſting Purpoſe* of God, whereby (before the Foundations of the "World were laid) he hath conſtantly *decreed*, by his Counſel, *ſecret* to us, to de- "liver from Curſe and Damnation thoſe, whom he hath *choſen* in Chriſt out of "Mankind, and to bring them by Chriſt unto everlaſting Salvation, *as Veſſels made* "*to Honour*." Our Church, out of her great Tenderneſs, makes no mention of the Veſſels *fitted for Diſhonour*; but other Churches have carried the Matter farther, and ſay, that, beſides the *Predeſtination* to *Life*, there is a Predeſtination of a great Part of Mankind to everlaſting *Miſery*, antecedent to their Births, and without any Conſideration of their Actions; tho' others will have both their *Election* and *Reprobation* depend upon God's *Foreſight*, in what Manner each Man would behave in this preſent Life.

THE *Supralapſarians* (ſo called, as I conceive, becauſe they place the Loſs and Condemnation of a great Part of Mankind in the Decree of God, which was antecedent to the Fall of *Adam*) think that God, in every Thing he does, has nothing in Conſideration, but his own *Glory*: [z] That, with this Intent, he made the World, put a Race of Men in it, and conſtituted them under *Adam*, as their Head and Original: That he decreed *Adam*'s Sin, the Lapſe of his Poſterity, and Chriſt's Death; together with the Salvation or Damnation of ſuch Men, as ſhould be moſt for his Glory: That to thoſe, who were to be ſaved, he decreed to give ſuch *efficacious* Aſſiſtance, as ſhould certainly put them in the Way of Salvation; and to thoſe whom he rejected, he decreed to give ſuch Aſſiſtances and Means only, as ſhould render them *inexcuſable*; and that all Men do continue in a State of Grace, or of Sin, and ſhall be ſaved, or damned, according to that firſt *Decree*; without any Conſideration had either to their Obedience or Diſobedience, merely to manifeſt his Grace and Mercy in thoſe that are ſav'd, and, in thoſe that are condemn'd, the Abſoluteneſs of his Power and Juſtice.

THE *Sublapſarians* are of Opinion, that *Adam*, having ſinned of his own free Choice, and his Sin being *imputed* to all his Poſterity, God did conſider Mankind, thus loſt, with an Eye of Pity; and, having determined to reſcue a great Number of

[y] Leibnitz Theodicée. [z] *Burnet*, on the Articles, and *Curcell.* Inſtit. Lib. 6.

of them out of this loſt Condition, decreed to ſend his Son to die for them; to accept of his Death on their Account; and to give them ſuch Aſſiſtances, as ſhould be *effectual* to convert them to him, and to make them perſevere unto the End: But, as for the reſt, whether *Infants* or *Adult*, whether *Heathens* or *Chriſtians*, he fram'd no *poſitive* Act concerning them, only he left them in their laps'd Condition, without intending, either that they ſhould partake of the Benefit of Chriſt's Death, or of *efficacious* and *perſevering* Aſſiſtance.

THE *Arminians* and *Remonſtrants* think, that God intended to create, and to deal with Mankind according to the Uſe, that they ſhould make of their Liberty: That foreſeeing how every one would uſe it, he did therefore decree all Things, that concerned them in this Life, together with their Salvation and Damnation in the next: That Chriſt died for all Men; that ſufficient Aſſiſtance is given to every one; but every one being left to his own Opinion, whether he will make a proper Uſe of it or no, his *Salvation* or *Deſtruction* is only imputable to himſelf.

THE *Socinians* deny the certain *Preſcience* of future *Contingencies*, and therefore think, that the Decrees of God from all Eternity were only *general*; that ſuch as believe, and obey the Goſpel, ſhall be ſaved; but that ſuch, as live and die in Sin, ſhall be damn'd: That there were no *ſpecial* Decrees made at firſt concerning particular Perſons; but are only concluded on, from Time to Time, as Men come into the World, and God obſerves they acted their Part in it: That Man is not by Nature ſo corrupt, as ſome pretended, nor ſtands in ſuch Need of Spiritual Aſſiſtance; but may by his own Strength make himſelf *good*, and, if he be not wanting to himſelf, *to work out his own Salvation*. Theſe are the chief Opinions, that, in every Age of the Church, under one Denomination or other, have been current in the World; and it may not here be an improper Work, to enquire a little into the *Riſe*, and ſeveral *Gradations* of them.

An Account of the Controverſy in the firſt Ages.

IN the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, the *Gnoſticks* fancied, that the Souls of Men were of different *Ranks*, and that they ſprung from different *Principles*, or Gods, that made them: Some were *carnal*, and devoted to Perdition, ſome *ſpiritual*, and certainly to be ſaved, and others *animal*, or of a *middle* Order, either capable of Happineſs or Miſery. In Oppoſition to this, *Origen* aſſerted, that all Souls were by Nature equally capable of being good or bad, and that the Difference among Men aroſe merely from the Freedom of the Will, and the various Uſes they made of it, whereby they became capable of Rewards or Puniſhments from the Hands of God. *Pelagius*, a *Scottiſh* Monk, and in great Repute at *Rome* both for his Learning and Strictneſs of Life, was a Diſciple of *Origen*, and carried theſe Doctrines further than the *Greek* Churches had done; for he aſſerted the entire Liberty of the Will, and withal denied, that we had ſuffered any Harm by the Fall of *Adam*, or that there was any Neceſſity for *inward Grace* and Aſſiſtance. St *Auſtin* had ſaid many Things on the Side of Liberty in his Diſputes with the *Manichees*, but he hated *Pelagius*'s Doctrine, becauſe he thought it aſſerted a *ſacrilegious* Liberty, and therefore ſet himſelf up to decry it, and to vindicate the Neceſſity of *ſupernatural* Aid, with the utmoſt Vehemence. *Caſſian* (a Diſciple of St *Chryſoſtom*, but now remov'd from *Conſtantinople* to *Marſeilles*, about the Time that the Diſpute was hot) in order to *accommodate* the Difference, took a middle Way. He maintained, that all Things were decreed and done, according to the *Preſcience* of God, in which all future *Contingencies* were foreſeen; he aſſerted an inward *Grace*, but ſubject to the *Freedom* of the Will, inſomuch that the firſt Converſion of the Soul was merely the Effect of its own free Choice, ſo that he denied all *preventing* Grace, which afterwards came to be the peculiar Diſtinction of thoſe, that were afterwards called *Semi-Pelagians*. St *Auſtin*, being informed of his Opinion, wrote againſt it. *Fauſtus Vicentius* and others defended *Caſſian*; while *Proſper* and *Fulgentius*, and others vindicated St *Auſtin*: And in this State continued the Controverſy, when the Ruin of the *Roman* Empire, and the Diſorders that the *Weſtern* Provinces fell under by their new and barbarous Maſters, occaſioned a great Decay of Learning in thoſe Ages. After this Time, as there aroſe few Writers of any Note, St *Auſtin*'s great Labour and Piety, and the many vaſt Volumes, he had left behind him, gave him ſo great a *Name*, that none durſt conteſt [a] what had been

[a] The chief Difference between St *Auſtin*'s Doctrine, and that of the *Sublapſarians*, conſiſts in this, — that he, ſuppoſing an *inward Regeneration* to accompany the *Sacrament* of Baptiſm, made a Difference between the *Regenerate* and the *Predeſtinate*, which theſe do not: And he ſuppoſed farther, that Perſons, thus regenerate, might have all

been ſo copiouſly and zealouſly defended by him, though ſuch a clear Thread of good Senſe, and ſuch an high Strain of Piety ran through *Caſſian*'s *Collations*, as made them be admir'd by all that read them.

In the Popiſh *Churches.*

WHEN the State of Learning began to revive, and *School-Divinity* was come into great Credit, *Thomas Aquinas*, who was counted the chief Glory of the *Dominican* Order, aſſerted all St. *Auſtin*'s Doctrine, and added this one Poſition to it,—that, as God's Providence extended itſelf to every Thing, it immediately concurred in the Production of our Thoughts, Motions, and Actions; and, by a *phyſical* Influence pre-determined our Wills to all Things, whether good or bad; but without being the Author of Sin, as he ſhews at large. *Scotus*, who was no leſs the Glory of the *Franciſcan* Order, denied this *Pre-determination*, aſſerting the *Freedom* of the Will; and *Durandus* denied this *immediate Concourſe* of God to all human Actions; but in this he had very few Followers.

WHEN *Luther* began to form his Opinions into a Body, he clearly ſaw, that nothing did ſo plainly deſtroy the Doctrine of *Merits* and *Juſtification* by good Works, as St. *Auſtin*'s Doctrines. He found likewiſe many expreſs Authorities in his Works, againſt moſt of the Corruptions of the *Roman* Church; and being of an Order, that carried his Name, and was much accuſtomed to read and reverence his Works, it is no Wonder that he, without any ſtrict Examination of the Matter, eſpouſed all his Opinions. Moſt of thoſe of the Church of *Rome*, that wrote againſt him, ſeem to be of a contrary Perſuaſion; and though the Doctrines of St. *Auſtin* were at firſt received by the whole Order of the *Jeſuits*, and *Bellarmine* formed himſelf upon them; yet, in a very ſhort Time, they all came over to the other *Hypotheſis*, which differed from the *Semi-Pelagians* only in this, that it allowed of a *preventing* Grace, but ſuch, as was ſubject to the Freedom of Man's Will. Hereupon great Complaints were made of their *Defection* from what had been eſtabliſhed, and many Conferences were held at *Rome*, about what was the *Doctrine* and *Tradition* of the Church in this Regard; but when every one expected a final *Deciſion*, all Sides were commanded to be ſilent, and to quarrel no more upon thoſe Heads.

ABOUT forty Years after this, *Janſenius*, a Doctor of *Louvain*, being a zealous Diſciple of St. *Auſtin*, and ſeeing the Progreſs, that the contrary Opinions were making, publiſhed a voluminous Syſtem of St. *Auſtin*'s Doctrine, in all the ſeveral Branches of the *Controverſy*, and not only ſet forth the *Pelagians* and *Semi-Pelagians*, in very *black* Colours, but compared the Doctrines of ſome *modern* Innovators with theirs. The Book was received by the whole Party with great Applauſe, but, at *Rome*, it was firſt prohibited, only as a Violation of that *Silence* which the *Pope* had enjoined; but afterwards, Articles were picked out of it, upon which it was *condemned*, and all the Clergy of *France* required to ſign its Condemnation. Hereupon enſued a very extraordinary Queſtion concerning the *Pope*'s Infallibility in *Matters of Fact*; one Side affirming, that the *Pope*, having condemned theſe Articles as *Janſenius*'s Opinion, the Belief of his Infallibility obliged them to conclude, that they were in his Book; while the other, with great Truth, maintained, that neither *Popes* nor *Councils* were ever yet eſteemed infallible in Matters of Fact: At laſt a new Ceſſation of Hoſtilities, upon theſe Points, was reſolved on; but the Hatred continues, and the War ſtill goes on, though ſomewhat more *covertly*, than it did before.

And in the Reformed.

IN the Reformed Churches, the like Contentions have all along happened: *Luther*, as was ſaid, ſet out with the Doctrines of St. *Auſtin*, but it was not long before he is reported to have changed his Mind; and, ſince his Time, the *Lutherans* have gone ſo entirely into the *Semi-Pelagian* Opinions, that they will neither tolerate, nor hold Communion with any of another Perſuaſion. *Calvin* not only taught St. *Auſtin*'s Doctrine, but ſeemed to go on to the *Supralapſarian* Scheme, which was more openly eſpouſed by *Beza*, and is generally followed by moſt of the Reformed Churches abroad.

IN *England*, our firſt Reformers were generally for the *Sublapſarian Hypotheſis*; but *Perkins*, and others, aſſerting the *Supralapſarian* Points, *Arminius*, a Profeſſor in *Leyden* (and from whom the Followers of his Sentiments derived their Appellation) wrote againſt him; upon which *Gomarus* and he had many Diſputes, and

all Grace, except that of *Perſeverance*; but being not *predeſtinated*, they were certain finally to fall away, and to forfeit the Grace of *Regeneration*. In other main Points, ſuch as the *Abſoluteneſs* of the Decree, the *Extent* of Chriſt's Death, the *Efficacy* of Grace, and the *Certainty* of Perſeverance, there is no mighty Difference between them.

their Opinions bred great Diſtraction over all the *United Provinces*, till at length a great *Synod* met at *Dort*, (to which Divines were ſent from *England*, as well as other Churches) which condemned the Tenets of *Arminius*, but the Difference between the *Supralapſarians* and the *Sublapſarians* was not meddled with. What contributed to the Condemnation of the *Arminian* Doctrine was a *political* Queſtion, that had ſome time been agitated, and occaſioned a Diviſion of Opinion, *viz. Whether the War ſhould be carried on with* Spain, *or Propoſitions of a Peace entertained.* The Followers of *Arminius* were almoſt all for a Peace, and the others (among whom the Prince of *Orange* was *Chief)* were as generally for a War: Hereupon the *Aminians* were repreſented as Men diſaffected to their Country, and whoſe Opinions inclined them to *Popery*, and therefore it is leſs Wonder to find them condemned in a *Synod*, which was convened in a Country, where ſuch Miſrepreſentations of them had been induſtriouſly ſpread.

WHEN theſe Diſputes croſſed the Sea, and came among us, they were ſoon carried to ſo great an Height, that a *Proclamation* was iſſued out, requiring *Divines* to preach no longer upon theſe Heads: But, as the *Arminian* Tenets were greatly encourag'd by Archbiſhop *Laud*, they very much prevail'd; until, unhappy Diſputes falling in, at that Time, concerning the Extent of the *Royal Prerogative*, and the *Arminians* declaring for it, though they were favoured at *Court*, yet they were cenſured in *Parliament*, which brought their Doctrine under a very hard Character all the Nation over. The Subverſion of the Government, that aftewards followed, gave a fatal Blow to the *Arminian* Doctrines. Moſt of the *Sectaries*, that then prevail'd, embrac'd *Calvin*'s Notions in Point of *Predeſtination*, and held all other Opinions in great Deteſtation: But when the Government came to be re-eſtabliſhed, the *exploded* Doctrines reviv'd, and were the kindlier uſed and cultivated, for having ſuffered ſo hardly before. At preſent they are become the general Profeſſion of almoſt all the *Clergy* of the Church of *England*, as the others are made the favourite and diſtinguiſhing Opinions of moſt *Diſſenters*; and upon what Reaſons they ſeverally found their Sentiments, will be the Subject of our next Enquiry.

SECT. II.

A true STATE *of the* ARGUMENTS *on both* SIDES.

On the Calviniſts *Side, taken from the Nature,*

THE *Calviniſts*, who, as we ſaid, differ little, if at all, from the [b] *Supralapſarians*, lay down this for a Foundation, that God is eſſentially *perfect*, and independent in all his *Acts*, ſo that he can conſider nothing, but himſelf, and his own *Glory*; that himſelf can only be the *End* of all his Counſels, and therefore in every Thing he does, can intend nothing but the Manifeſtation of his own *Attributes* and *Perfections*; that Creatures in his Sight are nothing; by a ſtrong Figure, they are ſaid to be *leſs than nothing*; and, if we in our Deſigns, *ſay they*, make no Account of *Ants* or *Inſects*, of *Straws* or *Grains* of Sand, there is leſs Reaſon to think that God has any Regard to us, in all that he deſigns and does. This is the great Baſis of their Doctrine: And from hence they proceed to argue,——That there can be no

The Preſcience, certain *Preſcience* of future *Contingents*, becauſe Things, that are not certainly *to be*, cannot certainly be *foreſeen*; for if they are certainly foreſeen, they muſt certainly come to paſs. It ſeems therefore to imply a Contradiction to ſay, that a Thing may be, or may not be, and yet be certainly foreſeen by God. God cannot foreſee Things, but as he decrees them, and ſo gives them a *Futurition*; and therefore a Preſcience, antecedent to his Decree, they reject as a Thing impoſſible.

The Decrees, FROM the *Preſcience*, they go to the Decrees of God, and ſay,——that *conditional* Decrees are *imperfect* in their Nature, as ſubjecting the Will and Actions of God to a Creature; that they are Acts in *Suſpence*, whether they ſhall or ſhall not be, and are conſequently inconſiſtent with infinite Perfection; and that a general Deſire in God, that all Men ſhould be ſaved, looks as if he wiſhed for what he could not

[b] The Difference between the *Supralapſarians* and *Sublapſarians*, as I ſaid before, conſiſts in this,—— that the former aſſert God's *Deſtination* of ſome Men to Damnation, the other only his *Preterition* of them. But this is only a Difference in Words, and a ſofter Way of expreſſing the ſame Thing. For in Effect, 'tis all one, whether God *deſtinate* a Man to Damnation, or do a Thing whereby his Damnation will inevitably enſue: For whomſoever God does not elect, whether we call him *reprobated* or *omitted*, 'tis certain that he is excluded from the Grace of God, upon which Excluſion his Damnation neceſſarily follows, becauſe without the Grace of God there is no Salvation. *Fiddes*'s Sermons.

not accompliſh, and that his *Goodneſs* was more extenſive, than his *Power*. Though therefore the Decree of *Reprobation* may ſeem ſomewhat *ſevere*, yet we are not to meaſure the Puniſhment of Sin, *ſay they*, by our Notions of *Juſtice*; for God afflicts many good Men very ſeverely, and for many Years together, in this Life, purely for the Manifeſtation of his Glory, and yet none of us think that he is unjuſt: Now, if God may do that for a little Time, which is inconſiſtent with our Notions, and with our Rules of Juſtice, he may certainly do it for a longer Duration; ſince it is as impoſſible for him to be unjuſt for a Day, as for all Eternity.

The Providence of God.

FROM the Decrees of God, they proceed to his *Providence*, and tell us,——that the World was for many Ages delivered up to Idolatry, and, ſince the Appearance of Chriſtianity, Countries of vaſt Extent are ſtill in the ſame ſad Condition; that the State of *Chriſtendom*, in the *Eaſtern* Parts of it, is under ſo much Ignorance, and a great Part of the *Weſt*, under ſo much Corruption, that it muſt be acknowledged the *major* Part of Mankind has, in all Ages, been left deſtitute of the Means of *Grace*: Now, if God leaves whole Nations in ſuch Darkneſs and Corruption, while he freely chuſes others to communicate the Knowledge of himſelf to, then we need not wonder, that he ſhould hold the ſame Method with *Individuals*, that he does with whole *Bodies*: For the *rejecting* whole Nations by the *Lump*, for ſo many Ages, is much more unaccountable, than the *ſelecting* of a Few, and leaving others in a State of *Ignorance* and *Brutality*. This Argument, taken from common Obſervation, becomes much ſtronger, *ſay they*, when we conſider what the *Apoſtle* aſſerts, particularly in his Epiſtles to the *Romans* and *Epheſians*, even according to the Expoſition of thoſe of the contrary Side. For if God, according to the Purpoſe of his Election, [c] *loved Jacob*, ſo as to chuſe his Poſterity to be his People, and *hated*, or rejected *Eſau* and his Poſterity; and, if by the ſame Purpoſe, the *Gentiles* were to be grafted *upon that Stock*, from which the *Jews* were then *to be cut off*, then is there plainly an Election of *Nations*, previous to all other Conſiderations; and if God, as our Saviour [d] tells us, *hides ſome Things from the Wiſe and Prudent, and reveals them unto Babes*, even for this Reaſon, *becauſe it ſeemeth good in his Sight*, then is the ſame diſtinguiſhing Favour equally applicable to *Particulars*.

Election proved from Scripture.

THEY conclude therefore, that, though Chriſt's Death was offered to all Chriſtians, yet *intentionally* and *actually* he only died for *ſuch*, as the Father had, from all Eternity, *elected*. They cannot think that Chriſt could have *died in vain*, ſince [e] St *Paul* ſpeaks of it as a great Abſurdity; and yet had he died for all, he muſt have *died in vain*, with Relation to the far greater Part of Mankind, that are not to be ſaved by him: And therefore they infer, that he died for none, but ſuch as were *elected*, and that all thoſe, for whom he died, are certainly *ſaved*; which they think is implied in our Saviour's Limitation of his Interceſſion, [f] *I pray not for the World, but for thoſe that thou haſt given me; for they are mine, and all thine are mine, and mine are thine*. Univerſal Words, they own, are uſed concerning the Death of Chriſt; and the Merits of his Blood are ſaid to be a *ſufficient Oblation for the Sins of all Mankind*: But then theſe Expreſſions, they conceive, are to be underſtood in a *qualified* Senſe, *viz.* that no Nation, or Sort of Men are excluded from the Merits of Chriſt's Death, and that ſome of all Kinds ſhall be ſaved by him; but they cannot be extended farther without Imputation upon the Juſtice of God, ſince, if he has received a ſufficient Oblation for the Sins of the whole World, it is not reconcileable to Juſtice, that *all* ſhould not be ſaved by it; at leaſt, that all ſhould not have the *Offer* and *Promulgation* of it, that ſo a *Trial* might be made whether they would accept of it *or not*.

An efficacious Grace.

THE ſame they ſay of the Means of Salvation: That, ſince God (according to the Senſe of their Adverſaries) certainly foreſaw what Aſſiſtance would be ſufficient, and what not; it ſeems inconſiſtent with his *Holineſs* and *Truth*, to afford any Means, that would prove *ineffectual*; becauſe his *Holineſs* muſt needs carry him to do every Thing, in the moſt effectual Way, to make Men good and happy, and his *Truth* (if he ſincerely deſired the Salvation of all without any *latent* Purpoſes) muſt have called in his Almighty Power to have effected it. The Grace therefore, *ſay they*, that we aſcribe to God's *Elect*, is ſet forth in Scripture by ſuch Figures and Expreſſions, as do plainly denote its *Efficacy*, and that it does not depend upon us to uſe it, or not uſe it at Pleaſure; and for this Reaſon it is called a [g] *Creation*, a [h] *Regeneration*, or *new Birth*, [i] a *Quickening* and Reſurrection; God is ſaid, [k] *to work in us both to*

[c] Rom. ix. 13. [d] Matth. xi. 25, 26. [e] Gal. ii. 21. [f] John xvii. 9, 10. [g] Eph. ii. 10.
[h] 2 Cor. v. 17. [i] Pſal. cxix. 50. [k] Phil. ii. 13.

to will and to do; we are ſaid, [l] *to be led by the Spirit*; *to be kept by Grace unto Salvation*, and though therefore we could not ſo well reconcile, *ſay they*, the *Efficacy* of God's Grace with the *Freedom* of Man's Will, yet, when theſe two ſtand in Competition, it is but *decent* to make Abatements on Man's Part, and not on God's. But there is no Need of this. Angels, and Saints in Heaven, *ſay they*, though they be made perfect in Glory, and are not capable of any farther Reward, yet it cannot be denied, but that they act with a more accompliſhed Liberty, becauſe they ſee all Things in a true Light: And, in like Manner, thoſe, that are predeſtinated to Life, act with as much, and more Liberty, than other Men, though they find a ſecret Inclination infus'd into their Minds, and a certain forceable Conviction ſtamped upon them, determining them to purſue what is acceptable unto God, and therein to perſevere unto their Lives End. And therefore, ſince all depends upon God, and [m] *that of his own own Will he begat us*; ſince *with him is no Variableneſs, nor Shadow of turning*; whom [n] *he loves he loves unto the End*, [o] and *to whom he becomes a God, thoſe he will never leave nor forſake*; from thence they conclude, that *the Purpoſe and Calling of God muſt be without Repentance*, and that, though good Men may fall into very grievous Sins, yet of all, *that are given by the Father to the Son* to be ſaved by him, *none ſhall be loſt*.

Conſiſtent with Free Will.

UPON the whole Matter, they believe, that God did, in himſelf, and for his own Glory, *foreknow* ſuch a *determinate* Number, whom he pitch'd upon to be the *Perſons*, in whom he would be both *ſanctified* and *glorified*; [p] that having thus *foreknown* them, he *predeſtinated* them to be holy, according to the *Image of his Son*; that *theſe* he called by a *particular* Call, aſſiſted with an *irreſiſtible* Grace, *juſtified* for their Obedience, and will, in the Concluſion, *glorify* them; but the reſt of Mankind he has *predeſtinated* to a contrary Doom. And for the Maintenance of all this, they think they have the Countenance of Scripture. For, beſides the famous Text [q] already alluded to, when all Mankind are repreſented in the Hands of God, as [r] *Clay* in the Hands of the *Potter*, who, *out of the ſame Lump, hath Power to make one Veſſel unto Honour, and another unto Diſhonour*; when, to ſilence all Murmuring at ſuch arbitrary Proceedings, the Queſtion is put, [s] *nay, but, O Man! who art thou that replieſt againſt God? Shall the Thing formed ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus?* when it is declared in expreſs Terms, that [t] *God will have Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth*; when on one Hand it is written, [u] that *as many believed the Goſpel, as were appointed to eternal Life*, and that [x] *ſome were recorded in the Book of Life according to God's Purpoſe before the World began:* When, on the other Hand, it is written, [y] *God has made the wicked Man for the Day of Evil*, and that [z] *ungodly Men of old were given up to vile Affections; given over to a reprobate Mind, had their Hearts hardened, and their Eyes blinded, being ordained of old to Condemnation*; and to ſilence all Objections, when the whole is concluded with this ſolemn Queſtion, [a] *what, if God willing to ſhew his Wrath, and to make his Power known, endured, with much Long-ſuffering, the Veſſels of Wrath fitted to Deſtruction?* When theſe, and many more Paſſages of the ſame Import, I ſay, occur to them in Scripture, they can hardly refrain thinking, that *Reprobation* is an abſolute free Act of God, as well as *Election*, to manifeſt his Holineſs and Juſtice in the one, as well as his Love and Mercy in the other: Beſides the Advantage, that this Doctrine has, of producing a religious *Awfulneſs* in us, as oft as we look up to God; and *Humility*, and *Self-Annihilation*, whenever we look down upon ourſelves.

Their whole Hypotheſis proved from Scripture.

THIS is the full Strength of the Arguments, that the *Calviniſts* make uſe of, in Defence of their Opinions; and we come now, with an equal Impartiality, to relate, what the *Arminians*, on the other Side, have to ſay in Vindication of theirs.

The Arminian *Side argue from the Attributes of God.*

THE *Arminians* begin with this,——[b] that God is juſt, holy, and merciful; wiſe in all his *Counſels*, and true in all his *Declarations* to the Sons of Men, To theſe, *ſay they*, he makes frequent *Appeals*; theſe he ſets before us as *Patterns* for our Imitation; and therefore in theſe his Nature cannot but be anſwerable to the common Notions we have of them, otherwiſe we are bid in vain to imitate, and examine them. And if the Caſe be ſo, then, what can we think of a *Juſtice*, that condemns us for a *Fact*, that we never committed, nay, what was committed many Years before we were

[l] Rom. viii. 14. [m] James i. 17, 18. [n] John xiii. 1. [o] Heb. xiii. 5.
[p] Rom. viii. 29, 30. [q] Ibid. ix. 11, 13. [r] Ver. 21. [s] Ver. 20. [t] Ver. 18.
[u] Acts xiii. 48. [x] Rev. xiii. 8. and iii. 5. [y] Prov. xvi. 4. [z] Rom. i. 26, 28. [a] Ibid. ix. 22.
[b] Vid. *Burnet*, on the Articles, and *Whitby*, on Election and Reprobation.

were born? That makes it its firſt Deſign to be *glorified* by our being eternally miſerable, and determines us to the Commiſſion of Sins, merely to juſtify the *previous* Decree of our Reprobation? What can we think of an *Holineſs*, (which yet in Scripture is ſaid *to be of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*) that by an *antecedent* Decree fixes our Commiſſion of ſo many Sins, in ſuch a Manner, that there is no Poſſibility for us to avoid them? No one can think, *ſay they*, that that Man has a true Love for Holineſs, who will do nothing, that is in his Power to promote it in others: How can we then think that God, whoſe Love to Holineſs tranſcends what the moſt righteous Man has for it, has paſſed a Decree from all Eternity, which renders the Want of Holineſs in moſt Men an *unfruſtrable* Event, and yet eternally condemns them for it? God repreſents himſelf always in Scripture under other Lineaments, [c] *as gracious and merciful, ſlow to Anger, and abundant in Goodneſs and Truth.* 'Tis often ſaid, and ſaid ſometimes with the Solemnity of an Oath, [d] *that he deſires that no Man ſhould periſh*, and [e] *that as he lives, he takes no Pleaſure in the Death of Sinners:* In what Senſe then, *ſay they*, muſt theſe Words be taken, if we can believe, that, by an abſolute Decree, he did reprobate ſo many of them? If all Things, that happen, do ariſe out of the Decree of God as its firſt Cauſe, then, we muſt believe, that God takes Pleaſure both in his own Decrees, and in the Execution of them; and, by Conſequence, that he takes Pleaſure in the *Death of Sinners*, even in Contradiction to his moſt ſolemn Declarations in Scripture. Beſides, what can we think of the *Truth* and *Wiſdom* of God, and of the *Sincerity* of thoſe Offers of Grace and Mercy, with the Obteſtations, Exhortations, and Expoſtulations upon them, that occur ſo frequently in Holy Writ, if we can imagine, that, by an *antecedent* Act, he hath determined that all theſe Things ſhould be *ineffectual?* Does it become his *Wiſdom* to quarrel with his People for ſaying, [f] *the Fathers had eaten ſour Grapes, and the Childrens Teeth were ſet on Edge*, when his Decree had made it the ſad *Doom*, not of them only, but even of the greateſt Part of Mankind, to die eternally for the Sin of their Forefather *Adam*; and when the Apple, he had eaten ſo long ago, had ſet all his Childrens Teeth on Edge? Or does it become his *Sincerity*, to ſeem ſo earneſt in his Calls to them to repent, and to enquire, with ſuch an Appearance of Concern, [g] *Why will ye die? Why* [h] *will ye not return, and live?* When he himſelf has paſs'd an Act of *Reprobation* on them, which makes it impoſſible for them to repent, and turn from the Evil of their Ways, and therefore impoſſible they ſhould *live?* And yet, if we can but ſuppoſe God to be ſincere in this, he muſt neceſſarily have *two* Wills, repugnant to each other; the one commanding us our Duty, and requiring us, with the moſt ſolemn Obteſtations, to do it; and the other, putting a fatal *Bar* in our Way, by decreeing that we ſhould do the contrary: Which ſtill bears hard upon more Attributes than one, conſidering, that the *Will* for what is good is *ineffectual*, while the *Will*, that makes us ſin, is *infallible*.

From the Freedom of Man's Will.

FROM the Nature of God, they go to the Nature of Man; and him they ſuppoſe poſſeſs'd of ſuch an inward *Freedom*, as enables him to do, or not to do what he pleaſes; otherwiſe his Actions would neither be good nor evil, neither capable of Rewards or Puniſhments. All Virtue and Religion, *ſay they*, all Diſcipline, and Induſtry muſt ariſe from this, as their firſt Principle; that there is a Power in us to govern our Thoughts and Actions, and to raiſe and improve our Faculties. To this the whole Tenor of Scripture agrees, ſince it is full of Perſuaſions, Exhortations, Reproofs, Expoſtulations, Encouragements, and Terrors, which were all vain and *theatrical* Things, if there are no *free* Powers in us, to which theſe are addreſſed. 'Tis to no Purpoſe, we know, to ſpeak to the Dead, to perſuade the Blind to ſee, or the Lame to walk: and, if we are under the like Impotence, till the *irreſiſtible* Grace of God comes, what Occaſion is there for all theſe *ſolemn* Diſcourſes that can have no Manner of Effect upon us? They cannot render us *inexcuſable*, unleſs it were in our Power to be bettered by them: And to imagine that God gives Light and Bleſſings to thoſe, (whom he all along intended to damn) to make them inexcuſable when they could do them no Good, and to aggravate their Condemnation only, gives us ſuch a ſtrange Idea of God, as our Reverence to his moſt ſacred Majeſty will not ſuffer us to name.

THOUGH therefore it be no eaſy Matter to ſhew how theſe future Contingences, which depend upon the free Choice of Man's Will, ſhould be certain and infallible

[c] Exod. xxxiv. 6. [d] 2 Pet. iii. 9. [e] Ezek. xxxiii. 11. [f] Ezek. xviii. 2.
[g] Ver. 31. [h] Ver. 23.

in the Sight of God; yet this they think proper to reſolve into the *infinite* Perfection of the divine Mind, and hold it more eligible to reject, what they apprehend to be contrary to the Nature of God, than what they only find above their Capacity to comprehend. They conceive however, that the *Preſcience* of God does not make Effects *certain*, becauſe they are foreſeen; but that they are foreſeen, becauſe they *are to be*; ſo that the Certainty of the Preſcience is not *antecedent* and *cauſal*, but *ſubſequent* and *effectual*. The divine Preſcience therefore, being only the Knowing all Things that were to come, does not infer a *Neceſſity*; for if it did, then all human Actions would be neceſſary, and the Freedom of Man's Will deſtroyed; all future Recompences would be *diſcarded*, and Virtue or Vice become *empty Names*; ſince there would be no Blame, no Puniſhment, due for doing what we could not *help*, nor any Praiſe, no Reward imputable, for doing what we could not *avoid*.

And Sufficiency of Grace.

THEY acknowledge indeed, that there is a Difficulty ſitting upon the Diſpenſation of *Grace*, nor can they conceive the Reaſon of God's not giving all Nations an equal Meaſure of Light, nor putting all Men into equally happy Circumſtances; but ſtill they aſſoil God's Juſtice and Goodneſs in this Reſpect, becauſe he gives to all Men what is neceſſary to the *State*, he has placed them in, and anſwerable to the *Obligations*, they are under; and that this Light and common Grace is ſufficient to carry them ſo far, that God will either accept of it, or give them farther Degrees of Illumination. And hence it comes to paſs, that all *Men* are *inexcuſable* in the Sight of God, and that he is always [i] *juſt and clear, when he is judged*; ſince every Man had what was ſufficient; if not to ſave him, yet at leaſt to bring him into a State of Salvation.

Election, how to be underſtood in Scripture.

ALL the Paſſages therefore in the New Teſtament, concerning the Purpoſe, the Election, the Foreknowledge, and the Predeſtination of God, relate, *in their Opinion*, not to *particular* Perſons, but to God's Deſign of calling the *Gentile* World to the Knowledge of the *Meſſias*. This was a Secret, (though ſome of the Prophets hinted at it) which was then only perfectly revealed, when our Saviour gave his Apoſtles Commiſſion *to go, and teach all Nations*, and conſequently, to preach the Goſpel to the *Gentiles*. It proved a *Stumbling-Block* to the *Jews*, and was a chief Controverſy between them and the Apoſtles, in the earlieſt Days of Chriſtianity; and therefore it was no Wonder, that St *Paul* eſpecially, who declares himſelf to be the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, ſhould be very frequent and copious upon theſe *Topicks*; but there was not that Need for his amuſing the People, in the very Infancy of Religion, with high and unſearchable *Speculations*, concerning the *Decrees* of God. They therefore conclude, [k] that all the Paſſages, cited from the ninth Chapter to the *Romans*, are nothing to the Purpoſe, becauſe they are not deſigned to determine any Thing concerning God's *abſolute Decrees* of dealing either with Mankind in *general*, or with *particular* Perſons, as to their final and eternal State; but only to juſtify his Dealing (as in his Providence he hath done) with the unbelieving *Jews*, upon their ſtubborn *Infidelity* and Hardneſs of Heart; and admitting the *Gentiles* to be his Church, and the ſpiritual Seed of *Abraham*, upon their *Faith*, and Submiſſion to the Terms, which he had propoſed for their Juſtification, and Acceptance with him. All which appears, *ſay they*, from the Recapitulation that is made in the Concluſion: [l] *What do we ſay then?* Or, what is the Subſtance of what I have intended in this whole Diſcourſe? It is even this, —— [m] *that the Gentiles, which* (before the Preaching of the Goſpel) *followed not after Righteouſneſs, have yet* (through Faith) *attained unto Righteouſneſs; but the Jews, following after the Law of Righteouſneſs*, (or after Righteouſneſs by the Law) *have not attained unto Righteouſneſs, becauſe they ſought it not by Faith in* Jeſus Chriſt.

BY the like Method of Interpretation, they clear that famous Paſſage, in the eighth Chapter of the ſame Epiſtle, from any Pre-determination in the Divine Will, concerning the Salvation of particular Perſons. [n] *We know that all Things work together for Good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his Purpoſe*, [o] according to his Purpoſe manifeſted in the Goſpel, *i. e.* to true Chriſtians: *For whom he did foreknow*, [p] thoſe whom God, from all Eternity, foreſaw would be, *in Time*, obedient to his heavenly Call, them he alſo *predeſtinated*; he determined, upon his Foreſight of their Obedience, that they ſhould *be conformed to the Image of his Son*, or be like Jeſus Chriſt in his State of Suffering, to which God

[i] Pſal. li. 4. [k] *Whitby*, upon Election and Reprobation. [l] Ibid. [m] Ver. 30, &c.
[n] Chap. viii. 28, &c. [o] Vid. Curcell. Inſtitut. [p] *Fiddes*'s Sermons, and *Whitby* on Election and Reprobation.

God was pleaſed to appoint him, *that he might be the Firſt-born among many Brethren*; or, by his ſuffering firſt, [q] *might leave them an Example that they ſhould follow his Steps. Moreover, whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called*; thoſe, whom he thus deſigned to follow the Example of Chriſt, he actually called to profeſs the Doctrine of the Croſs, and, in Conſequence thereof, to a State of Suffering; *and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified*; upon their Patience under theſe Sufferings, he approved them as *ſincere*, (for ſo *to juſtify* in Scripture, ſignifies no more, than to expreſs our good Liking of any Thing) *and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified*, or will glorify: For an *Enallage* of *Time*, whereby that, which is future, is ſpoken of as already done, both Sides are ready here to admit.

ACCORDING to this Explication, they make the Senſe of the Words to run in ſome ſuch Strain as this: "It is the Will of God, that ſuch as love him, and "are admitted into the Chriſtian Covenant, ſhould undergo many Afflictions and "Perſecutions in this World. Thoſe therefore that he foreſaw fitly qualified for "a State of *Suffering*, he wiſely made Choice of, as the fitteſt Perſons to follow "the Example of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, who was *made perfect through Suffering*. "To this End he actually, and in his due Time, called them to ſuffer; and they "behaving themſelves under their Sufferings, as became them, were approved and "applauded by God, who will one Day crown their Patience and Fidelity with "Glory unſpeakable." And, to confirm this Interpretation, they obſerve, that the whole Purpoſe of this Chapter is to comfort Chriſtians againſt the Sufferings, they were expoſed to by Reaſon of their Profeſſion; that, to this Purpoſe, the Apoſtle admoniſhes them, that the Spirit, which they had received, was *not the* [r] *Spirit of Fear*, (of the Fear of Death, from which they [s] *were delivered by the Death of Chriſt*) but *the Spirit of Adoption*, which declared them *Heirs of God*, and ſuch as were to be glorified with Chriſt after their Sufferings; that this future Glory was a ſufficient Ground of Patience under all their Sufferings, ſince all [t] *the Sufferings of this preſent Life were not to be compared to the Glory, that ſhould be revealed*; and that, while they continued in this afflicted State, patiently waiting for this Glory, they had the Spirit of God to *help their Infirmities*, and the Promiſe of God aſſuring them, that all theſe Sufferings ſhould [u] *work together for Good to them that loved him*.

'TIS endleſs to enter into a Diſcuſſion of all the Paſſages, ſeeming to favour God's abſolute and irreſpective Decrees, that they interpret in this Manner. God's *Love* to *Jacob*, and *Hatred* to *Eſau*, they apply to their reſpective Poſterity, which he might favour leſs or more, without any Imputation upon his Juſtice, ſince that Favour was no more than of *temporary* Conſideration. In the ſame Manner is the Compariſon of the *Potter's Power over the Clay* to be underſtood, only as denoting ſome *peculiar* Diſtinction of God's Favours to Men in this World, (which he certainly has a Right to beſtow as he pleaſes) and his excluding others from ſharing in the Benefits of them. The Word *Elect*, *ſay they*, is of general Acceptation, denoting, in the *Old Teſtament*, all the Nation of the *Jews*, and in the *New*, the whole Body of Chriſtians: The Expreſſion *ordained to eternal Life*, means only ſuch as are fitted and pre-diſpoſed to it, and that by their own Inclinations, more than any Act of God; and [x] the Phraſe of *being written in the Book of Life* is *Jewiſh*, and does not ſignify an *abſolute Election* of any Perſon to eternal Happineſs, but only the preſent Right of the *juſt* Perſon (if he continues ſo) to enjoy it after Death.

IN like Manner they obſerve, that the Word ἀδόκιμος, which we render *reprobate*, (but might as well have been rendered *diſapproved*) has no Relation in Scripture to any *abſolute* Decree concerning Man's *Damnation*, but only to ſuch Actions of Men (corrupted as to Faith and Manners) as cannot, when done, but be diſapproved both by God and Man. Thoſe *Gentiles* therefore, ſay they, [y] who *changed the Truth of God into a Lye, by worſhipping the Creature inſtead of the Creator*, are ſaid to *be given up to a reprobate Mind, i. e.* which could not be approved, but utterly abhorred, both by God and Men, ſince it prompted them to do τὰ μὴ καθήκοντα, Things neither agreeable to Nature or Reaſon. *Reprobation, how to be underſtood in Scripture.*

THE *blinding Men's Eyes*, and *hardening their Hearts*, therefore, muſt not be underſtood of any *poſitive* Act of God, but only of his *permiſſive* Will; when he ſuffers Men, abuſing the Liberty he gives them, and the Clemency he ſhews them, to

[q] 1 Pet. ii. 21. [r] 2 Tim. i. 7. [s] Heb. ii. 9. [t] Rom. viii. 18. [u] Ibid. 28.
[x] *Whitby*, on Election and Reprobation. [y] Rom. i. 25, &c.

to go in ſuch Courſes, as will naturally darken their Underſtanding, and ſtupiſy their Conſciences. Men *blind* their own Eyes, and *harden* their own Hearts; but, by a common Form of Speech, the Act is imputed to God, [z] when, from his Clemency, or the Lenity of his Puniſhments, they take Occaſion to do ſo, tho' the Thing was never in God's Intention; juſt as when an undutiful Child makes an ill Uſe of the Indulgence of his Parents, they are apt to charge themſelves with having ſpoiled and ruined him, though it was the fartheſt Thing in the World from their Thoughts. God has no Need of the Wicked therefore, ſay they, nor *has he made them for himſelf againſt the Day of Evil*, in ſuch a Senſe, as thoſe Men intend, who ſuppoſe that he made ſome Perſons, with a direct Purpoſe to glorify his Juſtice in the Puniſhment of their Wickedneſs: The Words of *Solomon* relate to a quite different Purpoſe; they relate to the *providential* Diſpenſations of God in this Life, and are to be expounded accordingly, *viz.* "That God can ſerve the "Ends of his Providence by wicked Men, without being the Author of their Wick-"kedneſs; and make them the *Inſtruments* of his Juſtice, to puniſh other wicked "Men, or of his Fatherly Chaſtiſements, *in the Day of Evil*, *i. e.* in the Day of "Adverſity, to exerciſe the Faith and Virtues of good Men."

The reſt of their Hypotheſis proved from Scripture.

HAVING thus got over the Scripture-Difficulties, which their Adverſaries are known to object, they proceed to lay down theſe ſeveral Propoſitions:——That Chriſt died for all Mankind; that God deſires the Salvation of all; that he determines no Man to the Commiſſion of Sin, but leaves every one to his own free Choice, without the Coercion of *irreſiſtible* Grace, or the Neceſſity of *final* Perſeverance: And for this they think they have the Authority of Scripture to alledge. For when they read it recorded of Chriſt, [a] *that he is a Propitiation for our Sins, and not for our Sins only, but for the Sins of the whole World*; [b] that he *came into the World to ſave Sinners*; [c] that *by the Grace of God he taſted Death for every Man*; and that his Death, as to its Extent, is ſet in Oppoſition to the Sin of *Adam*; *for*, [d] *as by the Offence of One, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation, ſo, by the Righteouſneſs of One, the free Gift came upon all Men to Juſtification*; they cannot but conclude, that Chriſt's Death was *intentionally* of univerſal Benefit. When they perceive the Reaſons of God's Diſpenſations, [e] *that he is long-ſuffering to us-ward, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to Repentance*; and hear him declaring himſelf with ſuch Solemnity, [f] *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no Pleaſure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Way and live: Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil Ways; for why will ye die, O Houſe of* Iſrael? They muſt needs ſuppoſe (unleſs they will charge God with *Fallacy)* that his Deſire of Man's Salvation is both ſincere and unlimited. When they hear our bleſſed Saviour complaining, [g] *Ye do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt; as your Fathers did, ſo do ye*; [h] *How often would I have gathered you under my Wings, and ye would not?* And his Father making the ſame Declaration, [i] *What more could have been done in my Vineyard, that I have not done in it, and yet it ſtill brought forth wild Grapes?* They cannot but perceive plain Intimations of a Power in Mankind, by which they not only *can*, but too often *do*, reſiſt the Motions of Grace: And, laſtly, when they find God, by the Mouth of his Servant *Moſes*, ſo loudly appealing to their Choice, [k] *I call Heaven and Earth to record this Day againſt you, that I have ſet before you Life and Death, Bleſſing and Curſing, therefore chuſe Life*; and, by the Mouth of his Holy Prophet, ſo kindly admoniſhing them, that *when the Righteous turneth from his Righteouſneſs, and committeth Iniquity, all his Righteouſneſs, that he hath done, ſhall not be mentioned; in his Sin, that he hath ſinned, ſhall he die*, with many more Intimations of the like Strain, frequently occurring in the Book of God; they cannot but believe, that a great deal depends upon the *Liberty* of their Will; that their future Ruin or Felicity is chiefly chargeable upon themſelves; and that, in this State of their Probation, nothing can have ſuch a determining Influence upon them, but that, as a wicked Man may turn to a good Courſe of Life, ſo a good Man may ſometimes fall into a bad one; and therefore they think, that the Apoſtle's Admonition is, at all Times, very ſeaſonable, [l] *Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.*

UPON the whole they conclude, that if theſe *Poſitions* are true, and ſupported by Scripture, then in the contrary Doctrine of *abſolute* and *irreſpective* Predeſtination, whether to Life or Death, deſtitute of all real Foundation; beſides the pernicious Effects,

[z] *Fiddes's* Sermons. [a] 1 John ii. 2. [b] 1 Tim. i. 15. [c] Heb. ii. 9. [d] Rom. v. 18.
[e] 2 Pet. iii. 9. [f] Ezek. xxxiii. 11. [g] Acts vii. 51. [h] Matth. xxiii. 37. [i] Iſa. v. 4.
[k] Deut. xxx. 19. [l] 1 Cor. x. 12.

Effects, that this Doctrine may chance to have, by making Men careleſs of their Actions, negligent of their Prayers; and, in a ſmall Proceſs of Time, either lulling them into Security, or plunging them into Deſperation.

SECT. III.

Some REFLECTIONS *upon theſe different* OPINIONS.

WE have hitherto ſtated the *Arguments* on both Sides in their full Force and Latitude; and ſhall now proceed to make ſome *Reflections* upon the whole, in order to determine our Sentiments to that *Opinion*, which ſeems more eligible for us to adhere to; after we have have firſt taken a brief Review, wherein they agree, and wherein they differ.

Wherein they agree and diſagree.

THEY both agree in the *Reality* of God's Decrees relating to Man's final State, becauſe it is preſumable, that infinite Wiſdom does nothing without previous Determination; but then the *Calviniſt* ſays, that theſe Decrees are *prior* to his Preſcience, *abſolute*, and dependent on the ſole Will of God; whereas the *Remonſtrant* aſſerts, that they are *ſubſequent* to the Divine Preſcience, *conditionate*, and reſpective of the Behaviour of Man. They both agree that theſe Decrees are the *ſecret* Will of God; but then this *ſecret* Will (in the Points of Election and Reprobation) is ſometimes contrary to his *revealed* Will, ſays the *Calviniſt*, which the Remonſtrant abſolutely denies. They both agree in laying the Baſis of theſe Decrees in the Nature and Attributes of God; but then the *Calviniſt* makes the *Independency*, and *abſolute Sovereignty*; whereas the *Remonſtrant* thinks it better to make the *Juſtice*, and *Goodneſs*, and *Holineſs* of God, the Foundation thereof. They both agree, that there is mention made in Scripture of the *Election* of ſome, and the Election of ſome, they both conclude, implies a *Rejection* of the reſt; but this Election, ſays the *Calviniſt*, relates to particular Perſons; to Churches and Nations, ſays the *Remonſtrant*: 'Tis *abſolute*, and without any Condition at all, ſays the *Calviniſt*; 'tis upon the Condition of Faith, and Holineſs, and a final Perſeverance therein, ſays the *Remonſtrant*. They both agree that the Number of theſe *Elect* will *comparatively* be but few, but the *Calviniſt* imputes this to the Divine Decree, which will *have* it ſo; the *Remonſtrant* to the Sin and Corruption of Mankind, which *make* it ſo. They both agree in the Reality of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion, but, in the Effects and Imputation of it, they differ; the *Calviniſt* accounting it a Crime, chargeable upon his Poſterity, and deſerving the Condemnation of ſo many Millions; whereas the *Remonſtrant* thinks every Crime *perſonal*, without a ſpecial Compact, and *Adam*'s Poſterity not culpable, without their own Conſent. They both agree in the *Merits* of Chriſt's Death, and in God's accepting it as a *Propitiation* for the Sins of Mankind; but the *Calviniſt* limits the Intention of it to ſuch as are *predeſtinated* to Life, while the *Remonſtrant* ſuppoſes that God deſigned the Benefit of it to be *extended* to all. They both agree in the Diſpenſation of Grace, and other Means of Salvation, ordained by God to help us out of the Corruption of human Nature; but then theſe Means the *Calviniſt* applies *efficaciouſly* to none, but the *Elect*; this Grace he accounts *irreſiſtible*, and *indefectible* in thoſe that are *called*; whereas the *Remonſtrant*, thinks it conſiſtent with God's Juſtice, in Matters of eternal Salvation, to deal out his Aſſiſtance with a more *impartial* Hand; to give every Man at leaſt a *ſufficient* Meaſure thereof, (but what will not be effectual without his own Co-operation) and then leave him to his own Choice, whether he will *work out his own Salvation*, or not. Laſtly, they both agree, that in the Concluſion of all Things, God's Glory and Honour will be conſpicuous; but then the *Calviniſt* places his Glory chiefly in the Manifeſtation of his abſolute Power and Dominion; the *Remonſtrant* in the Diſplay of his Mercy and Goodneſs, and other more amiable Attributes. Both Opinions, in ſhort, have ſome *Difficulties*, both ſome *Advantages* attending them, and do, in ſome Meaſure, depend upon the Turn that is given to Mens Minds.

[m] THE Man that has long mixed his Thoughts of God's *infinite* Perfection with the Notions of abſolute and *unchangeable* Decrees, of carrying every Thing by a *poſitive* Will, of doing every Thing for his own Glory, cannot comprehend Decrees depending on a foreſeen Free-Will, a Grace ſubject to it, a Merit of Chriſt's Death that is loſt, and a Man's being at one Time loved, and yet finally hated of God,

[m] *Burnet*, on the Articles.

without being ſhock'd: And, on the other Hand, he, that has accuſtomed himſelf to think often on the infinite Goodneſs and Mercy, the Long-ſuffering, Patience, and Slowneſs to Anger, that appears in God, cannot let the Thought of abſolute Reprobation, of determining Men to Sin, or of not giving them Grace neceſſary to keep them from Sin and Damnation, enter into his Mind without the ſame Horror, that another feels in the *Reverſe* of all this.

IF ever therefore we would bring our Minds to a right Temper for examining a Controverſy of this *intricate* Nature, we muſt, above all Things, diveſt them of all that Prejudice and Partiality, which the Courſe of our Education, the Books we have read, and the Company we have kept, are too apt to infuſe, and then, (to determine our Sentiments) our firſt Enquiry muſt be, which of the two Opinions is built upon the truer Foundation, and has fewer Difficulties attending it.

Whether Opinion is better founded.

NOW the Foundation, as we ſaid, that the *Calviniſts* build their *Hypotheſis* upon is this,—that God, in all his Dealings with Men, conſiders nothing but himſelf, and his own Glory; whereas the *Remonſtrants* ſuppoſe that he takes Man's Happineſs all along into his Concern and Deliberation. Let us then ſee whether of theſe Sentiments better comports with the Nature of God. God, we know, as an infinitely perfect Being, muſt be infinitely happy within himſelf; can have no Self-End without himſelf; and, conſequently, the End, for which he requires any Thing from us, or decrees any Thing concerning us, is not, cannot be, any Advantage he expects to reap for it, (becauſe, from all Eternity paſt, he was as compleatly happy, as he can be for all Eternity to come) but merely to do us good. [n] If it be ſaid, that God may act to manifeſt his Glory, *viz.* the Glory of his Mercy, Juſtice, Holineſs, and Truth; this may be admitted: But then, it muſt be conſidered, that he manifeſts theſe Attributes, either for no Good, or for his own Good, or for our Good. To ſay that he does it for no Good, is to impeach his Wiſdom; to ſay that he does it for his own Good, is to reflect on the Perfection of his Nature; and therefore it remains that he muſt do it for our Good, which is the Thing contended for. 'Tis a vain Imagination therefore, that the great Deſign of any of God's Actions is to be admired and applauded by his worthleſs Creatures, and to gain himſelf an Eſteem and good Word from ſuch creeping Worms as we are. *We take too much upon us*, if we imagine that the all-wiſe God can be concerned, whether ſuch blind Creatures as we approve or diſapprove of his Proceedings, or that he can really ſuffer any Diminution of his Glory by our Diſlike, or is advanced to Honour, by our Approbation of his Diſpenſations. We detract from his *ſelf-ſufficient* Majeſty, if we conceive that he can be tickled with Applauſe, or aim at Reputation from us, in his glorious Deſigns: That therefore ſuch, as we, ſhould think well of him, or have due Apprehenſions of thoſe *Attributes*, by the Acknowledgment of which we are ſaid to *glorify* him, can be no farther his Concern, than as it ſerves the noble Ends of his great Goodneſs, *viz.* that theſe Conceptions may engage us to that *Affection*, to that *Imitation* of him, and *Obedience* to him, as tends to the Promotion of our Happineſs.

THE Hypotheſis in this Manner ſetting out wrong, it is not to be wondered at, that the Difficulties, in ſupporting it, are ſo many; and that, whereas the other Opinion is only pinched in one Place, *viz.* in accounting for God's certain *Preſcience* of ſuch *Contingencies*, as depend upon Man's Free-Will, (which yet may be reſolved into the [o] infinite Perfection of the Divine Mind) the Patrons of *abſolute* Predeſtination are forced to ſet up a *ſecret* Will in the divine Decrees, which, with all their Art, they cannot reconcile with his *revealed* Will, that is delivered in his Word; [p] forced to deviſe a certain Compact between God and *Adam*, (which the Scripture knows nothing of) in order to juſtify the Imputation of his Sin to his Poſterity; and forced to aggravate *Adam*'s Offence to an unreaſonable Degree, in order to vindicate the Decrees enſuing upon that Imputation; are under Difficulties to ſay, why *Adam*'s *perſonal* Sin was every Man's Sin, and *conſented* to by every Man's Will, before any Man, but he, had either Will or Being; under Difficulties to tell us, why all Men ſhould be charged with his *firſt*, more than his *following* Faults, and have his *Guilt* imputed to them, more than his *Repentance*; under Difficulties to deviſe, why God, who is the common Father of all, ſhould (contrary to his Declarations,) become ſo ſtrange a Reſpecter of Perſons, as to make ſome eternally *happy*, and others eternally *miſerable*, for no other Reaſon, but to ſhew the Abſoluteneſs of his Will; and (to name no more) under Difficulties, to account for the Reaſon

[n] *Whitby*, on Election and Reprobation.
[p] *Vid. Whitby*, concerning the Decrees.
[o] *Vid.* Biſhop *King*'s Sermon, concerning Predeſtination.

Reaſon of the Promiſes and Threats, the Cautions and Exhortations, the tender Intreaties and Expoſtulations ſo frequently proceeding from his Divine Mouth, if Mens Doom be fixed before they are born, and all Incitements and Endeavours can be of no Avail.

Whether more agreeable to the Notions of God.

2. ANOTHER Enquiry, proper to be made in this Caſe is, whether of the Opinions repreſent God in a Manner more congruous to the Notions we have of him. The *Calviniſts*, we obſerved, ſet out with high Conceptions of God's *Sovereignty*, his abſolute Will, and irreſiſtible Power: The *Remonſtrants*, on the other Hand, with more favourable Notions of his Juſtice, and Goodneſs, and other *moral* Perfections; and hence it comes to paſs, that as each *Hypotheſis* advances, the wider it ſeparates from the other. Let us then ſee whether of theſe Notions of God (for both are undoubtedly true) are more worthy of him, in the Queſtion now before us. [q] God, we know, who is infinitely exalted above all other Beings, can be ſubject to no other Law, but that of his own Perfections. Now the Perfections of God, which lay a Reſtraint upon him, are thoſe, which, for Diſtinction's Sake, we call *moral*, ſuch as his Wiſdom, and Juſtice, and Goodneſs, and Truth, which, by being *eſſential* to him, are as much a Law to his Will and Power, as *moral* Laws are to ours. To ſecure our Minds therefore againſt any injurious Apprehenſions of God, this we may lay down as a moſt neceſſary Rule, that he is ſuch a Being, as can neither will, nor act any Thing, but what his own eſſential Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, and Juſtice do approve; that in all his Decrees, Purpoſes, and Actions, he conſults his *moral* Perfections, and regulates himſelf by them; and, conſequently, that he neither chuſes nor refuſes, elects nor reprobates, ſaves nor damns, without their full Conſent and Approbation.

IF this be admitted as a Rule, then the Queſtion is, whether *he* thinks more worthily of God, [r] who knowing that all the laps'd Sons of *Adam* were equally the Objects of his Pity and Compaſſion, equally capable of his Mercy, and equally his Offſpring, believes, that his Decrees of governing and diſpoſing of them are wholly founded on ſuch an *abſolute Will*, as no rational or wiſe Man acts by; ſo that he determines of the everlaſting Fate of the Souls, he daily creates, without Reſpect to any Good or Evil done by them, and, conſequently, without any Reaſon, why he puts this Difference between them; and yet afterwards, in all his *Revelations* made for the Regulation of their Lives, ſuſpends their everlaſting State upon Conditions; or that he hath placed the greater Part of them under an abſolute Decree of Reprobation, which leaves them incapable of Salvation, and then not only bids them *ſave themſelves*, but invites, encourages, and conjures them to turn to him, when, all the while, he's reſolved they ſhall not, and then eternally torments them for neglecting that Salvation, which he knows they never can attain, without that Grace, which he hath abſolutely reſolved for ever to deny them: Whether this Perſon, I ſay, thinks more worthily of God; or he, who looks upon him as an univerſal Lover of the Souls of Men; that therefore he would have all Men be ſaved, and gives them all Things *neceſſary unto Life and Godlineſs*, draws them to him *with the Cords of a Man*, with the Cords of Love, by the moſt alluring Promiſes, and by the Strivings of his holy Spirit; ſwears to them, that he would not they ſhould periſh, warns them of, and conjures them to avoid the Things, that would tend to their eternal Ruin; directs them to the Means, by which they may moſt certainly eſcape it; rejoices more at the *Converſion of a Sinner*, than at the *Righteouſneſs of ninety-nine Perſons, that need no Repentance*; and, when all Methods of his Grace are loſt upon them, breaks forth into compaſſionate and melting Wiſhes, that *they had known the Things, which did belong to their eternal Peace.*

AGAIN, whether he conceives more truly and honourably of God, who thinks, he chuſes his Favourites without *Reaſon*, and rewards them without any *Qualifications*, but what he irreſiſtibly works in them; or he, who looks upon him as one, that deals with all Mankind, not according to *his*, but their *own* Works, as they are willing and obedient, as they make themſelves fit Objects of his Love; and rewards them, as they improve the Talents he has given them, or *hide them in a Napkin*. Whether, laſtly, *he* repreſents God honourably, who believes that by his *revealed* Will, he hath declar'd *he would have all Men to be ſaved*, and yet, by an *antecedent ſecret* Will, would have the greateſt Part of them periſh; he hath impoſed a Law upon them, which he obliges them to obey on Pain of his eternal Diſpleaſure, tho' he knows they cannot do it, without his irreſiſtible Grace; and yet is abſolutely

[q] *Scot*'s Chriſtian Life, Part II. [r] *Whitby*, concerning the Decrees.

abſolutely bent to with-hold his Grace from them, and then to puniſh them eternally for what they could not do without it; and yet after all aſks, *Why will ye die? When wilt thou be made clean? How long will it be, ere this People obey me?* Or *he*, who believes it more agreeable to the Truth and Sincerity of the Divine Nature, to deal plainly with his Creatures, and mean what he ſays; when he lays their Duty before them, ſhews them its Weight, and their Ability to bear it, encourages them to undertake it, promiſes them ſufficient Aid to ſupport them under it, and in the Concluſion (if they hold out to the End) to crown their Labour with eternal Reſt.

The Senſe of Scripture.

3. A FARTHER Enquiry, proper to be made upon this Occaſion, is, which of the two Opinions ſeems to be more agreeable to the *genuine Senſe* of the Word of God. And this is a Queſtion the harder to be determin'd, becauſe both Sides claim the Authority of the holy Scriptures, and think that their Notions are expreſſly contain'd in them. The *Decretaliſts* lay great Streſs upon the ninth Chapter to the *Romans*. They imagine, that [s] God's *loving Jacob*, and *hating Eſau*; [t] his hardening the Heart of *Pharaoh*; [u] his Dealing with Mankind, as the *Potter* does with *his Clay*; [x] his arbitrary Diſpenſation of Mercy; [y] his manifeſting his Juſtice in the *Veſſels of Wrath*, and [z] the Riches of his Glory in the *Veſſels of Mercy*; together with ſome Implications of the [a] Inſignificancy of any Endeavours in Man, without the Extenſion of *efficacious* Grace, relate to particular Perſons, and ſtate the whole Caſe of their *Reprobation:* And, in [b] another famous Paſſage of the ſame Epiſtle, they think they have found out the *Golden Chain*, as they call it, of Predeſtination to Life, wherein the Decrees and Means of Salvation are ſo inſeparably link'd together, that, whoſoever hath obtain'd the one, muſt neceſſarily be Partaker of the other.

THEIR Adverſaries, on the other Hand, compile all the Paſſages in Scripture, wherein the Impartiality and juſt Dealings of God, his Love to his Offspring, and univerſal Concern for their Souls, his Deſire that *all ſhould be ſaved*, his ſending his Son to die for all, his affording every Man ſufficient Means, his ſtriving with Sinners for their Converſion, his appealing to their Senſes, their Reaſon, their Choice, and uſing ſo many kind Entreaties and Obteſtations to reclaim them, are ſet forth: And from thence they infer, that, ſince there can be no Repugnancy in the Word of God; ſince *their* Texts are plain, and their Adverſaries obſcure, the Attributes of God muſt, by all Means, be preſerv'd, and therefore theſe *Predeſtinarian* Paſſages (as is pretended) muſt come under another Form of Interpretation.

Rules to interpret Scripture.

NOW the chief Rules to be obſerved in the Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures (ſuch, I mean, as are applicable to our preſent Purpoſe) [c] are ſuch as theſe: 1. To judge of the Senſe of a Paſſage by the *Deſign* of the Writer, and the *Scope* he propoſes to himſelf. 2. To conſider, whether the Paſſage explain'd in ſuch a Senſe, has any, or no *Connection* with the preceding, or following Diſcourſe. 3. To compare one Paſſage in Scripture with another, and, from the *Compariſon*, obſerve what the right Senſe is; and, 4. To remark whether a Paſſage explain'd in ſuch a Senſe, is agreeable to the *Analogy* of Faith, *i. e.* whether it be not contrary, either in itſelf, or in the Conſequences that may be drawn from it, to the known Attributes of God, or ſome Article of Faith, eſtabliſhed in other Places of Scripture.

IF then the Deſign of St *Paul*, in that Chapter to the *Romans*, was, not to treat of the Doctrine of *Predeſtination*, but only to vindicate God's Righteouſneſs from any Violation of the Covenant made to *Abraham*, in rejecting the *Jews* for their *Infidelity*, and receiving the *Gentiles*, that believed in Chriſt into the ſaid Covenant, (as both the Beginning and Concluſion of that Diſcourſe, and [d] ſeveral other Places in that Apoſtle's Writings ſeem to denote) and if, in that famous Paſſage before-mention'd, the Apoſtle's Intent was, not to lay down the Scheme of Mens *final* Election, but only to encourage Believers, under thoſe ſore Afflictions, which they were to undergo for the Name of Chriſt, from the Conſideration of their being under the Appointment, the Approbation, the Protection, and Retribution of Almighty God; (for ſo the Concluſion immediately following the Words runs, [e] *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?*) If, I ſay, the Words may be fairly taken in this Senſe, (and herein every Man is to be Judge for himſelf) then have we theſe weighty Reaſons for embracing

[s] Ver. 13. [t] Ver. 17. [u] Ver. 21. [x] Ver. 15. [y] Ver. 22. [z] Ver. 23.
[a] Ver. 16. [b] *For whom he foreknew, he alſo did predeſtinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the Firſt-born among many Brethren. Moreover, whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called; and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified; and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified,* Rom. viii. 29, 30. [c] *Du Pin's* Canon of Scripture. [d] Vid. Rom. xi. paſſim. [e] Rom. viii. 31.

bracing it, *viz.* that the [f] contrary Conſtruction bears hard upon the *Wiſdom* of God, to predeſtinate Men, without any Conſideration of their Faith and Obedience, to eternal Life; bears hard upon the *Holineſs* of God, to leave the greateſt Part of Mankind in ſuch a Condition (and that not occaſioned by their own Fault) wherein they are under a Neceſſity of ſinning; bears hard upon the *Juſtice* of God, to determine eternally to puniſh Sinners, for their Diſobedience to thoſe Laws, which they were never in a Capacity to obey; and, inſtead of recommending to them his *Mercy* and Goodneſs, fills their Minds with anxious Thoughts of his cruel Deſigns againſt them, and makes him the Object of their perpetual Terror.

The Senſe of Antiquity.

4. AFTER the Scriptures, our next Enquiry is, what the Senſe of the *ancient Fathers* was concerning this Queſtion: And herein the Anti-Predeſtinarians have manifeſtly the Advantage; ſince, according to the Confeſſion even [g] of *Calvin* himſelf, all the firſt Fathers of the Church do unanimouſly agree, [h] that God hath left it in the Power of Man *to turn to Vice or Virtue*; *to believe or not believe*; and to *chuſe or refuſe Faith and Obedience*; that *our Happineſs or Miſery depends upon our own Choice*; that, *by Virtue, we may be God's, and by Wickedneſs, the Devil's Children*; and *that every one gives Occaſion to his Maker to render him a Veſſel of Honour or Diſhonour*. Nay, [i] *Voſſius*, if we will believe him, declares, that all the Fathers, before St *Auſtin*'s Time, were of Opinion,—that God predeſtinated Men to Life, from a *Preſcience*, that they would live piouſly, and perſevere unto the End: And therefore *Proſper*, in his Epiſtle to St *Auſtin*, confeſſes, [k] that even they, who condemn'd *Pelagius*, rejected St *Auſtin*'s Doctrine of an abſolute Decree of Salvation, as a mere *Novelty*: "For, *ſays he*, many of the Servants of Chriſt, in the City of "*Marſeilles*, think that what you ſay concerning the calling of the *Elect*, accord-"ing to Purpoſe, is contrary to the Opinion of the Fathers, and the Senſe of the "Church: They affirm obſtinately, that the Things you gather from St *Paul*'s "Epiſtle to the *Romans*, were never ſo underſtood by any Eccleſiaſtical Man." And himſelf acknowledges, that, having reviſ'd the Opinions of thoſe, that had wrote before of this Matter, he found almoſt all of them to be of one and the ſame Judgment, *viz.* that the *Purpoſe* and Predeſtination of God was according to his *Preſcience*, and that he *therefore* made ſome *Veſſels of Honour*, and others of *Diſhonour*, becauſe he foreſaw the End of every One, and what would be their Will and Actions under the Divine Aſſiſtance.

The Doctrine of the Church.

5. THE Church of *England*, it muſt be confeſs'd, (and ſome Regard ſhould be paid to her Authority) has founded [l] her Article upon the Doctrine of St *Auſtin*. She ſuppoſes Man to be *under a Curſe and Damnation*, antecedently to Predeſtination, which delivers him from it. She ſpeaks very advantageouſly of the Efficacy of Grace, and makes it the principal Agent in whatever belongs to our ſpiritual Condition. [m] In her other Articles ſhe imputes a great deal to *Original Sin*, making it *deſerve God's Wrath and Indignation*; and thinks that the Freedom of Man's Will was ſo ſadly impair'd by the *Fall*, that he cannot turn himſelf to God: But that, wherein the main Difficulty of the Queſtion lies, *viz.* whether God's eternal Purpoſe or Decree was made according to what he foreſaw his Creatures would do, or purely upon an abſolute Will, in order to his own Glory, ſhe no where pretends to define, on Purpoſe ([n] as ſome think) not to exclude any, whoſe Sentiments may poſſibly vary in the Expoſition of this Matter, from her *Communion*.

To ſum up the whole Evidence in one Word. The *Remonſtrants* have choſe a better Foundation for their Opinion, and, in the Purſuit of it, repreſented God in a more agreeable Dreſs: The *Calviniſts* have ſtrong Pretenſions to Scripture, but perhaps may be miſtaken in the Interpretation of it. The *Remonſtrants* have clearly the Advantage, as to the Opinion of the antient Church; but the *Calviniſts*, it muſt be acknowledg'd, have a much nearer Conformity to the Doctrines of our own. In ſuch abſtruſe Points, each Man, I ſuppoſe, is left to his own Perſuaſion; for no Church, I am ſatisfied, has Authority enough, to make Men [o] *believe and hold what is not agreeable to the Doctrine of the Old and New Teſtament, and to what the Catholick Fathers and antient Biſhops gathered from that very Doctrine.*

[f] Vid. *Fiddes*'s Sermons. [g] Inſtit. Lib. iii. Cap. 23. [h] *Whitby*, concerning the Decrees, page 96, where the ſeveral Fathers are quoted. [i] Hiſt. Lib. v. [k] Vid. Page 881, &c. [l] Vid. Article 17. [m] Article 9, 10. [n] Vid. *Burnet*, on the Articles. [o] *Sparrow*'s Collect. Can.

CHAP. II.

Of CREATION *in General.*

Creation, what, and why we conceive it impoſſible.

AFTER the *Decrees* of God, we come now to conſider the *viſible* Effects of them, in the wonderful Works of *Creation* and *Providence*. *Creation*, according to the proper Acceptation of the Word, is the Production of ſomething, which, before that Production, had no Exiſtence, either in Whole, or in Part, either in its *Form* or *Matter*, but in reſpect of both was abſolutely nothing: Which, how difficult ſoever in our Conceptions, is not impoſſible to Almighty God. We indeed, becauſe we are only acquainted with the Works of Art and Nature, cannot ſo eaſily imagine how any Thing can be effected without Materials: [a] When we diſcourſe of the Manner, whereby God produced the World, we are too apt to run into the Enquiries of the *Epicurean* in *Tully*, [b] *Quæ molitio? Quæ ferramenta? Qui vectes? Quæ machinæ? Qui miniſtri tanti operis fuerunt?* We look upon God only as an *Artificer*, that contrives the World firſt into a *Platform*, and then uſes Inſtruments to erect it; and conſequently, we ſtill ſuppoſe the Matter ready for him to work upon. [c] We perceive that a Carpenter cannot build a Ship or a Houſe without pre-exiſtent Materials, and thence we are apt to conclude, that God himſelf can do no more, becauſe we cannot conceive how he ſhould do it, or becauſe he muſt do it by other Methods, than what we are acquainted with; [d] ſo *difficult a Thing it is to abſtract our Minds from the Obſervations of this viſible World, when they ſeek to apprehend the Operations of God!*

The Unreaſonableneſs of ſuch a Conception.

BUT now [e] what can be more irrational, than from the Weakneſs of the *Creature* to infer the ſame Imbecillity in the *Creator*, and to meaſure the Arm of *Almighty* God, from the Finger of *impotent* Man? Whatever implies an Excellence in the Artificer may be aſcribed to him; but whatever denotes any Infirmity muſt be ſeparated from the Notion of him. That Wiſdom, Contrivance, and Pre-conception, that Regularity, and Beauty of Operation, which are required in an Artiſt, moſt eminently center in him, who hath *ordered all Things in Meaſure, and Number, and Weight*; but if the moſt exquiſite Idea in the Artificer's Underſtanding be not ſufficient to execute his Deſign without Hands to work, and Materials to employ; it will therefore no more follow, that God, in his Productions, is obliged to make uſe of pre-exiſtent Matter, than that he is compounded of corporeal Parts.

IT is only, therefore, becauſe we are unacquainted with the *primary* Productions of God, and take our Specimen of his Power from the *preſent* Order of the Univerſe, and what we ſee others do before us, that we run into this Miſconception; but, by the ſame Rule, were we equally ignorant of the moſt ordinary Productions of Nature, we ſhould be apt to conclude, that they were equally impoſſible, and, for the Illuſtration of this, [f] *Maimonides* has furniſhed us with an excellent Similitude. *Shewn from an apt Compariſon.*

"Suppoſe, *ſays he*, that a Perſon, of exquiſite natural Parts,
"whoſe Mother dies, and whoſe Father brings him up in a deſolate Iſland, with-
"out ever ſeeing a Female of any Kind, or converſing with any Man, until he be
"grown up to Years of Underſtanding, ſhould enquire of the firſt Man he ſpeaks
"to, *how Men are born, and how they come into the World?* The other tells him,
"that every Man is bred in the Womb of one of the ſame Kind with ourſelves,
"thus and thus form'd; that, while we are in the Womb, we have a very little
"Body, are there nouriſh'd, and move and grow by little and little, until we
"come to ſuch a determinate Bigneſs; and that then we come forth into the
"World, and grow on ſtill, until we come to the Proportion we are now of. Here
"the young Man preſently ſtops him, and enquires; when we were thus little in
"the Womb, and did live, move, and grow, did we not eat, and drink, and breathe
"at the Mouth and Noſtrils, as we do now? If it be anſwer'd *No*, he is inſtantly
"ready to affirm the contrary, and begins to philoſophize in this Manner,—Why,
"if

[a] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [b] *Tully*, de Nat. Deor. Lib. I. [c] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I.
[d] *Tully*, de Nat. Deor. Lib. II. [e] *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [f] Maimon. more Nevoch. Lib. II. Cap. 17.

" if one of us, *ſays he*, ſhould ceaſe breathing but for an Hour, our Life and Motion " are gone; how then is it poſſible for any, tho' never ſo ſmall, to live, and move " in the Womb for ſo many Months, ſeeing it is ſo cloſe ſhut up, and in the Mid- " dle of the Body? If one of us ſhould ſwallow a little Bird, it would preſently die, " as ſoon as it came into the Stomach; how much more, if it were in the Belly? " If we ſhould be, but a few Days, without eating and drinking, we could not " live; how then can a Child continue ſo many Months without it? If it be reply'd, " that there is a Paſſage open in the Belly, at which the Child receives its Nouriſh- " ment: This he accounts as *Romantick* as the other; for if our Bellies were ſo " open, *ſays he*, we ſhould quickly be deſtroy'd, and therefore he concludes, [g] that " it is impoſſible Mankind ſhould ever be born in this Manner." And for the ſame Reaſon, as that excellent Author infers, do ſome Men argue againſt the *Production of the World out of nothing*, becauſe it croſſes their common Conceptions, and anſwers not the Courſe of Things, that Nature has eſtabliſh'd: Never conſidering, [h] that the Creation of the World is a ſupernatural Production, *antecedent* to all the Laws of Nature, which, after the firſt Production, were to be obſerv'd, but were impoſſible to be obſerv'd before.

Creation in a proper Senſe.

WE readily grant, that the Words *Creation* and *create* do not originally, and in their proper Senſe, ſignify, in any Language whatever, the Production of all Things out of nothing, *i. e.* out of no pre-exiſtent Matter. They denote, indeed, any Kind of Production or Formation; [i] ſometimes the making of one Subſtance out of another; [k] ſometimes the reſtoring a Thing to its former Perfection; and [l] ſometimes the doing of a ſtrange and wonderful Work; but, notwithſtanding this, [m] when we conſider, that the *Hebrew Language has no other Word to ſignify a Production out of nothing, but* BARAH, and that other Places in Scripture enforce that Acceptation; when we are called upon, in the Words of [n] that zealous Mother to her youngeſt Son, *to look upon the Heaven and the Earth, and all that is therein, and to conſider, that God made them of Things that were not; when by Faith we underſtand*, [o] as the Apoſtle argues, *that the Worlds were framed by the Word of God, ſo that Things which are ſeen, were not made of Things, which do appear; and*, by the leaſt Glance of Thought, can perceive, that nothing can be co-eternal with God; that Matter, if it be *uncreated*, muſt be ſelf-*exiſtent*, immenſe, independent, and, in ſhort, the very ſame with God, and conſequently God muſt undergo all the Forms and Changes of Matter; be this and that Thing, have this and that Quality, be hot and cold, moiſt and dry, be a Man and an Horſe, a Tree and a Fiſh, or any Thing elſe; when we conſider this, I ſay, we cannot but perſuade ourſelves, that *Creation* (as it relates to the Production of the World) muſt be underſtood in a *ſtrict* and *proper* Senſe: And, being agreed in the *Thing* itſelf, there needs be no Scruple in giving a new and heightening Signification to the *Word*, [p] eſpecially, ſince it is plain from a Paſſage in [q] *Galen*, where he compares *Moſes* and *Epicurus* together, that not only *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, but even *Heathens* themſelves, underſtood *Moſes* in this Senſe.

WERE there indeed any Impoſſibility in the Thing, the Multitude of Authorities would be no Sanction to this Opinion: But when we call in the Almighty Power of God to the Work, nothing, I conceive, can be ſaid to be impoſſible, except it implies a plain Contradiction, and what Contradiction, I pray, can there be in this, ——*that God ſhould give Exiſtence to that, which had none before?* For that is all we underſtand by Creation. [r] *To be*, indeed, and *not to be* at the *ſame* Time, implies a Contradiction; but to be, and not to be, at *divers* Times, does not; and the Reaſon is obvious, becauſe, tho' the Exiſtence of a Thing, in any one Inſtant, does perfectly exclude all Poſſibility of Non-exiſtence, for that Inſtant; yet the not being of a Thing in any Inſtant does not exclude all Poſſibility of it's being afterwards, when God Almighty pleaſes. [s] We can hardly think it a Repugnancy to Reaſon, that infinite Power ſhould raiſe an *Inſect* into Being without any *paſſive* Matter to work upon: And yet, if we can ſuppoſe that infinite Power can make an Inſect, it may as well produce a World out of nothing; [t] to ſay therefore, that the Power of God is *infinite*, and yet that he cannot exert it without a previous and paſſive Principle to

[g] *Stilling fleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [h] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [i] Gen. i. 21. [k] Iſa. lxv. 17. [l] Numb. xvi. 30. [m] *Stilling fleet*, ibid. [n] 2 Mac. vii. 28. [o] Heb. xi. 3. [p] *Stilling fleet*, ibid. [q] Galen de Uſu Part. Lib. xi. where he ingenuouſly confeſſes, that the Opinion of *Moſes*, which attributed the Production of all Things, out of no pre-exiſtent Matter, to God, was far more rational, than that of *Epicurus*, which aſſign'd it to a mere caſual Concourſe of *Atoms*. [r] *Nicholls*, ubi ſupra. [s] *Stilling fleet*, ubi ſupra. [t] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

to work upon, is to confound the Ideas of *finite* and *infinite*, and really to diveſt him of that Power, which we would appear, at the ſame Time, to attribute to him. For, if any Subſtance, actually in Being, is of Neceſſity pre-required to his Operation, then is his Power not *infinite*, but limited; foraſmuch as it depends, as to the Exerciſe of it, upon that Subſtance. A Power of Creation therefore is implied in the very Notion of a Deity; and tho' we cannot perfectly conceive how this mighty Work is effected, yet, in ourſelves, we find ſomething that gives us a faint Emblem of it, and ſee enough in the World to convince us of the Poſſibility of the Thing. [u] The Mind, we perceive, produces Thought, the Fire Heat, and the Sun Light, which are all diſtinct from the Subſtances that produce them; and yet, both Thought, Light, and Heat, are real Beings, that properly exiſt, tho' formed out of no pre-exiſtent Matter, and muſt therefore be produced out of nothing, either by the immediate Power of God continually acting, (which is moſt reaſonable) or by a ſubordinate Power, communicated to the Creature along with his Being. Now why is it not as eaſy for the Deity to produce Subſtances out of nothing, by his Almighty Power, as it is for a Creature to produce Accidents, by his finite and limited one? And why ſhould not God produce all Things out of nothing at firſt, as well as produce theſe Accidents, Modes, or Appearances, every Moment? The Philoſopher, who, from a lucky Concourſe of Atoms, or the more regular Diſpoſition of Matter and Motion, raiſes his *Hypotheſis*, forms an *imaginary* World to himſelf, and, by a Kind of *mental* Creation, makes every Thing riſe, as he calls for it; move, as he directs it; and take up the Place, that he aſſigns it in the *Syſtem*. And, if he perceives in himſelf, that he can do this, he ought, in all Modeſty, to acknowledge that God can form a *Deſign*, as well as he; can deviſe *Means* and *Inſtruments* for executing it, as well as he; and, after that is done, can, by the Word of his Power, ſtamp it into Being when he pleaſes: For why ſhould not God be as able to create a World in *Reality*, as the Philoſopher is to do it in *Imagination?*

Proved from natural Agents.

Ex nihilo nil fit, how applied.

'TIS a wrong Application therefore [x] of that famous Axiom, ſo much talked of among the Ancients, *Ex nihilo nil fit*, that [y] *Lucretius*, and others make, when they endeavour to carry it farther, than the Intention of the firſt *Atomiſts*, viz. to the diſproving of a Divine Creation of any Thing out of nothing, and conſequently, the Denial of a Deity. [z] The *Ancients* applied it only to natural Productions, and made the Senſe of it to be,——that whatever was brought into Being, which did not exiſt before, muſt have ſome Cauſe of its Exiſtence, and a Cauſe of ſufficient Power and Perfection to produce it. [a] The *Corpuſcular* Philoſophers made uſe of it afterwards, to decry the Doctrine of *ſubſtantial Forms* and *Qualities*, (which *Ariſtotle* and his Followers maintained) by aſſerting, that theſe *Forms* were nothing, and that all Alteration in Bodies depended upon the *Figure* and *Motion* of their Parts; but they no where extended it (till ſuch as denied the Exiſtence of a God ſtarted up) to the *primary* Production of Things, nor meant it as an Argument againſt the Divine Power of creating the World,

IN a Word, 'tis one of the natural Notions belonging to the ſupreme Being, to conceive of him, that he is *omnipotent*; and 'tis very reaſonable for us to believe, that our finite Underſtandings cannot comprehend the utmoſt Extent of Omnipotence. Tho' therefore the *making of ſomething out of nothing* does argue an inconceivable Power, yet ſince there is no *Contradiction* in it, and we find ſomething ſimilar in ourſelves that makes it ſeem *credible*, we ought to acquieſce in this Perſuaſion, without diſputing the Power of God, which we certainly cannot comprehend.

Creation in an improper Senſe.

THIS is what we call a *proper* Creation: And in this Manner, we may ſuppoſe, that the *Chaos*, or firſt Matter, all immaterial Subſtances, and ſimple or elementary Bodies were produced, But beſides this, there is another Kind of *Creation*, which is commonly called *improper*, becauſe it is the Production of Things out of ſome pre-exiſtent Matter; but out of ſuch Matter, as is ſo unfit to receive the Form and Impreſſion

[u] *Nicholls's* Conference, Vol. I. [x] *Cudworth's* Intel. Syſtem. [y] Nullam rem ex nihilo gigni Divinitùs unquam, *Lucr.* [z] *Nicholls's* Conference. [a] *Empedocles's* Verſes, quoted by *Plutarch* and *Ariſtotle*, are the moſt ancient Pieces in *Grecian* Philoſophy, where this Axiom is urged: And yet he only makes uſe of it to prove the ſame Quantity of Matter ſtill abiding in the World, and that it is not produced in the Generation of Things, nor deſtroy'd in their Corruption. *Nicholls's* Conference, Vol. I.

Νήπιοι, &c.

Children in Knowledge! vainly to ſuppoſe,
That all that's born, from *Nothing* has aroſe;
Or when, in Death, the ſcatter'd Parts do fly,
To think, that *Ought* does into *Nothing* die.

preſſion put upon it, that it may, in a Manner, be looked upon as no Matter at all, and its Aſſumption of that Form be called a *Creation*, but ſtill an *improper* one, becauſe it had a *Medium*. And in this Manner, we conceive, that the ſeveral Species of corporeal Beings, which furniſh and adorn the World with ſo much Luſtre and Variety, were compos'd; as we ſhall have Occaſion to ſhew, when we come to relate, with *Moſes*, how, at the Call and Command of God, every Thing aroſe from the *Primordial* Maſs.

SECT. I.

The ARISTOTELIAN *Hypotheſis rejected.*

" BUT if the World be eternal, *ſays the Ariſtotelian preſently*, what becomes " of the Creation then? If Things have, all along, continued in the ſame " Condition they are at preſent, and from all Eternity there has been a conti- " nued Succeſſion of Men and other Creatures, [b] without any *firſt Cauſe* of their " Being, what a piteous Figure does the *Jewiſh Hiſtorian* make, with ſo groſs a " Miſtake at his firſt ſetting out? And yet, that the World is eternal, we have ſe- " veral good Reaſons, together with the Teſtimony of many ancient Philoſophers, " to convince us."

THIS is what we call the *Ariſtotelian* Hypotheſis: And to obſerve a little how it came to be introduced (after the World, for many Ages, had been in Poſſeſſion of a contrary Opinion) we are to conſider, that, after the Death of *Thales*, the firſt Founder of *Natural* Philoſophy among the *Grecians*, (who [c] *made God the eldeſt of Beings, becauſe unbegotten; the World the moſt beautiful, becauſe God's Workmanſhip; and the Water the only Material, from whence it was created)* that, after his Death, I ſay, [d] his Succeſſors began to differ with one another, and, every one making it his Glory to contradict his Maſter, ſome ſet up *Air*, and ſome *Fire*, for the Principle of the World's Production; which occaſioned a Multiplicity of *Sects* preſently, and turned that Philoſophy, which at firſt went much upon the *original* Tradition of the World, into Diſputes and Altercations, tending as much to the finding out of Truth, (as one expreſſes it) as the fighting of two Cocks on a Dunghil does to the finding out of the Jewel that lies there. *The Riſe of the Ariſtotelian Hypotheſis.*

IN this Degeneracy of Philoſophy aroſe the Opinion of the World's *Eternity*. For the certain Tradition of the World being now loſt in a Crowd of *Philoſophers*, affecting to amuſe all Mankind with *novel* Notions, and ſpruce *Theories*, inſomuch, that no convictive Proof or Evidence could be given, *that Things were ever otherwiſe, than they are now*; it was thought at laſt the moſt defenſible Tenet, to aſſert, that the World never had a Beginning, nor would have an End, but that it always did, and always would continue in the ſame Condition it was in. This Opinion, tho' *Ariſtotle* ſeems to make himſelf the Author of it, was firſt broached by [e] *Ocellus Lucanus*, to whom the *Stagyrite* has not been a little beholden, tho' he wanted the Ingenuity to acknowledge it.

THE only Argument however of any Weight, that the Admirers of this *Hypotheſis* have to truſt to, is taken from the Nature and Attributes of God. 'Twas a worthy Saying that of [f] *Plato, that the Goodneſs of God was the Cauſe of the Production of the World*; but from this Saying, *ſome modern Platoniſts have inferred the Neceſſity of the World's Eternity*: " For, if God be always good, ſay they, he muſt always " have an Object to exerciſe his Goodneſs upon, *as the Sun diſperſes his Light, as* " *ſoon as he is himſelf.*" [g] Were God indeed of the Nature of the Sun, it would be ſo with him; but there is this vaſt Difference between them, that, tho' God be eſſentially and neceſſarily good, yet the Communications of his Goodneſs are the Effects of his Will, and not merely of his Nature. Tho' therefore it be proper to aſſert *An Argument for the World's Eternity anſwered.*

[b] Tho' the Philoſophers we now ſpeak of did aſſert a Deity, which, in ſome Senſe, might be called the Cauſe of the World, yet they withal aſſerted, that the World was co-equal with God himſelf; and ſo, though there might be ſome Priority in the *Order of Cauſes* between them, yet there was none in *Order of Time and Duration*; as we ſee the Light, though it flows from the Sun, yet the Sun is never without Light. *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ, page 275. [c] Diog. Laert. Vit. Thal. [d] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [e] This *Ocellus Lucanus* is the Only Author of any great Antiquity, that theſe *Eternaliſts* have to boaſt of; and yet he lived not long before *Plato*, and wrote about the Year of the World 3580, which is eleven hundred Years later than *Moſes*, and almoſt forty Years later than the lateſt of the Prophets: Beſides the manifeſt Suſpicion that his Book *Of the Nature of the Univerſe*, ſo much talked of, was of a much later Date, and perhaps the Compoſition of ſome *Ariſtotelian* Philoſopher, not much older than *Simplicius* or *Philoponus*. [f] *Plato*'s Timæus. [g] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ.

ſo much Goodneſs in God, as none can be imagined greater, and from the Communication of his Goodneſs to aſſert, that the World had its Being; yet it muſt be acknowledged, that God is an Agent infinitely wiſe and free, who could have refrained from making the World, or could have made it otherwiſe; and therefore thoſe, that make the Expreſſions of the Divine Bounty neceſſary, in order to ſettle the World's *Eternity*, and that he might always have an Object, whereon to exerciſe his Goodneſs, take as much from his *Self-Sufficiency*, as they would ſeem to flatter his Goodneſs. For God cannot be himſelf without his Goodneſs; and therefore if his Goodneſs cannot be without ſome Creature to ſhew and diſplay itſelf upon, God cannot be *perfect* or happy without his Creatures; becauſe theſe are neceſſary Iſſues of his Goodneſs, and conſequently, the Being of the Creature becomes neceſſary to the Being of God; which is the higheſt Derogation imaginable from the *abſolute Perfection* of the Divine Nature.

THIS being premiſed, we come now to conſider the grand Queſtion, *whether the World was created, and had a Beginning or not?* And becauſe this is a Queſtion concerning an *ancient Matter of Fact*, which can only be decided either by *Teſtimonies*, or by *Probabilities of Reaſon*, let us in the firſt Place ſee, how far Teſtimony, I mean *human* Teſtimony (for we ſhall hardly be allowed to make uſe of *Divine*, in this Caſe) makes for the World's Creation.

1. *The World's Creation prov'd from Teſtimony.*

[h] THAT there was a general Tradition, concerning the Beginning of the World, and its Creation by the Power of God, we have the concurring Teſtimony of the moſt ancient Nations, [i] the *Egyptians*, *Chaldeans*, and [k] *Phœnicians*, from whom the *Grecians* derived their Learning; as well as the Teſtimony of the moſt barbarous Nations, the [l] *Indians*, who believed that the World did begin, and would have an End, and the People of *Peru*, [m] who, upon the firſt Diſcovery of *America*, were found to worſhip one chief God, under the Name or Title of *The Maker of the Univerſe*.

THAT this was not a blind Tradition, but the juſt Reſult of Reaſon and Enquiry, we have the joint Opinions of the moſt ancient Philoſophers, that were Heads and Leaders of *Sects*, ſuch as *Thales*, *Anaxagoras*, *Pythagoras*, &c. and the Profeſſion of the moſt eminent Writers, that ſucceeded them, ſuch as *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Tully*, *Seneca*, &c. to convince us. Particularly of *Thales*, [n] *Tully* tells us, that he was the firſt of all the Philoſophers, who enquired into theſe Matters, and that, according to him, *Water was the Beginning of all Things, out of which God faſhioned the World:* Of the *Brachmans*, a chief Sect of Philoſophers among the *Indians*, [o] *Strabo* informs us, that they were of the ſame Sentiments with the *Grecians, that the World was made of Water*; and in this they agreed with the Scripture-Account, for *Moſes* tells us, that *the Spirit of God moved upon the Face of the Waters*, which [p] St *Peter* expreſſes thus, *that by the Word of God the Heavens and the Earth* (for ſo the *Hebrews* call the World) *were of old* ἐξ ὕδατος συνεστῶσα, *made, or conſtituted of Water*, not *ſtanding out of the Water*, as our Tranſlation renders it. Nay, even [q] *Ariſtotle* himſelf, who was the great Aſſerter of the *Eternity* of the World, gives us this Account why the Gods were anciently repreſented by the Heathens, as ſwearing by the River *Styx*, *becauſe Water was ſuppoſed to be the Principle of all Things*; and in the Book [r] *de Mundo*, he acknowledges it to have been an ancient Saying, and general Tradition among Men, *that all Things are of God, and were made by him:* And therefore we may conclude this Article with the Teſtimony of [s] *Maximus Tyrius*, to the ſame Purpoſe. "However Men differ, in other Points, "*ſays he*, yet they are all agreed in this Principle, that there is one God, King "and Father of all Things, *&c.* This the *Greeks* ſay; this the *Barbarians*; this, "thoſe that live upon the CONTINENT, and thoſe that dwell by the Sea; the "Wiſe, and the Unwiſe."

WE have likewiſe an Hiſtory, [t] that has generally been owned to be the moſt ancient Book in the World, and has always been eſteemed of great Authority, even amongſt thoſe *Heathens*, who do not believe its Divine Inſpirations, I mean, the Hiſtory of *Moſes*; to which no Man of Learning will deny, at leaſt, the ordinary Credit of other *ancient* Writings. Now *Moſes* gives us ſuch a plain, eaſy, and unaffected

[h] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [i] *Wilkins*, of the Principles of Natural Religion. It appears from *Diogenes Laërtius*, that the *Egyptians* did conſtantly believe that the World had a Beginning, and was corruptible; that it was ſpherical, and the Stars of the Nature of Fire, and that the Soul was of an immortal Nature, *&c.* *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [k] Grot. de Veritate Chr. Rel. Lib. i. [l] Strab. Geog. Lib. xv. [m] *Acoſta*'s Hiſt. [n] De naturâ Deorum, Lib. i. [o] Geogr. Lib. xv. [p] 2 Pet. iii. 5. [q] Metaph. Lib. i. Cap. 3. [r] Cap. 4. [s] Diſſert. I. [t] *Wilkins*'s Nat. Rel.

affected Account of the *Original* of the World, and the moſt remarkable Paſſages of the firſt Ages, (particularly of the Plantation of the Earth by the Diſperſion of *Noah*'s Family) ſo agreeable to the moſt ancient Remains of *Heathen* Writers, as muſt needs recommend it to every impartial Man's Belief. They indeed, [u] in their Computation of ancient Times, differ very much from the Account of *Moſes*: The *Chaldeans*, for Inſtance, reckoned forty-three thouſand Years, from the Beginning of the World, to the Time of *Alexander*; but this Way of Computation is acknowledged by *Diodorus Siculus*, and *Plutarch*, (very credible Perſons, and great Searchers into ancient Books) to be meant of *Lunar* Years or Months, which, being reduced to *Solar* Years, will fall out to be much about the ſame Time, aſſign'd by *Moſes* for the Creation.

THUS it appears that, as far as Teſtimony is an Argument in this Caſe, we have the Tradition of all Nations, both civiliz'd and barbarous, the general Opinion of the moſt antient Philoſophers, and the common Conſent of the moſt conſiderable Writers, to convince us, that the World had a Beginning from God. Let us now in the next Place ſee, what are the Arguments that Reaſon offers in Confirmation of this Point. II. *From Reaſon.*

[x] THE Creation, we know, is a prodigious Collection of an infinite Number of Things, all different, and without any eſſential Connection of the Exiſtence of one with the Exiſtence of another. The Heavens can exiſt without the Stars, and every Star exiſts *independent* on any other; the Air might be without the Heavens, without the Stars, without the Firmament, without the Earth, and without the Sea. The Exiſtence of the Earth does not depend on that of the Air, nor the Exiſtence of the Sea upon that of the Earth, the Air, or the Stars. Nay, one Part of the Earth may exiſt without another Part, and every Thing, to the ſmalleſt Atom, has its proper Exiſtence, independent on that of the reſt of the World. To prove then that the World has exiſted from all Eternity, as it is now, we muſt ſay, that it had its Exiſtence from itſelf; and (ſince it never was made) that it could not receive it from any other. Now, as it cannot have its Exiſtence in *itſelf*, without having it in all its *Parts*, even to the moſt minute Atom, we muſt own, that there are as many ſelf-exiſtent and eternal Beings, as there are, not only viſible Parts, but even Atoms in the Univerſe; and ſo, by aſſerting the World's Eternity, we plunge ourſelves, the very firſt Step we take, into a Gulf of *Abſurdities*, which we cannot get out of, without acknowledging that the World, in its *Whole*, as well as its *Parts*, has had a Beginning. *From the Independency of Bodies one upon another.*

BUT farther; [y] It is natural to the Mind of Man to conſider any *compounded* Thing, as having been once more *ſimple*, whether the Compoſition be a Mixture of many *Ingredients*, (as moſt terreſtrial Bodies are) or whether it be *organical*, but eſpecially if it be organical: For a Thing, that conſiſts of a Multitude of Pieces aptly compacted, we cannot but conceive, that it had thoſe Pieces, at one Time or other, put together. 'Twere hard to conceive an *eternal Watch*, whoſe Pieces were never ſeparate, nor in any other Form than a Watch; or an *eternal Houſe*, whoſe Materials were never aſunder, but always in the Shape of an Houſe; and much harder is it then to conceive an *eternal* World, which is made up of more Ingredients, and more various Subſtances, the living Part of it eſpecially, having much more Variety of Parts, and multifarious Conſtruction, than any Houſe, or any artificial Thing. So that by Nature and Neceſſity we ſeem to be led, as much to conceive this great Machine of the World to have been once in a State of greater *Simplicity*, than it is now; as to conceive a Watch, an Houſe, or any other Structure, to have been once in its firſt, and ſimple *Materials*. *From their Compoſition.*

'TIS natural for us to conceive farther, that whatever we ſee *finite* and liable to Corruption, (as the ſeveral Parts of the World, we are acquainted with, ſeem to be) [z] cannot *Their Corruptibility.*

[u] When *Alexander* entered *Egypt* with his victorious Army, the Prieſts, who pretended to have an exact Chronology of other Nations, as well as their own, for ſome Myriads of Years, preſented him with an Account of the *Perſian* Empire, which he gained by Conqueſt, and the *Macedonian*, which he received by Birth, of each 8000 Years: Whereas nothing can be more certain, than that the *Perſian* Empire, whether we ſuppoſe it to begin in *Cyrus*, or in *Medus*, was not then 300 Years old, and the *Macedonian*, which began in *Coranus*, not 500. They therefore, who made ſo large Additions to advance the Antiquity of other Nations, may very well, without any Breach of Charity, be ſuſpected to have extended their Account much higher, for the Honour of their own Country. *Pearſon* on the Creed. [x] *M. Martin's* Diſcourſe of Nat. Rel. [y] *Burnet's* Theory of the Earth. [z] This *Lucretius* urges as a convincing Proof that the World was not eternal:

Quare etiam nativa neceſſe eſt conſiteare
Hæc eadem; neque enim, mortali corpore quæ ſunt
Ex infinito jam tempore adhuc potuiſſent
Immenſi validas ævi contemnere vires.

cannot have exiſted from all Eternity: For whatever is finite, and tending to its End, had a Beginning; whatever is *corruptible*, had its Nature limited by the Hand that made it, and what is not *immortal* was not *eternal*. If then we caſt our Eyes upon the *Surface* of the Earth, there we meet with Hills, Mountains, and Promontories, none of which could have been viſible, and extant at this Day, if the World had been from Eternity; for then, Millions of Ages ago, they muſt have ſunk down into the Valleys, and been loſt in the Bottom of the Sea. That the Mountains and higher Parts of the Earth are continually ſinking, being blown and waſh'd away by the Winds and Rains *without*, and waſted *within* by Streams and Currents, in their Veins and Crannies; and that the ſtrong and rocky Parts of it are ſometimes weakened by ſubterraneous Fires, or torn and tumbled down by Storms and Earthquakes, and ſo buried in the Caverns, that are under them; this is obvious to common Obſervation. If then the World had been eternal, long ago muſt the higheſt Eminences have been brought to a Level, and laid under Water. For whatever moulders, or is waſh'd away from them, is carried down into the lower Grounds, and into the Sea, never to be brought back again by any Circulation; ſo that while the higher Parts are continually waſting, and the lower continually gaining, the ſubſiding Earth will, in Proceſs of Time, not only make an *Equality*, but even choak up the very Channels of the Sea; and raiſing the Waters every where upon the Surface of the Earth, turn that into one confus'd *Ocean*, or at leaſt, a noiſome and uninhabitable Marſh. I do not ſay that this would be effected in ten thouſand Years Time; but take twenty if you pleaſe, take an hundred Thouſand, take a Million, 'tis all one; for you take the one as eaſily as the other from Eternity: Nor is it of any Moment, how little you ſuppoſe the Mountains to decreaſe; 'tis but taking more Time, and the ſame Effect ſtill follows. For ſuppoſe them to waſte but as much as a Grain of Muſtard-Seed every Day, yet (what is nothing to Eternity) in ſome Thouſands of Ages there muſt be an End of them. The Air alone, and little Drops of Rain have defaced the ſtrongeſt and proudeſt Monuments of the *Greeks* and *Romans*; and allow them but Time enough, and they will, of themſelves, beat down the Rocks into the Sea, and the Hills into the Valleys: But then, if we take in the above-mentioned Cauſes, that work with more Violence, we both ſhorten the Time, and make the Effect more ſure.

The Earth's Surface.

Its Petrefaction.

IF we look into the *Bowels* of the Earth, we there meet with Stones, and other hard Subſtances, which, if the World were eternal, would, long ago, have overſpread the Surface of the Earth, and made it uncultivable. [a] That Stones do grow is granted by all; and Philoſophers have made it clear, that the Way of their Augmentation is by the *Concretion* of *ſaline* Particles, which according to their Contexture with more or leſs *terrene* Matter make them either *fine* as Adamants, or *coarſe* as Pebbles, and Freeſtone. By Experience likewiſe we find, that theſe Concretions are ſo ſtrangely durable, that hardly any Time is able to diſſipate and diſſolve them; for the *Marbles*, in the great Pyramid of *Egypt*, that lie *inwards*, and are not expos'd to the Waſhings of the Rain, and the Frettings of the nitrous Air, are not in the leaſt decay'd, tho' they have ſtood there ſo many thouſand Years. Now, if Stones do continually increaſe without any ſenſible Decay; upon Suppoſition that the World has continued from Eternity, it would, by this Time, have been turned into one maſſy Rock by this eternal *Petrefaction*, and the Huſbandman been forced to uſe *Mattocks* inſtead of *Ploughs* for its Cultivation. As yet indeed, I do not ſay that this Increaſe of *ſaxeous* Matter is any great Inconveniency to the Earth, and therefore, I reckon it an Argument of its late Creation; nor can I think it any Imperfection in this great Work of the Deity, which is well enough contrived for a World of *ſome thouſand Years Duration*, but not of an *eternal* one: And therefore I am apt to believe, that his infinite *Power* made it in this wiſe, to give us a *phyſical* Proof of its daily Decay and Tendency to a Diſſolution; and that his infinite *Wiſdom* thinks not proper to amend theſe Decays, in the ſame Manner as we, when we have but a ſhort Time in an Houſe or Eſtate, take not much Care to repair it, if it will but continue for our Time.

Its Inhabitants, and late Cultivation.

IF we conſider the ſeveral Countries of the Earth, their late Diſcovery, and Want of Cultivation, the Manner of their being peopled, and the gradual Increaſe of their Inhabitants, we ſhall likewiſe perceive, that the World, inſtead of being *eternal*, is but a very *novel* Exiſtence. [b] From Writers of ſo late a Date, as *Homer* and *Heſiod*, it

[a] *Nicholls*'s Conference, and *Burnet*'s Theory.

[b] *Vid. Nicholls*'s ibid. *Wilkins*'s Nat. Rel. *Pearſon*, on the Creed, and *Burnet*'s Theory.

it plainly appears, that, in the early Ages of the World, Mankind led generally a Sort of *paſtoral* Life, and oftentimes chang'd their Abode from one Country, or one Part of the Country to another, which could not have been done, if the World had been populous; for then, each Parcel of Land would have had a proper *Poſſeſſor*, who would not have given up his Right to any new Comers. But, in thoſe Days, Countries had ſo thin a Stock of Inhabitants, that there was Land ſufficient, not only for ſingle Perſons, but alſo for vaſt Colonies of Men, which, before it was occupied by them, lay for any Body that would take it. Nothing is more famous in ancient Hiſtory, than theſe *Tranſmigrations* of Inhabitants from one Country to another; nothing more notorious, than their leaving the Land uncultivated, and immenſurable Deſerts behind them; nothing more certain, than their Ignorance how other Nations lived, and very late Diſcoveries of diſtant Countries; all which can be imputed, not ſo much to a Want of Genius, as the Want of Men and proper Inſtruments, which Time had not yet produced. In the Writings of thoſe, who have ſearched into Antiquity, we find, [c] ſays *Tertullian*, "that Mankind has, by little and "little, increaſed and multiplied; that the *Aborigines (thus the Men were called, whoſe "Original was not known)* went to inhabit, ſome one Country, and ſome another; "——that afterwards being become more numerous, they ſpread themſelves by "Colonies into other Places.——Thus did the World, from Day to Day, become "more inhabited, and more cultivated: —— That, which aforetime had been "frightful Deſerts, was changed into fruitful and delicious Countries; Foreſts gave "way to Agriculture, and ſavage Beaſts to Flocks of Sheep; Rocks have been "levell'd; Marſhes drain'd, and, in Proceſs of Time, Towns have been built, "ſurpaſſing in Number the Cottages and rural Huts that were before."

'Tis not yet two thouſand Years, ſince the *Iſland*, we live in, was found out by People of no great Diſtance in the *Continent*, to be inhabited: 'Tis not a great deal more than two hundred Years, ſince one half of the Globe, that we now know, and ſail ſo often to, lay undiſcovered; and 'tis not unlikely, that a very conſiderable Part of it is yet unknown: But now, had the Earth been from everlaſting, every Corner of it had been found out, every Waſte cultivated, every Foreſt made plain; for the Inhabitants of it would have ſwarmed, and been more numerous, than the Sand on the Sea-Shore, many Ages ago; whereas we find that it is not yet ſufficiently ſtocked, and, notwithſtanding the daily Increaſe of its Inhabitants, there is Room ſtill left for many Millions more.

The Lateneſs of Hiſtory.

[d] If we look again into the *Records*, that give an Account of ancient Times; nay, if we peruſe the *Fictions* of the Poets, we ſhall find not the leaſt Footſtep of any Thing, exceeding the received Opinion of the Time of the World's Beginning. Now 'tis very wonderful, that, if the World was eternal, we ſhould have no Hiſtory of above three thouſand Years ſtanding; nay, even that *Greece itſelf*, in ſo many Myriads of Ages, ſhould offer us nothing of this Kind, until the Time of *Herodotus* and *Thucydides*; and *Egypt*, the School of *Greece*, not long before, ſhould know nothing but a little *romantick Chronology*, and ſome *myſtical Hieroglyphicks*. [e] Had the Race of Men been from everlaſting, or even as old, as the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians* make it, how ſhould it come to paſs, that the Invention of Poetry ſhould find no Actions worthy its heroick Verſe, before the *Trojan* or *Theban* War, or the fam'd Adventure of the *Argonauts?* For whatſoever the Muſes (thoſe Daughters of Memory) rehears'd before thoſe Times, is nothing elſe, but the Creation of the World, and the Nativity of their Gods. Were there, from all Eternity, no memorable Actions done, till about this Time? Or, had Mankind no Way, till of late, to record, and propagate them to Poſterity? It is much, that, if Men were from Eternity, they ſhould not, in all that long Duration, find out the Way of *Writing*. Writing, it muſt be owned, is no eaſy Invention: 'Tis the Repreſentation of an Image, or the Picture of another Repreſentative; (for as Letters are the Repreſentation of

[c] Tertull. de Animâ.

[d] Vid. *Pearſon*, on the Creed. *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. *Nicholls*'s Conference, and *Wilkins*'s Nat. Rel.

[e] This Argument to me is the ſtronger, becauſe it comes from *Epicurus*, who can be thought no Favourer of any Religion, as his Senſe is delivered by *Lucretius:*

Præterea, ſi nulla fuit Genitalis Origo
Terraï & cœli, ſemperque æterna fuere:
Cur, ſupra, bellum Thebanum, & funera Trojæ,
Non aliis alii quoque Res cecinere Poëtæ?
Quo tot Facta virûm toties cecidêre? neque uſquam
Æternis Famæ monumentis inſita florent? *Lucret.* Lib. v.

Quis dubitet, quin Mundus recens ac novus ſit, cum Hiſtoria Græca bis mille annorum Hiſtoriam vix contineat? *Macrob. Saturnal.* Lib. i.

Words, ſo Words are the Repreſentation of Thoughts) and therefore it required no ſmall Penetration, to deviſe a Method of doing this; but then, that among ſo many Millions of ingenious Men, in ſo many Millions of Ages, an Invention, even more difficult than this, ſhould be happily hit on, and ſucceſsfully purſued, is no wonderful Thing at all.

Of Arts and Sciences.

IF we look into *Arts* and *Sciences*, whether ſuch as be uſeful, or ornamental to human Life, we ſhall find their Invention and Origin too late to give any Sanction to the World's Eternity. [f] How imperfect was the Geography of the Ancients! How imperfect their Knowledge of the Earth! How imperfect their Navigation! Can we imagine, if there had been Men from everlaſting, a Sea as now, and all Materials for Shipping, as much as we have, that Men could have been ſo ignorant both of the Land and Sea, as 'tis manifeſt they were, until theſe later Ages? They had very different Fancies concerning the Figure of the Earth. They knew no Land beyond the Continent, and that but imperfectly too, for the *Torrid Zone* they thought uninhabitable; and yet they were Men, that had the ſame Wit and Paſſions, the ſame Motives and Incitements, that we have. How then is it poſſible, that neither the Ambition of Princes, nor Hopes of Gain in private Perſons; neither the Deſire of Knowledge, nor the Glory of Diſcoveries, nor any other Paſſion or Conſideration, could ever move them, in that endleſs Time, to try their Fortunes upon the Sea, and know ſomething more of the World they inhabited? *They were generally ſtupid*, it may be thought; yet, in the Courſe of infinite Generations, 'tis ſtrange that there ſhould be no great *Geniuſes*, no Perſons of extraordinary Parts and Reſolution, to attempt Things above the reſt. They knew not the Uſe of the *Load-ſtone*, 'tis true, nor had they [g] the Mariner's Needle; but then this is the Wonder, that, neither that Invention or any other ſhould be brought to Light, 'till t'other Day, as it were, if the World had ſtood from Eternity: I ſay this, or any other *practical* Invention; for ſuch Things, when they are once found out and known, are not eaſily loſt again, becauſe they are of daily Uſe.

To bring the Matter home; *Seneca* tells, that the Beginning of Arts and Sciences was not above a thouſand Years before the Time he lived in; and indeed the Original of them is ſo very recent, that there are ſcarce any, whoſe firſt Inventor is not recorded in Story. How could the World then, or at leaſt how could *Greece*, be, from all Eternity, without the common Tools of Carpentry, the Saw, the Augre, the Plane, and the Plumb-Line, till *Dedalus* had the Happineſs to invent them? Did Mankind for ever live upon Roots, and Herbs, and Acorns, till *Ceres*, or (which is all one) the *Egyptian Iſis* found out the Method of ſowing Wheat and Barley? How could they be Strangers to ſuch eaſy Inventions, as thoſe of Wine and Honey, till *Bacchus* ſhewed them to the World? Could no one know how to cut and poliſh Stone, till *Cadmus* taught the Way? And (to be ſhort in our Inſtances) how came the Art of Dialling to be ſo lately found out, to mention nothing of Clocks and Watches, of the Invention of Guns and other military Engines, of Coining, and the like? The *Romans* had not ſo much as a Sun-Dial, till the ſecond *Punick* War; and when they had one, they placed it in the [h] *Forum*, and were forced to make uſe of it alone, for above an hundred Years, as *Pliny* tells us, tho' it never went right all the while. [i] Now it is not imaginable, that ſo ſagacious, ſo buſy a Creature as Mankind is, could all of them have lived, an Infinity of Ages, deſtitute of theſe Arts, ſo advantageous to the Benefit of human Life, without ſome ſucceſsful Attempts, to ſupply their Wants by them.

AND if they were ſo tardy in the Invention of *practical* Arts, ſo neceſſary and beneficial to human Life, 'tis the leſs Wonder that we find ſo ſmall Advances made, in all *natural* and *experimental* Philoſophy, in Aſtronomy, Chymiſtry, and other *theoretical* Sciences. How little has been diſcovered, till of late, either of our own Bodies, or of the Body of the Earth, and of the Functions or Motions of Nature in either! What more obvious, would one think, than the Circulation of the Blood? What

[f] Vid. *Burnet*'s Theory. *Wilkins*'s Nat. Rel. and *Nichells*'s Conference, Vol. I. [g] The Diſcovery of the *Magnet*, and conſequently of the *Mariner's Needle*, ſome attribute to *Flavio Amalphi*, (whom others call *John Goia of Amalphi*) an *Arabian*, in the Year of our Lord 1360. Others aſcribe it to the *Chineſe*, who diſcover'd it to *Paulus Venetus*; while others make it as ancient as King *David*: But *Gaſſendi* (Animad. page 364.) is of Opinion, that it was found out by a *French* Man, about the Year MCC, ſince it is mentioned by one *Guyotus Provineus*, a *French* Poet of that Time, who calls the Compaſs *Marineta*: To which *Gaſſendi* alſo adds, that it was moſt probably a *French* Invention, becauſe the *North Point* is, by all Nations, mark'd in their *Compaſſes* by a *Flower-de-Luce*, which is the Arms of *France*. [h] *Wotton*'s ancient and modern Learning, and *Hale*'s Orig. of Mankind. [i] *Pliny*'s Nat. Hiſt. Lib. vii. Cap. 60. [i] *Wilkins*'s Nat. Rel.

What can more excite our Curioſity, than the flowing and ebbing of the Sea? than the Nature of Metals and Minerals? And yet theſe are either yet unknown, or [k] were at leaſt unknown, before this laſt Age, which has made greater Progreſs in Diſquiſitions of this Nature, than all Ages put together: Nor does the whole Maſs of Knowledge in this Earth ſeem to be ſo great, but that a few Ages more, with ſome happy Geniuſes in them, may bring to Light all that we are capable to underſtand, in this State of Mortality.

I MIGHT farther proceed, and ſhew the Novelty of the World's Original, [l] from the firſt Foundation of Kingdoms and Empires; from the firſt Inſtitution of religious Worſhip among the *Heathens*; the Plantation of particular Countries and Iſlands; the Hiſtory of Families, and the Account of our own Succeſſions, which, [m] upon a moderate Computation, are not yet an hundred and thirty-two Generations from *Adam*: But I have been long enough in this Argument, and indeed have dwelt the rather upon it, becauſe the contrary *Hypotheſis* has been, of late, made the Retreat of ſuch, as diſlike the Being of a God; and is thought a *Fort* more tenable, than that *giddy* and *fantaſtical* one, which we come next to conſider.

SECT. II.

The EPICUREAN *Hypotheſis expos'd.*

"THE Opinion of the *Epicurean* in Subſtance is this:——[n] "They ſuppoſe the "Matter, of which the World is conſtituted, to be eternal and ſelf-exiſtent; "and that, before it was brought into the Form and Order wherein we now ſee it, "there was an infinite empty *Space*, wherein an infinite Number of the little Parts "of this Matter of various Figures, but equally ponderous and ſolid (for which Rea- "ſon they are called *Atoms*) did move and play; and being always in Motion, did, "after infinite Trials and Encounters, without any Counſel or Deſign, and without "the Diſpoſal of any wiſe and intelligent Being, at laſt, by a lucky Caſualty, en- "tangle and ſettle themſelves in this beautiful and regular Frame of the World. For "they ſuppoſe, not only that the Earth and all its living Creatures, but even the great "Syſtems of the heavenly and elementary Bodies, as well as the Souls and Bodies of "Men, were formed by Chance, or by the fortuitous Concourſe and Coheſion of "theſe Atoms."

[o] THIS was their Hypotheſis: And what gave Occaſion to it, was a Diſguſt taken at the Doctrine of *Forms* and *ſubſtantial Qualities*, wherewith *Ariſtotle*, and ſome others before him, were wont to explain the *Phenomena* of Nature. If a Room was but enlightened by bringing in a Candle, the *Ariſtotelian* uſed to ſay, that this was done *by the Generation of the Form of Light*; if Fire was extinguiſh'd by throwing on Water, that this was done *by the Corruption of the Form of Fire*; and in this trifling Way they accounted for moſt Things. [p] *Democritus* was the firſt, that found Fault with theſe *Solutions*, and, obſerving what was done in the World by the Strength of *Matter* and *Motion*, he introduced the Doctrine of *Atoms*; and *Epicurus*, lighting *accidentally* on his Book, fell in Love with his Philoſophy, and ran entirely into his Sentiments. 'Tis very probable, that their firſt Inſtitution of theſe Atoms was only to give a better Solution of the Appearances of Nature, than what the Doctrine of *Forms* and *real Qualities* had done: And therefore they aſſerted (not unjuſtly) that *Generation* and *Corruption* were cauſed by nothing elſe, but the Coalition or Separation of *The Riſe of it.*

[k] The Circulation of the Blood, which to us is a modern Diſcovery, and aſcrib'd to Dr *Harvey*, has been known in *China*, according to *Voſſius*, 4000 Years, *which ſeems to be a Miſtake*, tho' 'tis certain that that People have wonderful Skill in Pulſes. *Baker*'s Reflect. on Learning. [l] Vid. *Hale*'s primitive Origin. of Mankind. [m] Vid. *Pearſon*, on the Creed, page 68. [n] Vid. *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sac. *Hale*'s Origination. *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. and *Ray*, on the Creation. [o] This Account of the World's Original (as abſurd as it is) *Lucretius* has very elegantly expreſſed in the following Verſes:

Sed quibus ille modis conjectus Materiaï
Fundârit Cœlum, ac Terram, Pontique profunda
Soliſque & Lunæ Curſus, ex Ordine ponam.
Nam certè neque Conſilio Primordia Rerum
Ordine ſe quæque, atque ſagaci mente locârunt,
Nec quos quæque darent Motus pepigere profectò:
Sed quia multa modis multis Primordia Rerum
Ex infinito jam tempore percita plagis,
Ponderibuſque ſuis conſuêrunt, concita ferri,
Omnimodiſque coire, atque Omnia pertentare,
Quæcunque inter ſe poſſent congreſſa creare:
Propterea fit, uti magnum volgata per ævum,
Omnigenos Cœtus, & Motus experiendo,
Tandem ea conveniant, quæ ut convenere, repente
Magnarum Rerum fiunt Exordia ſæpe,
Terraï, Maris, & Cœli, Generiſque Animantum. *Luc.* L. v.

[p] Vid. in the Lives of the Philoſophers, that of *Democritus*.

of the Particles, whereof a Body was compoſed, and that all the various *Affections* of Things proceeded from their different Figure, Order, and Poſition. But finding the Succeſs of their *Invention*, they gave their Fancies a Range, and, in the Concluſion, came to affirm, that there was nothing but *Matter* and *Motion* in the World, and that the Origin of the Univerſe proceeded from no wiſer Principle, than Chance, or the caſual Concourſe of their Atoms: Therein giving the World a ſad Inſtance of the Proneneſs of our Minds, to be *intoxicated* with thoſe Opinions we are once in Love with, for otherwiſe we could ſcarce ſuppoſe, that Men of Learning and ſober Conſideration would ever embrace a *Scheme*, that had no other Foundation, but a Set of ſuch precarious and abſurd Suppoſitions, as were ſcandalous for Philoſophers to make uſe of.

The Confutation of it.

[q] THEIR very *Principia*, or Atoms of infinite Number, floating in an infinite *Vacuity*, is a mere *Fiction*, that has neither Truth, nor Evidence, nor Probability in it. [r] The *Gravity* of theſe Atoms, in ſuch an empty Space, where there can be no Impulſion from other Bodies, nor any Attraction from any *magnetic* Principles (which ſome account the Cauſe of *Gravitation*) is abſurd. [s] The *Motion* of theſe Atoms, in this great *Vacuum*, unleſs firſt excited by ſome intelligent, *active* Principle, is intirely fabulous, and impoſſible. [t] The *Declination* of their Motion is a childiſh Fiction; for either they all decline, and then they will no more meet, than if they deſcend *perpendicularly*; or ſome decline, and others fall perpendicularly; but then (as [u] *Tully* derides this Conceit) [x] "What Cauſe is there in Nature, that turns them "aſide? Or do they caſt Lots among themſelves, which ſhall decline, which not? "Or why do they decline the leaſt Interval that may be, and not a greater? 'Tis "ridiculous to aſſign different Taſks and different Offices to Bodies, that are all of "the ſame Nature and Solidity."

BUT ſuppoſing this Difference of Motion, and other *Poſtulata* to be granted them; yet they will never be able to ſhew us how a turbulent Concourſe and Concretion of Atoms ſhould produce thoſe Things that are in the Univerſe. [y] Were the World indeed no better than *Heſiod*'s Chaos, we might probably believe that an Agitation of *Particles* (ſuppoſing Matter created) might ſettle it in ſuch a confuſed Manner; but that there ſhould be nothing elſe but a blind *Impetus* of Atoms, to produce thoſe vaſt and regular Motions of the heavenly Bodies; to order the Paſſage of the Sun for ſo great a Conveniency of Nature, and the alternate Succeſſion of the Seaſons of the Year; to caſt up ſuch Channels for the Ocean, and keep that vaſt Body of Water (whoſe Surface is higher than the Earth) from overflowing it; to furniſh the Earth with ſuch *ſeminal* and *prolific* Principles, as to produce Food and Nouriſhment for thoſe Animals, which live upon it, and to ſupply every Thing neceſſary for the Comfort and Delight of Man's Life; nay, to make Man himſelf, with all his Faculties of Senſation, Memory, Intellection, and Volition, [z] riſing out of little Bags, (as the great Philoſopher deſcribes it) which our *teeming* Mother the Earth caſt forth upon her Surface: To believe, I ſay, that all theſe Things came only from a blind and unguided Chance, is the moſt prodigious Piece of Folly and Credulity, that can enter into an human Breaſt.

A VERY learned and ingenious * Author has, in a very fit and lively Compariſon, juſtly expos'd the Folly of this *Hypotheſis*. What would you do, *ſays he*, to a Man, who, ſetting up for a great Philoſopher, and coming into a ſtately Houſe, ſhould maintain, that it was all made by *Chance*, and that Art had no Hand

[q] *Hale*'s Origination, [r] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sac. [s] *Vid. Cudworth*'s Intellectual Syſtem. [t] *Ray*'s Wiſdom of God in the Creation. [u] *Tully* de Fato. [x] The Reaſon of this Motion of Declination is thus given by *Lucretius*:

Quod niſi Declinare ſolerent, omnia deorſum,
Imbris uti Guttæ, caderent per Inane profundum;
Nec foret Offenſus natus, neque Plaga creata
Principiis: Ita nil unquam natura creâſſet *Lib.* II,

[y] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sac.

[z] Creſcebant Uteri Terræ radicibus apti;
Quos ubi tempore maturo patefecerat ætas
Infantum fugiens humorem, auraſque petiſſens,
Convertebat ibi Natura foramina terræ,
Et ſuccum venis cogebat fundere apertis
Conſimilem Lactis ———
Terra cibum Pueris, veſtem Vapor, Herba cubile
Præbebat, multâ & molli lanugine abundans.

That Man's Body was formed out of the Duſt of the Earth we believe, becauſe we have Reaſon ſo to do; but that the Earth ſhould caſt forth ſuch *Follicula* (as the Poet expreſſes it) and then Men ſhould be brought up in ſuch a Way, as he deſcribes it, deſerves a Place among the moſt incredible Fables. *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sac. Page 293.

* M. *Fenelon*, late Archbiſhop of *Cambray*, in his Exiſtence of God.

Hand in the whole Contrivance? Why; you would carry ſuch a one about, and ſhew him the Parts of the Houſe, and tell him, for Inſtance, *Do you ſee this great Court-Gate? It is larger than any other Door, that Coaches may enter in at it. The Stair-Caſe is made up of low Steps for the eaſier Aſcent, and turns according to the Apartments and Stories, it is to ſerve. The Windows open at certain Diſtances, and enlighten the whole Building: They are glazed, leſt the Wind ſhould enter in with the Light; but they may be opened at Pleaſure, to take in the ſweet Air, when the Weather is fair. The Roof is contrived to defend the whole Houſe from Injuries of the Weather. The Timber-Work is laid ſlanting, and pointed at the Top, that the Rain and Snow may eaſily ſlide down on both Sides; and the Tiles bear one upon another, that they may cover the Timber-Work. The ſeveral Floors ſerve to make different Stories, in order to multiply Lodgings within a ſmall Space. The Chimnies are contrived to light the Fire in, and let out the Smoak, leſt it ſhould offend thoſe that warm themſelves. The Apartments are diſpos'd in ſuch a Manner, as to receive a numerous Family, without being obliged to paſs through one another's Rooms; and the Maſter's Apartment is the principal. Beſides, there are Kitchens, Offices, Stables, Coach-Houſes, and other Appendages, all fitted to their proper Uſe. Sure,* ſhould one urge to the Philoſopher, *this Work muſt have been directed by ſome ſkilful Architect, for every Thing in it is agreeable, pleaſant, uniform, and commodious; beſides, he muſt needs have had excellent Artiſts under him.* "Not "at all, *would ſuch a Philoſopher anſwer*, you love to deceive yourſelf. This Houſe, "'tis true, is uniform, pleaſant, and commodious, but yet it made itſelf, with all "its Proportions. *Chance* put together all the Stones in this excellent Order; it "raiſed the Wall; it laid the Timber-work; it cut open the Windows; it placed "the Stair-caſe, and no human Hand had any Thing to do with it."

WHEN we read the fabulous Story of *Amphion*, (continues that excellent Author) who, by a miraculous Effect of *Harmony*, cauſed the Stones to riſe, and place themſelves in juſt Symmetry, one upon another, in order to form the Walls of *Thebes*, we make ourſelves merry with the *poetical* Fiction; and yet the Extravagance of our *Philoſopher*, that ſuppoſes an Houſe to be made without Hands, or a World without a wiſe Agent, ten thouſand Times excels the Poet. The Confutation therefore, that the *Roman* Orator gives to this Hypotheſis, is not very different to that our Author had deviſed, and well deſerving our Obſervation. "If this "Concourſe of Atoms, *ſays he*, could make a whole World, why may it not ſome "Time make, and [a] why has it not already made, a Temple, or a Gallery, or a "Portico, or an Houſe, or a City? And yet it is ſo far from doing this, and every Man ſo far from believing it, that ſhould any one of us be caſt, ſuppoſe upon a deſolate Iſland, and find there a magnificent Palace, fitly contrived according "to the exacteſt Rules of *Architecture*, and curiouſly adorned and furniſhed, it "would never once enter into his Head, that this was done by an *Earthquake*, "or the fortuitous ſhuffling together of its competent Materials; but immediately "he would conclude that there had been ſome intelligent *Architect* there, the Effect of whoſe Art and Skill it was. Or ſhould he find there, but one ſingle "*Sheet* of Paper, an *Epiſtle* or *Oration* written, full of profound Senſe, expreſſed "in proper and ſignificant Words, and adorned with elegant *Phraſe* and Diction; "it would be beyond the Poſſibility of Man to perſuade him, that this was done "by the *careleſs* Daſhes of an unguided Pen, by the *rude* ſcattering of Ink upon "the Paper, or by the *lucky* Projection of ſo many Letters at all Adventures; but "he would be convinced by the Evidence of the Thing at firſt Sight, that there "had been not only ſome Man, but ſome Scholar there." The Application is eaſy; and there need no more Words to confute an Opinion, that is not ſo much the Production of Reaſon and Philoſophy, as the extravagant Reſvery of a ſelf-conceited Fancy.

[a] Cur Porticum, cur Templum, cur Domum, cur Urbem non poteſt? *Tully de Nat. Deor. Lib.* II.

SECT. III.

The CARTESIAN HYPOTHESIS *cenſured.*

The Sum of Des Cartes's *Hypotheſis.*

DES CARTES agrees with *Epicurus* in making *Matter* and *Motion* the Principles of Nature; [b] he ſuppoſes, however, the Being of a God, who created this Matter, and impreſſed the firſt Motion upon it; but then, after this Motion is impreſſed, and the Wheels ſet a going, he leaves this vaſt *Machine* to the Laws of *Mechaniſm*, which effect all Things, both *celeſtial and terreſtrial*, without any farther Aſſiſtance from the firſt Impreſſor: [c] And thereupon he forms his Hypotheſis thus:—He takes it for granted, that all the Matter of the World was at firſt of one *uniform* Nature, *diviſible* into innumerable Parts, and divided into many, which were all in Motion; and from hence he ſuppoſes, "1. That all the *Matter*, "of which the Univerſe is compos'd, was, at firſt, divided into equal Particles, of "a moderate Size, and had all ſuch a Motion, as is now found in the World. "2. That all theſe *Particles* were not, at firſt, *ſpherical*, becauſe many ſuch little "Globes, join'd together, will not fill up a *continued* Space; but that, of whatever "Figure they were at firſt, by their continual Motion, and frequent Occurſions "againſt each other, their *Angles* would be cut off, and they become ſpherical. "3. He aſſerts, that there is no *Space* left empty; and therefore when theſe round "Particles, by being join'd together, leave ſome Intervals between them, he ſup-"poſes that there are other *leſſer* Particles, ariſing from thoſe Angles, that were cut "off, which, by the Force and Celerity of their Motion, will be divided into innu-"merable ſtill leſs Fragments, proper to fill up all the Interſtices. 4. He ſuppoſes, "laſtly, that ſome of theſe *Fragments*, taken from the Angles of *ſpherical* Particles, "will neceſſarily have very *angular* Figures, and, upon that Account, being not ſo "fit for Motion, will be apt to ſtick together, and transfer a great Part of their "Motion to ſuch Particles, as are leſs, and conſequently move ſwifter." Now theſe Things being ſuppos'd, he undertakes to give us a very regular Account of the Formation of the World; and the *three* Sorts of *Particles* above-mentioned, he makes his *three Elements*. The *ſubtile* Matter, cut off from the Angles of the greater Particles, is that which compoſes the Sun and fixed Stars: The *ſecond* Element conſiſts of the *ſpherical* Particles themſelves, which make up the Heavens: And from the *third* Element, which conſiſts of thoſe *angular* Particles, he gives an Account of the Formation of the Earth, Planets, and Comets, and other Phenomena of Nature, by the Help of the common Affections of Matter, Size, Figure, and Motion; God, in the mean Time, as [d] Dr *Cudworth* expreſſes it, ſtanding by, as an idle Spectator of this *Luſus Atomorum*, and the various Reſults of it.

The Confutation of it.

THERE is one Thing however (as this learned Author obſerves) wherein our *mechanick* Philoſopher has been more extravagant, than ever any *Atomiſt* was of Old: For, whereas the boldeſt of them never durſt venture to affirm, that this regular Frame of Things reſulted from the fortuitous Motions of Atoms at the very firſt, before they had, for a long Time together, produc'd many *inept* Combinations of particular Things, and nonſenſical Syſtems of the whole; our Philoſopher will have his Atoms never ſo much as once to have *blunder'd* in their Motions, but, from the very firſt, to have taken up their Places, and rang'd themſelves as orderly and methodically, as they could have done, had they been directed by the moſt perfect Wiſdom. In the mean Time, his aſſerting a *Plenum*, and inventing his *ſubtile Matter* to fill every Space, was done in Compliance with the Humour of the Age; and [e] had his Friend *Merſennus* told him, that a *Vacuum* had been as much in Faſhion, as a *Plenum* then ſeem'd to be, we ſhould have had an *Hypotheſis* grounded upon a *Vacuum*, and, no doubt, as ſpecious and plauſible, as what we have now. [f] His *Laws of Motion* have been evidently ſhewn to be falſe, and his Notion of Matter is inconſiſtent with any Motion at all; for, as *Space* and *Matter* are, with him, the ſame Thing, (upon the Suppoſition that there is no *Vacuum*) there can be no Motion; ſince Motion is only the *Succeſſion* of Bodies from one *Place* to another, which cannot ſucceed from one Place, if there be no room to receive them in the next, as there cannot be, if every Place be FULL.

THAT

[b] *Baker*'s Reflections on Learning. [c] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacr. and *Ray* on the Creation, and *Carteſii Princip.* [d] Intel. Syſtem. [e] *Rapin*'s Reflections on Phyſicks. [f] *Baker*'s Reflections on Learning.

[g] THAT all the Motion now in the World was created in the Beginning of Things, and that there is no *new* Motion produced, but the *old* communicated, and transmitted from one Body to another; that the *Impulsion* of *subtile* Matter is the Cause of all *Gravity* and *Levity* in Bodies; that the Acceleration of heavy Bodies, in their Motion towards the *Center*, proceeds from the same Impulsion; that *Heat* is nothing, but the Motion of the Particles of the Air, agitated by this subtile Matter; that the *Vegetation* of Plants, and the *Generation* of Animals, were caused only by the fortuitous Motion of little *Particles*, as if Stones, by a Chance-Leap, should range themselves into a regular Palace; that Brutes are utterly destitute of all Sensation; that the Tokens, which they sometimes discover, of Joy or Sadness, of Pleasure or Pain, are but the Result of certain Springs, that play in the *Machine*, according as the Matter is disposed; that Heat is not in the Fire, nor Hardness in the Marble, nor Moisture in the Water; but that all this is in the Soul, which, by Thought and Reflection, finds the Fire to be hot, the Marble hard, and the Water moist: These are some of the *Paradoxes*, that our Philosopher has advanced, incongruous to Sense, and refuted by Experience. In the mean Time, his Explanation of the Nature of Things is not so satisfactory. His Hypothesis of the *Load-Stone*, with those little *hooked* Bodies, that attend it, is arbitrary and groundless. His Account of the *ebbing* and *flowing of the Sea*, by the Impression of the Moon's Atmosphere, is found to be false. [h] His Explication of the Pulse of the Heart, which he attributes to an *Ebullition*, and sudden Expansion of the Blood, by a *nitro-sulphureous* Ferment in its Ventricles, is contrary to Experience; and his Explication of the Motion of the Soul in the several Passions, by the Conjunction of Nerves and Fibres terminating in the *Glandula Pinealis*, is a pure *Chimera*. 'Twas prudently done therefore, to break off his System, just as he came to treat of the Formation of Animals, being very conscious, that (whatever he had done in Relation to the Heavens and the Earth it) would be impossible for him to form the Bodies of Men, and other living Creatures by the necessary Motion of Matter, without the Guidance and Superintendency of an *all-wise* and *all-powerful* Agent [i].

THE Truth is, all the *Hypotheses*, that the World has yet seen, cannot give an inquisitive Mind any Satisfaction. They seem to be wrote more for the Ostentation of their Authors Wit, than the Evidence of Truth; and have therefore little or no Foundation, but what a fruitful Invention gives them. And indeed how can it otherwise be? For since the particular Manner of the first *Origination* of Things is such a Matter of Fact, as cannot possibly lie within the Compass of human Discovery, Men must necessarily be ignorant of it, or have as confused Conceptions about it, as a blind Man has of Colours, unless it be revealed unto them, by some one that certainly knows the Fact itself.

The Folly and Impiety of all such Hypotheses.

[k] SUPPOSE in a Country abounding with Scholars, but unacquainted with *mechanical* Engines, a curious Artist (on purpose to try the Speculations of the Learned) should leave, in a Field or Forest, a Clock or a Watch, with the Configurations of the various *Phases* of the Moon, the Motion and Place of the Sun in the *Ecliptick*, and several other curious Indications of celestial Motions, as well as the Hours of the Day, nicely expressed; and that some of the Scholars of the Philosophical Sects should happen, in their Walk, to find it: What sad Work would they make in giving an Account of this Phenomenon? The *Epicurean* (according to his Hypothesis) tells us, that this Watch was nothing else but an accidental Concretion of Atoms, that, having happily fallen together, did, by a little *innate* Motion, and lucky *Chance*, make the Index, the Wheels, the Balance, and all. The *Cartesian* agrees with him, as to the main of the Supposition; but thinking he has not sufficiently explained how the Watch came to be put in Motion at first, talks a great deal of a certain *subtile Matter*, that pervades it, and gives Motion to its *moveable* Parts, which consist of certain *globular* Atoms, apt for Motion. A third, finding Fault with the two former, tells them immediately, that he has a more evident *Solution* of the Phenomenon, *viz.* the universal Soul of the World, that, having formed so many Sorts of Insects, with so many Organs and Faculties, and such Congruity in their whole Composition, has made this wonderful *Automaton* likewise, with all its Motions

[g] *Rapin*'s Reflections. [h] *Ray*'s Wisdom of God in the Creation. [i] There is indeed a posthumous Piece extant, imputed to *Cartes*, and entitled, *De la Formation du Fœtus*, wherein there is a Pretence made to solve it all by fortuitous Mechanism; but as the Theory thereof is built wholly upon a false Supposition, sufficiently confuted by Dr. *Harvey*, in his Book of *Generation*, so is it all along precarious and exceptionable; besides that it extends not at all to the Differences there are in Animals, nor offers any Reason, why an Animal of one Species might not be formed out of the Seed of another. *Cudworth*'s Intellectual System. [k] *Hale*'s Origination of Mankind.

Motions and celeſtial Appearances: When immediately ſteps in an *Ariſtotelian*, and, being diſſatisfied with all the former Solutions, tells them, "*Gentlemen*, you are all "miſtaken; all your *Hypotheſes* are impertinent, and the thin Cobwebs of your own "Brains. This Machine, I tell you, is *eternal*, and ſo are all its Motions; for as "a circular Motion has no Beginning or Ending, this Motion, that you ſee both "in the Index and Wheels, is *eternal*, had no Beginning, and ſhall have no End: "This is the only Way of ſolving the Phenomenon."

WHILE theſe ſeveral Philoſophers are thus debating the Matter, in comes the Artiſt that made the Watch; and, having heard all that paſt, "*Gentlemen*, ſays "he, you have ſhewn a great deal of Invention about this Piece of Work, but "you are all out in your Gueſſes. I myſelf made it, and brought it hither; and, if "you pleaſe to give me Leave, will tell you how I made it. Firſt I wrought the "Spring, and the Fuſee, and the Wheels, and the Balance, and the Caſe, and the "Table; I fitted them one to another, and placed theſe ſeveral Axes, that are to "direct the Motions of the Index, to diſcover the Hour of the Day, the Figure, "that ſhews the Phaſis of the Moon, and the other various Motions that you ſee; "and then I put it all together, and wound up the Spring, which gives Motion to "the Whole. In this Manner I made it: And that you may be ſatisfied I ſpeak "Truth, I will tell you the whole Order and Proceſs of my making it, the ſeveral "Materials that it conſiſts of, how every individual Part of it is formed, and how "long I was about it." This plain and undiſguiſed Diſcovery, at the very firſt naming of it, makes all the fine Suppoſitions of theſe philoſophical Heads vain and ridiculous: And, in like Manner, the plain unaffected Narrative of the World's Original, given us by the Hand of *Moſes*, is ſo full of good Senſe, Congruity, and Reaſonableneſs in itſelf, (as we ſhall afterwards ſhew) that it gives us at once a clear Diſcovery of this great Myſtery, and ſhews, that the Eſſays of Philoſophers to explain it are but *empty Theories*, the *Creatures* of Fancy and Imagination, and nothing elſe.

[l]NOR are the Eſſays of ſuch Philoſophers only *vain* in themſelves, but in ſome Senſe *criminal:* For ſince God, in the Holy Scriptures, repreſents the Structure of thoſe ſeveral Parts that compoſe the World, as the immediate Effect of his *Will*, in order to impreſs on our Minds a more lively and awful Senſe of his infinite Power; our Senſe of his Power is impaired, when we find it accounted for any other Way: Nor is the Awfulneſs of the Divine Majeſty near ſo great, when we hear a Philoſopher gravely recounting, how God having put certain Particles of Matter in Motion, they, by Degrees, ranged themſelves according to their preſent Order and Situation; as when we heard it ſaid, [m]*that he ſpake, and it was done; he commanded, and it ſtood faſt*; which not only expreſſes the Truth of the Hiſtory, but the general Senſe of Mankind, who have always had this Notion of God, *that to command, and to do it, is the ſame Thing with him.* [n]It was in this Deſcription of the Creation of the World, that *Longinus* obſerved the *ſublime* Stile of *Moſes*; and if the Relation of it be juſtly admirable, the Creation itſelf, in ſuch a Manner as is there related, muſt be much more wonderful. But now, what would *Longinus* have ſaid, if the Creation had been related to have been performed, not by any Command which had its immediate Effect, but by the tedious Proceſs of *mechanical* Cauſes? What Grandeur, what Evidence of the Divine Power and Majeſty is there in this, more than in any *chymical* Operation, if the mechanical Hypotheſis were true; 'Tis not eaſy to determine therefore, whether the Vanity or Impiety of Men be really greater, in pretending to draw a particular Proceſs of the Manner, wherein the ſeveral Parts of the World were formed, without the Divine Interpoſition; and 'tis to reprove ſuch bold and impious Eſſays of human Wit, (for [o]next to attempt the making of a World, I know no Undertaking more daring than to pretend to diſcover how it was made) that we find God repreſented in Scripture, as demanding of Man what Anſwer he can give to the Queſtions, there propoſed concerning the Origin and Formation of Things: [p]*Where waſt thou, when I laid the Foundation of the Earth? Declare, if thou haſt Underſtanding. Who hath laid the Meaſures thereof, or who hath ſtretched the Line upon it? Whereupon are the Foundations thereof faſtened, or who laid the Corner-Stone thereof?* And that we find *Solomon* himſelf, whoſe Knowledge of *natural* Cauſes was the moſt conſummate, and of the greateſt Extent, of any Man's that ever appeared in the World,

[l] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [m] Pſal. xxxiii. 9. [n] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II.
[o] *Jenkins*, ibid. [p] Job xxxviii. 4, &c.

World, declaring to all Poſterity an Incapacity in Mankind, to attain a Perfection in it: [q] *I beheld*, ſays he, *all the Work of God, that a Man cannot find out the Work that is even done under the Sun; becauſe though a Man labour to ſeek it out, yet he ſhall not find it; yea farther, though a wiſe Man ſeek to know it, yet ſhall he not be able to find it.*

'WE may therefore eſteem the Learning, and admire the Sagacity, and allow the good Intentions of theſe Authors, that make it the Matter of their Enquiry; but when any one advances an *Hypotheſis* in Contradiction to all others; propoſes it not as probable, but as certainly true; and maintains poſitively, not only that Things might be ſo, if God pleaſed, but that they were ſo, and could be no otherwiſe: This to me is an Extravagance of Conceit, highly repugnant to the *royal Philoſopher*'s Sentiments. We know nothing, in ſhort, of the Way and Manner, how God has been pleaſed to do any Thing, but by his own Revelation. If therefore *each* Hypotheſis were *poſſible*, yet it could not be affirm'd that *any one* was right; becauſe God might act by quite contrary Means, than what any Man can imagine. But when theſe ſeveral Hypotheſes deſtroy one another; when every one pretends to ſet up his *own*, in Contradiction to all the reſt, and none can maintain its Ground any longer, than till another is brought to confute it, it were very ſtrange if Men ſhould content themſelves with ſuch *Uncertainties*, rather than rely on the plain Word of God.

THE Word of God has aſſured us, that [r] *the inviſible Things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* His *Power*, in being able, with ſo much Eaſe and Expedition, to rear and uphold ſo vaſt a Fabrick; his *Wiſdom*, in contriving ſuch a beautiful Syſtem of Things, digeſting them ſo fitly, and connecting them ſo firmly, and in ſuch an *harmonious* Order; and his *Godhead*, in being the Author of all thoſe Beauties and Perfections, all thoſe Splendors and Magnificences, which we behold with ſo much Pleaſure and Wonder, and which, the Heathens themſelves, in the Contemplation of, were carried away with a *poetick* Rapture, and fell into Fits of compoſing *Hymns* and *Eulogies* to the *World's Creator*: And therefore [s] *Bleſſed be thy glorious Name, which is exalted above all Bleſſing and Praiſe. Thou, even thou, art Lord alone, thou haſt made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Hoſt; the Earth, and all Things that are therein, the Seas, and all that is therein, and thou preſerveſt them all.*

[q] Eccleſ. viii. 17. [r] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. [s] Rom. i. 20. [t] Neh. ix. 5, 6.

CHAP. III.

Of the CREATION *of* HEAVEN *and* ANGELS.

THE *World*, or *Univerſe*, conſiſts of two Parts; the one *inviſible* and inacceſſible to us, which is the *ſupreme* Heaven, together with the Angels, that there inhabit: The other *viſible*, which comprehends the Firmament, wherein the Stars do ſhine; the ſeveral Planets, that we behold with our Eyes; and this *terraqueous* Globe, whereon we live. This *ſupreme* Heaven [a] St *Paul* has called *the third Heaven*, in reſpect to our Diſtance from it; in which Senſe, the *firſt* Heaven is the *Air*, or *Atmoſphere* of the Earth, wherein Birds do fly, and Meteors are ingendered; the *ſecond* is the *ethereal* Region, wherein the Stars, and other luminous Bodies are fixed; and the *third*, the *empyreal* Heaven, where God himſelf reſides, and more immediately diſplays his *majeſtick* Preſence. Now he, that at all conſiders the vaſt Bulk and Extent of the Univerſe, and how many thouſand Miles Circumference that Part of the World, which lies open to our Sight, muſt be allowed to take up, will find himſelf, upon the firſt Reflection, compelled to acknowledge, [b] *that the Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament ſheweth his Handy-work.* The Sun, according to the common and loweſt

The Diviſion of the Heavens.

Created by God.

[a] 2 Cor. xii. 2. [b] Pſal. xix. 1.

loweſt Computation, is one hundred and ſixty-ſix times bigger than the Earth: [c] The Diſtance of the fixed Stars from us, [d] according to the beſt Calculations, is ſix hundred and forty-eight thouſand Millions of *Engliſh* Miles; and if ſo, what a prodigious Extent muſt the whole be? And what muſt we think of that *inviſible* World above, which ſtill increaſes, and enlarges its Circumference, in Proportion to its Diſtance? I make no Wonder at all therefore, that, upon ſuch a Contemplation as this, ſome Philoſophers of old have been tempted to believe the World *infinite*; and without doubt they would have believed it ſo, had not Reaſon come in to their Aid, and ſhewn them, that every Thing, compoſed of Number and Parts, muſt neceſſarily be *finite*, and can have no more than an *indefinite* Extenſion, *i. e.* an Extenſion ſo large, that we cannot conceive it, nor ſet any Bounds to it. But now, what Mind, leſs than *infinite*, what Hand, leſs than *omnipotent*, could have laid a Deſign ſo immenſe, and executed it ſo ſucceſsfully? We juſtly admire the Compaſs of the Heavens, the Vaſtneſs of their Diſtance, and the Regularity of their Motions; and when we behold the *ſtarry* Region, ſet forth in all its Pride and Glory, we cannot forbear extolling its great Creator: But could we draw aſide the Veil, and look into the *Sanctuary*; could we mount above this ſpangled Firmament, which is but the Outwork, as it were, to that new *Jeruſalem*, [e] *whoſe Streets are of pure Gold*, and the *very Foundations of whoſe Walls* (to accommodate its Luſtre to our Apprehenſion) *are of precious Stones*, which God has prepared for his own Habitation; we ſhould ſoon forget our boaſted Laws of mechanical Motion, and bluſh, and fall down, and join our Acknowledgments with thoſe bright *Intelligences*, that ceaſe not Day and Night, bleſſing God, and ſaying, [f] *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power; for thou haſt created all Things, and for thy Pleaſure they are, and were created.*

Whether Moſes's *Account extends to them.*

'Tis a great Diſpute both among *Aſtronomers* and *Divines*, [g] whether the Hiſtory of the Creation, as it is delivered by *Moſes*, includes the higher Heavens, or is only intended to deſcribe the Formation of the Earth, and its Dependencies. Thoſe that take his Words, *In the Beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth*, for a *ſummary Propoſition*, are of Opinion, that the entire *Univerſe* is comprized in the ſix Days Works; but others, who rather think them a *general Preface* to his Hiſtory, imagine, that they extend no farther than to this *habitable* World; at the moſt, no farther than this *Planetary Syſtem*. They ſuppoſe then, that the Creation of the Heavens was precedaneous to that of the Earth, ſome think, to that of the *Chaos*; that they were made for the Reception of Angels, who were created many Ages before the Formation of Man; and that it is agreeable to the Notions we have of God, that he ſhould have Creatures to communicate his Goodneſs to, and a Place to diſplay his Glory in, long before the *Moſaick* Account of Time. Tho' therefore the holy Penman mentions *Heaven* as well as *Earth*, in his Introduction; yet it does not therefore follow, *ſay they*, that he means the *ſupreme* Heaven, becauſe the Word *Heaven*, in Scripture-Language, is often known to ſignify no more, than *the Region of the Air*. Thus we read of the [h] *Firmament of Heaven*, [i] the *Windows of Heaven*, [k] the *Bottles of Heaven*, and [l] the *hoary Froſt of Heaven*; none of which extend beyond our *Atmoſphere*; and therefore, when God is ſaid to *create the Heaven and the Earth*, we cannot from thence neceſſarily conclude, that he did, at one and the ſame Time, create every Thing in the vaſt *extra-mundane* Spaces: Nay, tho' we ſhould allow *Heaven*, in this Place, to be taken in its moſt exalted Senſe, yet all that can be inferr'd from hence is, that *Moſes* is *here* inſtructing the *Jews*, not only that the little Globe, whoſe Formation he was going to deſcribe, but even the Frame of univerſal Nature, and the Heavens, with all their Hoſts, both viſible and inviſible, were effected by the ſame Almighty Hand: But, at what Point of Time they were effected, he no where determines; only he intimates, in the very next Words, that they were of an antienter Standing than the Earth; *for the Earth*, ſays he, (or the *Chaotick* Maſs, out of which the Earth was formed) *was without Form, and Void, and Darkneſs was upon the Face of the Deep*, even after he had told us, that God had *created the Heaven*. Tho' therefore we are told indeed, that in the fourth Day [m] *God made two great Lights, the greater Light to rule the Day, and the leſſer Light to rule the Night, and that he made the Stars alſo*; yet the Text, they ſay, does not neceſſarily denote ſo much. [n] Our *Engliſh* Tranſlation interpolates the Words *(he made)*

[c] Vid. *Monſ.* de-Fontenelle Hiſt. de l'Academie de Sciences en Anneé 1706. [d] Vid. *Whiſton*'s Theory. p. 32.
[e] Rev. xxi. 18, &c. [f] Ibid. iv. 11. [g] Vid. *Whiſton*'s Theory. [h] Gen. i. 20. [i] Ibid. vii. 11.
[k] Job xxxviii. 37. [l] Ver. 29. [m] Gen. i. 16. [n] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I.

made) which are not in the *Original*; for the ſimple Tranſlation of the *Hebrew* is only this,——*And God made two great Lights, the greater Light to rule the Day, and the leſſer Light to rule the Night, and the Stars*; which laſt Words *(and the Stars)* are not to be referred to the Word *(Made)* in the Beginning of the Verſe, but to the Word *(Rule)* which immediately goes before them; and ſo this Sentence, *the leſſer Light to rule the Night and the Stars*, will denote the peculiar Uſefulneſs and Predominancy of the *Moon* above all other Stars and Planets, in reſpect of this Earth of ours: For it ſhines out, when they only twinkle, and affords a mighty Influence in the Production and Growth of all Plants and Vegetables; ſo that it may not improperly be called the [o] *Ruler* of the Night, and a *Prince*, as it were, among other Stars.

THOSE that take in the whole *ſolar Syſtem*, allow of this Interpretation; but ſuch, as confine the *Moſaick* Creation to this *ſublunary* World only, have invented another, *viz.* [p] that the Heaven and heavenly Bodies were not created on the *fourth* Day, (for that they were long before) but were only then *brought to Sight*, and *made apparent to the Earth*, after the ſuperior Region of the *Chaos*, which obſcur'd them before, was ſo far defecated, and made clear, as to admit of the Rays of the Sun. [q] Tho' therefore the Subſtance of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, was certainly before; yet they are ſaid not improperly *then* to be *made*, when, the Darkneſs of the intermediate Air being diſſipated, they became conſpicuous to the Earth, and began firſt to ſerve it in the Capacity of Sun, Moon, and Stars. To countenance this Expoſition, they think it unaccountable, that the Earth, with its Furniture, ſhould take up four entire Days, at leaſt, of thoſe ſix, which were allotted for the whole Creation; while the Sun, Moon, and Stars, Bodies ſo immenſely large, beſides the unknown Regions of the *Empyreal* Heaven, are crouded together into one ſingle Day; whereupon they conclude, that theſe innumerable celeſtial Bodies were made at another Time. *When they were created.*

WHETHER Heaven was created *gradually* or *inſtantaneouſly*; out of nothing, or out of ſome pre-exiſtent Matter; and, in the Production of it, whether God proceeded in the ſame Method, that he did in the Formation of the Earth; are Queſtions, wherein we have no poſitive Evidence, and may therefore admit of no ſmall Debate. It ſeems more agreeable to Scripture, however, to imagine, that all celeſtial Beings were originally produced out of nothing, becauſe there was not that Reaſon for God's gradual Procedure (as we ſhall ſee preſently) in the Formation of them, as there was in the Diſpoſition of the Parts of the Earth: [r] And if they were made out of nothing, there is no Queſtion but that they were made *inſtantaneouſly*, and all in the ſame Moment; for when God commanded that they ſhould exiſt, (there being nothing either to oppoſe his Command, or retard the Execution of it, nor any Medium between Non-exiſtence and a State of Exiſtence) they muſt immediately have exiſted, in the Form that the Scripture repreſents his Almighty *Fiat*: [s] *He ſpake the Word, and they were made; he commanded, and they were created; for by the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Hoſt of them by the Word of his Mouth.* *Whether out of nothing.*

WHEN the Angels firſt received their Being; whether they exiſted before, or were themſelves a Part of the *Hexameron*, or ſix Days Work of God, is another Queſtion much diſputed among the ancient Doctors, eſpecially thoſe of the *Greek* Church. [t] Some have thought that theſe illuſtrious Spirits are mentioned by *Moſes* under the Name of [u] *Light*, and ſo were the Production of the *firſt Day*; but 'tis viſible that, in that Place, *Light* is oppoſed to *Darkneſs*, and called [x] *Day*; which is enough to convince any one, that it is not to be underſtood of *Angels*, but ſtrictly and properly of ſome *luminous Body*. *Angels when created.*

OTHERS have imagined that they were not made [y] until the *ſixth Day*; and that as other Parts of the Creation roſe by Degrees, from the Leſs to the more Perfect, until they came to Man, who was not created until the laſt Day; ſo Angels, who are

[o] This Senſe of the Words ſeems more natural, becauſe the Moon's being *Prince* and *Ruler* amongſt the Stars, and *Goddeſs of the Night*, is the common Language of the *Ancients*. Thus *Tully* tells us, that ſhe was called *Diana*, becauſe ſhe made a Day of the Night. *De Nat. Deor.* Lib ii. *Horace, Lucidum Cœli Decus, & Syderum Regina Bicornis*, Ep. 18. *Seneca, Obſcuri Dea clara mundi*, *Hipp.* and (to name no more) *Statius, Arcanæ Moderatrix Cynthia Lunæ. Theb.* [p] *Whiſton*'s Theory. [q] This Expoſition is thought the more feaſible, becauſe the Word *facere*, in the *Latin* Tongue, has its Derivation from *novam faciem induere*; ſo that a Thing is then ſaid to be *made* when it has another Appearance, than what it had before: Nor is the original Word *(Gnaſah)* which is uſed here, much different; for it ſignifies, not only any new Formation, but any new Uſe, or outward Appearance of a Thing; as might be ſhewn from ſeveral Inſtances. *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [r] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [s] Pſal. xxxiii. 6. and cxlviii. 5. [t] *Bull*'s Sermons. [u] Gen. i. 3. [x] Ver. 4. [y] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

are the *ſupreme* Order of created Beings, and many Degrees more perfect than Man, were made (but made after him) the ſame Day, to crown and conſummate the Work. But this Conjecture, how plauſible ſoever, has not the Fortune to be countenanced by Scripture; for *if the* [z] *Morning-Stars ſung together, and all the Sons of God ſhouted for Joy, when God laid the Foundations of the Earth*; [a] then were the Angels exiſtent, at leaſt on the *third Day* of the Creation, [b] when God ſeparated the *Waters* from the *dry Land.*

[c] OTHERS again are poſitive, that *Moſes* himſelf (though he does not expreſs on what particular Day the Angels were made) does nevertheleſs intimate, that they were created ſome Time within the Compaſs of the *Six*, when he tells us that, [d] *Thus the Heaven and the Earth were finiſhed, and all the Hoſt of them, and on the ſeventh Day God ended the Work, which he had made:* But then, what we are to underſtand by the *Hoſt of them*, this is the Queſtion. [e] The whole Hoſt of Heaven (taking it in that Senſe) conſiſts of two Parts, the *viſible* and *intelligible* Hoſt of Heaven. The *viſible* Hoſt of Heaven are the Sun, Moon, and Stars, thoſe glorious Lights of Heaven, which we behold with our Eyes, and ſo they are called [f] in ſeveral Places of Scripture. The *intelligible* Hoſt of Heaven are the Angels; and wherever we meet with this Hoſt [g] *bleſſing the Lord*, [h] *praiſing the Lord*, and [i] *worſhipping him*, there we may conclude, that it is commonly to be taken in this Senſe; but in the Place before us there is no Intimation given us how we are to take it, only, as *Moſes* makes mention of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, but never of the Angels, it ſeems more probable that the Words ſhould relate to them: And this Probability is farther heightened, if we conſider [k] how, from the Fall of the Angels, and their ſeducing Man ſo ſoon into Sin, it ſeems not a little credible, that they had an Exiſtence ſome Time, at leaſt, before the Creation of the material World. It does not ſeem reaſonable, that thoſe glorious Beings (as they confeſſedly were in their *original* State) ſhould immediately have formed, and executed a Deſign againſt their Maker; eſpecially conſidering the Nature of ſuch an Attempt, the Preparations to be made, the Numbers to be gained over, and the many previous Arts to be practiſed (all which muſt take up ſome Time) in order to inflame the Rebellion. For theſe and ſuch-like Reaſons then, *ſay they*, it ſeems expedient, that thoſe bright and heavenly Beings ſhould precede all *material* Things in the Time of their Creation, as well as they do in the Honour and Dignity of their Nature and Employment; which are the next Things we are to look into.

SECT. I.

Of the BEING *and* NATURE *of* ANGELS.

The Signification of the Word Angel.

ANGELS (in the proper Signification of the Word) [l] do not import the *Nature* of any *Beings*, but only the *Office* to which they are appointed, eſpecially in the Way of *Meſſage* or Intercourſe between God and his Creatures; in which Senſe they are called [m] *the Miniſters of God, that do his Pleaſure, and* [n] *miniſtering Spirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them, who ſhall be Heirs of Salvation.* That there are ſuch Beings in the Regions above, as we call *Angels*, i. e. [o] certain permanent Subſtances, inviſible, and imperceptible to our Senſes, endow'd with Underſtanding, and Power, ſuperior to that of human Nature; created by God, and ſubject to him, as the Supreme Being; miniſtering to his Divine Providence, in the Government of the World; and, by his Appointment, more eſpecially attending the Affairs of Mankind, is a Truth ſo fully recorded in the Scriptures, that no one can doubt of it, who believes their Divine Authority. [p] Nay, in thoſe very Books of *Moſes*, which the *Sadducees* looked upon as *ſacred*, there is ſuch expreſs Mention made of their frequent Intercourſe with Mankind, that we can hardly believe that theſe *Sadducees* utterly denied their Exiſtence, (for then they muſt deny the Truth of the *Pentateuch)* only that they had no Notion of their appearing at that Time, or perhaps ſome Ages before; in like Manner, as ſome among us, though they do not abſolutely impugn the Being of *Spirits*, yet are far from giving into the many Accounts of *Apparitions*

Their Exiſtence proved from Scripture.

[z] Job xxxviii. 7, 4. [a] Curcell. Inſtitut. [b] Gen. i. 9. [c] *Bull*'s Sermons. [d] Gen. ii. 1, 2. [e] *Bull*'s Sermons. [f] Deut. xvii. 3. [g] Pſal. ciii. 21. [h] Luke ii. 13. [i] Nehem. ix. 6. [k] Curcell. Inſtit. and *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [l] *Fiddes*'s ibid. [m] Pſal. ciii. 21. [n] Heb. i. 14. [o] *Bull*'s Sermons. [p] *Fiddes*'s ibid.

Apparitions, and in ſome Diſpoſition to explode them all, becauſe they relate to *inviſible* Subſtances.

'TIS a groſs Notion however not to believe the Reality of a Thing, becauſe we cannot ſee it; and we may with the ſame Propriety call in Queſtion the Being of a God, or the Operations of our own Minds, as we may the Exiſtence of Angels, becauſe our mortal Eyes are too groſs to diſcern their Subſtance, and remark their Attendance about us. 'Tis Argument enough to engage our Belief, that God has revealed the Thing to us, and 'tis perhaps an Inſtance of his Loving-Kindneſs, that he does not open our Eyes, to ſhew us the Beings, that do ſurround us; which, conſidering the *Mixture* of good and bad Spirits, differently obſerving our Ways, and differently affected with our Behaviour, might affright and diſtract us; at leaſt, determine the *Freedom* of our Will, and deprive us of the Honour of ſerving God by *Choice*.

'TIS none of our Ambition then, to be convinced by ocular Demonſtration: We know that the Word of God is true, and that, both in the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, this Doctrine of Spirits is ſo often declared and exemplified, that nothing but a Mind, highly prejudiced, and deeply tinctured with Infidelity, can reſiſt its Evidence. Nay we know, that the wiſeſt of the Ancients, both Philoſophers and Poets, always acknowledged the Exiſtence of Angels, [q] and, though they gave them different Appellations, that of *Demons* among the *Greeks*, and *Genii* among the *Latins*, yet they were full of this Perſuaſion, *that they were a Sort of middle Beings, ſent upon gracious Meſſages, and employed as Miniſters and Interpreters between God and Man*; and from this Perſuaſion, the Account of their *Mercury*, who, upon every Occaſion, was diſpatched from the ſupreme *Jupiter* with Meſſages to the World below, without all Controverſy, did ariſe.

'IT is not worth our while to enquire, by what Means the Heathen World was led into this Perſuaſion; whether it was by a certain *natural Inſtinct*, and Force of human Reaſon; by a prevailing *Tradition*, that obtained in the earlieſt Ages of the World; or by the Experience of ſuch *Effects*, as could not be accounted for without the Suppoſition of ſuch Beings. Which way ſoever *they* came into this Opinion, 'tis certain, that *we* cannot be miſtaken in it, becauſe we have both Reaſon and Revelation, for the Confirmation of our Faith in this Particular.

IF we look upon ourſelves, we cannot but perceive, that we are Creatures com- *From Reaſon.*
pounded of two different Natures; that, in our *animal* Nature, we reſemble the Beaſts that periſh; and in our *rational*, find too many Impediments, and Imperfections, ever to think ourſelves the *Top* of God's Creation. [s] If we look upon the Earth, we ſee a *Gradation* of ſeveral Creatures, one above another; ſome, that have barely *Being*, as Earth, Air, and Water; ſome, that, beſides Being, have *Life*, as Plants, Trees, and other Vegetables; ſome, that, beſides Life, have *Senſe*, and *Perception*, as brute Animals; and ſome, that, beſides Senſe, have *Reaſon* and *Cogitation*, as Men: And, as we ſee our *ſenſitive* Part exiſts in Beings, that are *beneath* us, ſo it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that our more noble and *intellectual* Part exiſts in Beings, that are *above us*: Exiſts *ſeparate* from all Incumbrance of Fleſh, and moves in a Sphere of Activity, as much ſuperior to us, as we are to Brutes.

NAY, as we perceive, that there are ſeveral Steps and Degrees, whereby Nature aſcends to the Top of that Species, which has ſome Reſemblance to the next Claſs of Beings, that are above it; (for ſome Brutes are more *ſenſible* and apprehenſive than others; ſome Plants more *beautiful*, and approaching nearer to Senſe; and, of inanimate Things, ſome are more *ſplendid* and amazing than their Neighbours) ſo it is no improbable Conjecture, that there is the like gradual Aſcent in this celeſtial *Hierarchy*, from the loweſt Rank, that borders upon *Man*, to the higheſt, that comes as near, as a finite Creature can, to an infinite *Deity*.

THIS Earth, which is but a Spot, in Compariſon of the Heavens, is repleniſhed, we ſee, with Men innumerable, capable of knowing, and conſequently of ſerving, and adoring their Creator. Heaven, we conceive, muſt be a glorious Place indeed, when the *Firmament*, that hangs over our Head, is but the Floor, and Pavement, as it were, of that bright extended *Region*, which the Glory of the Lord inhabiteth; and can we think, that this Region [t] is like an empty Wilderneſs, or barren Deſert, deſtitute of intelligent Beings, to admire the Wonders of the Place, and do Homage to the great Author of the Univerſe? When we ſee ſo many proſtrate at his *Footſtool*,

[q] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [r] *Bull*'s Sermons. Biſhop *Patrick*'s Sermons, and Biſhop *Bull*'s. [t] *Patrick*'s Sermons.

and paying their Devotions to him at such a Distance here below, can we suppose, that he has no Servants to wait on him in his *Presence-Chamber*, none to attend his Commands, none to resound his Praise, and tell forth his noble Acts, within the *Circumference* of his Throne?

WE sadly mistake ourselves, if we think, that the great God of Heaven and Earth is (what the *Epicureans* paint him) an *idle*, *solitary* Being, wrapped up in Indolence and Ease, and contenting himself with the dumb Contemplation of his own Excellencies. His Character *is to be good, and to do good*; he takes delight in viewing the Works of his Hands; he is pleased with the Praises, and joyful Acclamations of his Creatures; and perhaps, in Heaven, has as great a Variety of them, as we see upon Earth, and has put as large a Difference between their respective Powers and Abilities, as he has done, not only between Man and Man, but even between Men, and other inferior Creatures.

Their Number and Orders.

TO this Purpose, we may observe, that, not only the Number of the celestial Inhabitants is said to be [u] *ten thousand Times ten Thousand, and Thousands of Thousands*; but that the Conjectures of some speculative Men have distributed them into [x] *nine Orders*, according to the Number of the Words, whereby they are expressed in Scripture, and reduced these Orders into *three Hierarchies*, as they call them; to the first of which belong, *Seraphim*, *Cherubim*, and *Thrones*; to the second, *Dominions*, *Virtues*, and *Powers*; and to the third, *Principalities*, *Arch-Angels*, and *Angels*. They imagine farther, that in each *Hierarchy*, there is an exact *Subordination*; some are † *Assistentes*, [y] what we may stile, the *Residentiaries* of Heaven, who stand always before the Throne of God; and others, [z] *Ministrantes*, what we may call the *Missionaries* of Heaven, that are sent forth, as Need requires, to minister to the Faithful upon Earth; that the Province of the one is to *receive* all Orders immediately from God, and the Business of the other is instantly to execute them.

HOWEVER this be with Relation to the standing *Polity* of that invisible Kingdom, yet, at least, upon Occasions of more Importance, we are assured, that the highest of these heavenly Courtiers are sometimes dispatched with Embassies to the lower World; as the *Angel Gabriel* (who [a] *stands in the Presence of God*, as himself testifies) was first sent to *Zacharias*, to notify the Approach of the Messias; and afterwards, to the Virgin *Mary*, to congratulate her Conception of him; at which you find, with *this Angel* (as I suppose) a *Multitude of an heavenly Host*, i. e. of lower Angels, under the Command of this [b] Prince of the Host, *praising God, and saying, Glory be to God in the highest.*

Their Nature.

[c] THAT they are *Spirits*, the Apostle tells us; but whether they are *pure* Spirits, divested of Matter and all *corporeal Vehicle*, (as Philosophers term it) has been a Controversy of a long standing. Not only the ancient *Philosophers*, but some of the ancient Christian *Fathers*, were of Opinion, that Angels were cloathed with some Kind of Bodies, consisting of the purest and finest Matter, which they called *Æthereal*;

[u] Rev. v. 11. [x] Some of the *Hebrew* Doctors tell us, that there are four Orders of Angels; the first is of *Michael*, the second of *Gabriel*, the third of *Uriel*, and the fourth of *Raphael*; but, according to *Maimonides*, there are ten distinct Degrees of these heavenly Ministers. Among Christian Writers, *Dionysius* the *Areopagite*, (as he is called) was the first that positively asserted nine Orders of Angels; and in this he was followed by the Schoolmen, and most of the Doctors of the Church of *Rome*. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity.

† This Distinction of *Assistentes* and *Ministrantes* seems to imply, that the *principal* Angels are wholly exempt from the *Ministry*, that we are now discoursing of; for which it is alledged, that some of them are said *always to behold the Face of God*, and *to stand before him*; and, consequently, never go forth themselves upon *external Missions*, but only give the Orders, which they receive from God, to such *inferior* Angels, as minister under them, to be by them executed upon Earth. It is to be observed however, that the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* makes no Distinction among them in this Regard; for his *negative* Interrogation (which is equivalent to a strong Affirmation) is universal and unlimited, *Are they not all ministring Spirits?* Heb. i. 14. Nor should it be forgot, that the main Scope of the Author in this Chapter is, to assert the *Pre-eminence* of the Son of God, not above some inferior Angels only, but over the Angels *universally*, even those of the highest Rank and Dignity; and therefore he asserts, that, whereas the Scripture speaks of the Son as *sitting on the Throne of God the Father*, and so as *Co-Partner* with him in the Divine Empire; the Angels all of them are confessedly *ministring Spirits, sent forth*, at God's Pleasure, to execute his Commands on Earth. As certain therefore as it is, that the Son of God is superior to all Angels, none excepted, so certain it is, that all the Angels, without Exception, *are ministring Spirits, sent forth to minister* for the faithful on Earth. Their *standing before God* therefore, or *seeing his Face*, are only *metaphorical* Phrases, which mean no more, than their *being ready at Hand to do what he commands them*; and therefore, if the Son of God himself, when sent by the Father, vouchsafed to come down from Heaven, and to be *incarnate for us Men, and for our Salvation*; it cannot be thought beneath the Dignity of the most excellent of that celestial *Hierarchy*, to be sent down upon Earth, in order to do good Offices to Mankind. *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

[y] *Norris*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [z] This Distinction, *inter assistentes & ministrantes angelos*, was first made by *Aquinas*, and his Followers, being led into it by the Authority of *Dionysius*. *Bull*'s Sermons. [a] Luke i. 11——19. [b] Dan. x. 21. [c] *Tillotson*'s Sermons, Vol. II

Æthereal; and this Perſuaſion ſeemed to be grounded upon a pious Belief, that it is the peculiar Excellency and Prerogative of God himſelf, to be a *pure* and *ſimple* Spirit. The more current Opinion however of the Chriſtian Church (eſpecially of later Times) has been, that Angels are Subſtances entirely *ſpiritual*, though infinitely inferior to their Creator's *Eſſence*, and have nothing material or corporeal belonging to them; tho' they can, at any Time, form and aſſume Bodies, and, as the Scripture acquaints us, have, on certain Occaſions, appeared in *human Shape*.

Their Powers and Abilities.

[d] WE indeed, that are compounded Creatures, find a great deal of Obſtruction both in our ſpiritual and corporeal Acts, from this Load of Matter, that we carry about with us. *The Weight of the Body preſſes down the Soul* in all its nobleſt Sallies; and Maims and Sickneſs weaken and retard the Body, even in its moſt ordinary Operations: But now the holy Angels have none of theſe Impediments to contend with, they have no Weight or Load upon their Faculties; nothing to deaden or relax the *Spring* of their Motion; no Concupiſcence to darken their Underſtandings, or pervert their Wills; no Indiſpoſition, Languor, or Wearineſs, occaſioned by lazy or ſickly *Vehicles*; but are always freſh, vigorous, and bright, like the Sun, riſing in the Morning to run its appointed Courſe: [e] Are always ſtrong, quick, and penetrating, as the *Wind*, as *Lightning*, as a *Flame of Fire*, and are therefore very often, in Scripture, expreſſed by theſe *Metaphors*.

NAY, ſo ſtrong and powerful, ſo ſubtile and penetrating are they, that no Darkneſs can hinder their Sight; no Reſiſtance of material Bodies can obſtruct their Paſſage; no bodily Quality can have its Effect, if they pleaſe to ſuſpend or controul it: For they could ſee [f] *Sarah* laugh, though ſhe was in another Tent; [g] could paſs through the Priſon-Door, to viſit and releaſe St *Peter*; and [h] with-hold the Violence of the fiery Furnace, to reſcue the three *Iſraelites*. That they can collect, and manage to their Uſes, all *Meteors* and *Exhalations*; can diſpoſe the *Temperature* of the Air, and order the *Influence* of the Elements, ſo as to produce ſtrange Sights in the upper Regions, and occaſion either publick Bleſſings or Calamities here below; [i] the Thunder and Lightning, and Earthquakes, at the Delivery of the Law, ſaid to be raiſed by them; and the many ſore Judgments of [k] War, Famine, and Peſtilence, ſaid to be of their Infliction, are a ſufficient Indication.

[l] WHAT Influence they have over *human Bodies*, either to improve, or impair their State of Health; what Power they have over their *animal Spirits*, ſo as, by fixing, or accelerating them, to produce either Joy or Sadneſs in us; and what Acceſs they have to our Minds, by the Help and Mediation of our *Fancies*; [m] the Death of *Herod*, who was ſtruck with an Angel, and his Bowels *putrified into Worms*; [n] the Caſe of *Saul*, who, by the Faſcination of an evil Spirit, was at Times run into a deſperate *Melancholy*; and the Caſe of ſome primitive Martyrs, who, by the Miniſtry of good Spirits, were, in their Sufferings, *exhilarated* to a wonderous Degree, are abundant Conviction. Nay, I cannot ſee, why theſe lofty Beings, who are ſaid *to excel in Knowledge*, and Wiſdom, as well as *Strength*, may not ſo perfectly know the Texture of our Nature, as to find a more immediate Acceſs to our *Souls*; as to be able to ſuggeſt *Thoughts* by Day, as well as *Dreams* by Night; and, in the Courſe of their Attendance upon us, to inform or warn, to encourage or dehort, to comfort or affright us, in ſome of our moſt *momentous* Undertakings, whenever God's Commiſſion, or their Charity to our Souls, ſhall direct them ſo to do. This I am certain of, that the Scripture tells us expreſsly, that *Satan put it into the Heart of* Judas *to betray Chriſt*; and, if an evil Angel had Power to do this, there is no Queſtion to be made, but that an equal Ability is committed to thoſe, that watch over us for our Good. Theſe are ſome of the Powers and Faculties of Angels, that the ſacred Oracles have declared unto us; and more than theſe we muſt not expect to know, until we arrive at that happy State, where, by the infinite Power and Goodneſs of God, our Natures ſhall be transformed, and be made like unto them.

[o] IN what Manner theſe Angels come to the Knowledge and Perception of Things; whether it be by immediate *Intuition*, or by having the Images of them impreſſed upon their Minds, or by ſeeing the *exemplary* Reaſons of them in the Divine Nature: In what Manner they perform their *Motions*; whether it be by a continued and gradual *Succeſſion*, or by making long *Intervals*, and bounding, as it were,

[d] *Norris*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [e] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [f] Gen. xviii. 12. [g] Acts xii. 7.
[h] Dan. iii. 25. [i] Exod. xix. 16. [k] Ezek. ix. [l] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [m] Acts xii. 23.
[n] 1 Sam. xvi. 14. [o] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

were, from one Part of the World to another in an Inſtant: In what Manner they occupy *Space*, and whether two, or any other Number of them, may not be preſent in one individual Spot, at one and the ſame Time; theſe are Queſtions, that ſavour more of *Subtlety*, than *Edification*; but what, ſuch as love to amuſe themſelves with ſuch Enquiries, may find Abundance of, and Scope enough to entertain their Curioſity, in the *Lucubrations* of the *Schoolmen*. In the mean Time, this Argument, thus far purſued, may be of Uſe to diſpel and ſcatter thoſe dark and cloudy Thoughts of the Divine Providence, which are apt, ſometimes, to ariſe within us, when we behold the lamentable Corruption and *Apoſtacy* of Mankind.

Inferences from the Doctrine of Angels.

1. IF we take a View of the Hiſtory of the World, ſince the firſt Time of its Creation; [p] how Man, as ſoon as he was made, rebelled, and Angels themſelves fell from their *Station* in Heaven; how the whole World was ſo *polluted* with Wickedneſs, that nothing, but an univerſal *Deluge* of Water, could *cleanſe* it; how the new World ſoon ran into the ſame Exceſs of Impiety, and, in a ſhort Time, was totally overſpread with *Idolatry*, and *Polytheiſm*, except one Family; how that one Family perverted their Ways many Times, and provoked the Holy One of *Iſrael* to Anger, ſo that he *ſwore in his Wrath*, he would have deſtroyed them, had not *Moſes* his *Servant* ſtood in the Gap: If we conſider, that, even ſince the Coming of his Son to enlarge the Bounds of the Church, and collect all Nations under one *Shepherd and Biſhop of their Souls*, the greater Part of the *known* World lies in *Darkneſs*, and the Shadow of Death; that Satan has a large Empire, and many Subjects ſubmitted to his *Tyranny*; that a vile *Impoſtor* has many Followers, and has ſet up a falſe *Light* where the famous [q] *Candleſticks of the Lord* were once ſituate; and that the ancient People of God continue obdurate, and, even to this Day, [r] *when* Moſes *is read, have their Minds blinded, and the Veil remaining upon their Hearts*; if we conſider, among thoſe, that profeſs the Goſpel of Chriſt, how few there are, that, in their Hearts and Lives, conform to its fundamental Precepts; how many, that *in Works*, if not in Principles, *deny God, crucify afreſh* his Son, and, by their Abominations, *put him to open Shame*; how ſmall a Senſe of Virtue and true Goodneſs, how ſtrong a Bent to Profaneneſs, and all Manner of Wickedneſs there is in the World; we can hardly forbear thinking, that the Wiſdom of God in forming this viſible *Syſtem* (ſuppoſing him to foreſee this general Depravity) is not ſo very manifeſt; and that the Production of human Race was not deſerving his Pains, ſince the End of creating them (which muſt be his own Glory) was in a Meaſure totally defeated.

BUT then, on the other Side, if we conſider, that, in every Age of the World, there has been a *Remnant*, that have *ſerved the Lord with Fear and Reverence*, and *are kept by Grace unto Salvation*; which, though they be few, in Compariſon of thoſe, that by their Diſobedience have brought upon themſelves Perdition; yet, when met together in one Body, will make a glorious Appearance: If we conſider farther, that, beſides this *Houſhold of Faith*, collected out of every Generation, God has provided himſelf with an innumerable Multitude of more excellent Creatures, who, from their firſt Production, have been always ſerving and adoring him; who never ſinned, nor ſhall ſin, as long as he endures; that they, together with us, ſhall make up one *general Aſſembly*; that we, together with them, ſhall enter [s] *into the City of the living God, the new* Jeruſalem, *and there ſing Praiſes unto him, that ſits upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for evermore:* If we conſider this, I ſay, our Notions of Providence, in the Creation of the World, will begin to clear up; the Number of elect Saints and Angels will be found ſufficient to celebrate the *Supper of the Lamb* to all Eternity; and the Number of the *Reprobate* will put no *Damp* upon the heavenly Joy; for the Remembrance of them, upon the full and raviſhing Employ of our Faculties, will be quite loſt and extinguiſhed.

WHEN therefore we are troubled at any Time, and offended, to ſee how badly Things go here below; how Vice triumphs, and Virtue is deſpis'd; how the great and good God is diſhonoured and affronted, and his Laws ſlighted, by the Generality of Men; what a vaſt Train of deluded Mortals the *Prince of Darkneſs* draws after him to Perdition; and how ſmall the Number is, that the bleſſed Precepts of the *Prince of Life* do retrieve; let us then look *upwards*, and view the heavenly Regions above us, where Millions of Millions of holy Angels dwell. *There* the Kingdom of God is in its Glory; *there* Virtue ſhines in its full Luſtre and Brightneſs:

[p] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [q] Rev. i. 20. [r] 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15. [s] Rev. xxi. 2.
[t] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

Brightneſs: *There* no unclean Thing can enter, no Sin, no Uneaſineſs, no Diſorder is to be found *there*; but all Things go according to the great Creator's Will: And when, in a ſhort Time, *the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect* ſhall meet theſe Spirits above, and ſo enter into a joyful Eternity; how muſt the Senſe of this pacify our Minds, and reconcile all preſent Inconſiſtencies to us, if ſo be we do in earneſt look *for* [u] *a new Heaven and a new Earth, where Righteouſneſs*, and nothing but Righteouſneſs, *is to dwell!*

2. WHAT has been ſaid of [x] the Powers and Faculties of theſe celeſtial Creatures, will afford a Chriſtian, at any Time, a delightful *Contemplation*, to conſider, how immenſely great, as well as good, their heavenly Creator muſt be. We juſtly admire the *Wonders* of God in the Formation of Things, which we ſee upon the Surface of the Earth: A Plant, a Flower, a Pile of Graſs, the leaſt Inſect, and the meaneſt Reptile, if duly conſidered, give us great Notions of his Almighty *Power*: We juſtly commemorate his Greatneſs, in the Obſervations we make upon our own Compoſition; in every Joint, and Muſcle, and Fibre, *how fearfully and wonderfully we are made*; and (what is the Wonder of all) how our Soul is united to this Maſs of Fleſh and Bones: We juſtly adore his Immenſity, in ſurveying the Heavens, *even the Work of his Fingers*, and thoſe vaſt luminous Bodies, that he has placed over our Heads, [y] *to divide the Day from the Night, and to be for Signs, and for Seaſons, and for Days, and for Years.* But if we could turn aſide the Curtain, and look into the *Holy of Holies*; if we could penetrate this outward Firmament, and paſs, with St *Paul*, into the *third Heaven*, with Eyes impregnated to bear the Sight; we ſhould there behold ſuch an infinite Number of *Things unutterable*, as would quite eclipſe the other Parts of the Creation, and make us wonder at ourſelves, that we ever admired any Thing elſe.

WHAT then we cannot attain to by Sight, at this Diſtance from the other World, let us endeavour to bring Home to us by Contemplation. Let us imagine ourſelves in the ſame Place and Situation with *Daniel*, to whom was repreſented [z] *the Antient of Days, ſitting upon his Throne, a thouſand thouſand miniſtring unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtanding before him*, the leaſt of which was fairer than Light, ſwifter than Thought, and brighter than the Sun ſhining in its *Meridian* Strength; having, as he tells, [a] *his Eyes like Lamps of Fire, his Arms and his Feet like poliſhed Braſs, the Voice of his Words like the Voice of a Multitude*, and his Awfulneſs and Power ſo vaſtly great, that, at one Look, [b] he ſtruck the Prophet dead, and, [c] at one Touch, raiſed and revived him again; and then let us conſider, how inexpreſſibly powerful *the Author and Giver of Life* muſt be, who, with one Almighty *Fiat*, could ſpeak ſo many Myriads of immortal Spirits, all *excelling in Strength*, all ſurpaſſing in Wiſdom, into Exiſtence out of nothing; how inexhauſtible muſt the Fountain of that *Omnipotence* be, that could communicate ſuch prodigious Abilities to ſo many, without any Diminution of his own? [d] *how unſearchable are thy Works, O Lord, and thy Ways paſt finding out!*

SECT. II.

Of the EMPLOYMENT *and* OFFICES *of good* ANGELS.

THE Prophet *Iſaiah* has given us a very lively Deſcription of the ſupreme Majeſty of God, and of the Behaviour of his Angelical Miniſters: [e] *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple; above it ſtood the Seraphims, and each one had ſix Wings; with twain he covered his Face, and with twain he covered his Feet, and with twain he did fly; and one cry'd unto another, and ſaid, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hoſts, the whole Earth is full of his Glory; and the Poſts of the Door moved at the Voice of him that cried, and the Houſe was filled with Smoak. With twain he covered his Face,* [f] to ſhew he was ſenſible of his *Imbecillity*; *and with twain he did fly*, to indicate the *Speed* and *Alacrity*, wherewith he executed the Divine Commands: So that, according to this Repreſentation, the firſt, and moſt immediate Employment of Angels, is to attend about the Throne of God. [g] To this Purpoſe we muſt obſerve, that the Scriptures

I. *The Office of Angels with regard to God.*

1. *To attend upon him.*

[u] 2 Pet. iii. 13. [x] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [y] Gen. i. 14. [z] Dan. vii. 9, 10.
[a] Chap. x. 6. [b] Ver. 8. [c] Ver. 10. [d] Rom. xi. 33. [e] Iſa. vi. 1, &c.
[f] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [g] *Patrick*'s Sermons.

repreſent God, as the ſupreme Majeſty of Heaven and Earth, the Lord and Governor of all Things, who, although he be every where, yet exhibits his glorious Preſence more eſpecially in Heaven, which is therefore called his *Throne*. *There* his Majeſty does, as it were, keep his Court; *from thence* he iſſues out his Orders concerning the Government of the World, and the Preſervation or Puniſhment of all his Subjects; and *there*, conſequently, the Divine *Majeſty* and Glory is attended by the moſt noble and excellent of them all; as a King, among us, has always thoſe about him, that are of the higheſt *Quality*, and moſt eminent Rank in his Dominions. Now, as Perſons of this Quality wait upon an earthly Prince, and are ready by him, to be ſent as his *Embaſſadors*, or Meſſengers in any Employment, wherein he has Occaſion to make Uſe of their Service; juſt ſo are the Angels repreſented, as the glorious *Miniſters* of Almighty God, who, attending upon him in his *Celeſtial Court*, are always at Hand, to be *diſpatched* about ſuch Buſineſs, and to take upon them ſuch *Charges*, as he thinks fit to commit to them, through the whole World, for the Good of his lower Sort of Subjects, and eſpecially of us, the Children of Men. The Meaning of our Saviour's Expreſſion therefore, ſpeaking of little Children, [h] *that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the Face of God*, is the ſame, as if he had ſaid, "They ſtand in the Preſence of God, as his Miniſters and Servants; they wait "upon him in Heaven, where they behold the Majeſty of his Glory; and they "look up unto him, to ſee what Orders he will give them, and on what Meſſages "he will be pleaſed to ſend them, for the Good of my Diſciples." Nay, they are ſo ready to execute his Pleaſure, and fulfil his Commands, that the leaſt Signification of *his* Will is enough to determine *theirs*, and diſpoſe them to a chearful Obedience: For theſe Words, *behold his Face*, ſeem to be a *Metaphor*, borrowed from good Servants, who, being well acquainted with their Maſter's Inclinations and Deſires, have their Eye continually upon him, and preſently, upon the leaſt Motion of his Head or his Eye, go, and diſpatch what they know to be his Pleaſure.

2. They worſhip and adore him.

BUT while they are thus attending, *they cry one to another, and ſay, Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hoſts, the whole Earth is full of thy Glory:* So that the next Employ, wherein we may ſuppoſe the bleſſed Angels to ſerve, is in celebrating the Praiſes of the great *Creator*, and kind *Redeemer* of the Univerſe; in performing the Service, and *chanting* over the *Liturgy*, as we may call it, which at ſtated Times (as ſome Maintainers of *ſtated Forms* contend) is conſtantly ſung in Heaven. [i] How theſe heavenly Miniſters acquit themſelves in this Capacity, we have an Account given us by one, that was admitted within the Sanctuary, and ſaw the Solemnity of their Worſhip: [k] *And all the Angels ſtood about the Throne, and fell before the Throne on their Faces, and worſhipped God, ſaying, Amen, Bleſſing, and Glory, and Wiſdom, and Thankſgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, be unto our God, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever, Amen.* This is the Angels Employment about the Throne of God's Preſence: Nor is it ſimply their *Employment*, but their *Happineſs* too; for as the Wind, that *fans* the Flowers, returns from them with a Tincture of their Sweetneſs; ſo all the Breath, that the heavenly Hoſt ſpends in the Praiſes of God, returns to them accumulated with Joy and Bleſſing; God having order'd it ſo, that there ſhould be an inſeparable Connection between their *Duty* and *Beatitude*; and that, the more they admire, and praiſe, and adore, the more they ſhould participate of the Perfections, that do engage them in the Work.

3. To adminiſter to his Providence.

ANOTHER Branch of the Office of Angels, is to effect the Iſſues of *Providence*, in the Government of the World; and for this Reaſon, they are called [l] *the Eyes of the Lord, that run to and fro through the whole Earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong, in Behalf of them, whoſe Heart is perfect towards him* [m]: For [n] though God's infinite Power be ſuch, that he can do all Things, both in Heaven and Earth, immediately by himſelf; can rule the Univerſe, and ſteer its Affairs, and turn them which Way he pleaſes, by the leaſt Beck of his Will; yet his Wiſdom and Goodneſs have thought fit to honour his Creatures, eſpecially this higher and more perfect Rank of Beings, with his Commands, and to make them, according to their ſeveral Degrees and Capacities, the *ordinary* Miniſters of his Affairs in the Rule and Government of this inferior World.

THE Princes of the Earth have *Deputies* and *Vice-Roys*, to govern ſuch Dominions, as are too diſtant from the Circle of their Inſpection: And, in like Manner,

[h] Matth. xviii. 10. [i] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [k] Rev. v. 13. and vii. 11, &c. [l] Zech. iv. 10.
[m] The *Jews* interpreted this Paſſage of the Angels, as we may learn from *Philo*, who ſays, that the *Eyes of God* are his Angels. *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [n] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

ner,) the Opinion is pretty general, both among *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, that God Almighty has appointed particular Angels, to preſide over Empires and Kingdoms, to ſway the mighty Affairs thereof, and, by ſecret and inviſible Means, to bring about their Changes and Revolutions. [o] The only Difference is, that the Rulers of this World have their Deputies out of *Neceſſity*, becauſe they cannot govern without them; whereas the great King of Heaven and Earth has his Miniſters out of *Choice*, and employs them in his Service, that they may have an Opportunity of expreſſing their Affection, and engaging his Favour and Reward.

And to his Church.

ANOTHER Branch of the Office of Angels, is to adminiſter the Affairs of God's Church, and to guard it againſt the Violence of its Adverſary, the Devil. That *Michael*, the Archangel, was the *Prince*, or Tutelar-Angel of the *Jewiſh Church* and People, we may, when we pleaſe to be curious, collect [p] from the tenth Chapter of the Book of *Daniel*; [q] and that he, and the heavenly Hoſt under his Command, are, in the ſame Capacity, [r] related to the *Chriſtian Church*, is more than probable, from that Paſſage in the *Revelations*, where we are told, [s] *that* Michael *and his Angels fought againſt the Dragon, and the Dragon fought, and his Angels, but did not prevail*, i. e. [t] *Michael* defeated all his cruel Plots and bloody Enterprizes for the Deſtruction of Chriſtian People, by the Tyranny of the *Roman* Emperors, whom this inveterate Enemy of true Piety inſtigated againſt them. That every *National* Church of Chriſt has the Preſidence and Guardianſhip of an Angel, we may fairly infer from the Meſſages and Monitions ſent by Chriſt in the Beginning of the *Revelations*, [u] and directed *to the Angels of the ſeveral Churches of Aſia:* For though by *Angels* we are to underſtand no more than the *Biſhops*, yet the very Ground of the Metaphor implies thus much, that there were Angels, to ſuperintend the Affairs of each Church, as well as Biſhops. That every particular *Congregation* of Chriſtians is attended with the Preſence and Inſpection of Angels, is plain from that Paſſage of St *Paul*, [x] where he enjoins Women to have *their Heads cover'd*, as a Matter of great Decency in religious Aſſemblies, *becauſe of the Angels*, *i. e.* becauſe Angels are preſent in our *Churches*, obſerving the very Decency of our *Dreſs*, as well as the Devoutneſs of our Behaviour.

Their Diligence herein.

HOW the Angels acquit themſelves in all the Offices, wherein the Affairs of God's Providence and his Church are concern'd, we are inſtructed by the *Repreſentations* that are made of them in Scripture, all teſtifying the Perfection of their Obedience. [y] To this Purpoſe they are repreſented as *ſtanding about the heavenly Throne*; a Poſture that denotes their *Readineſs* and Preparation for their Employment: They are repreſented, as *full of Eyes*; a Circumſtance, that ſignifies their *Ambition* to know every Inſtance of the Divine Will: They are repreſented, as furniſh'd *with many Wings*; a Symbol, that intimates their *Speed* and Chearfulneſs in executing their Charge: And, finally, their *Aſſiduity* and Perſeverance in this Courſe are repreſented to us, when we are told, that *they ceaſe not Day nor Night*; are ever praiſing, ever ſerving; for to do the Will of God is their *Meat* and *Drink*, their great Refreſhment, and eternal Feaſt.

[z] THE *Jews* indeed have a Proverb, that the Angel of *Juſtice* flies but with *one Wing:* But hereby, I conceive, they intend only the *Slowneſs* of God, in iſſuing out Commiſſions of Vengeance, and not the Backwardneſs of Angels, in putting them in Execution: For they, who ſee the *Reaſon*, as well as the *Letter* of the Command, who have ſo clear a Viſion of the Divine Eſſence and Perfections, as will not ſuffer them to doubt of the Equity and Reaſonableneſs of all his Injunctions, are as well ſatisfied with the *Decrees* of his Severity, and perform them as chearfully, as they do the milder *Emanations* of his Love. To this Purpoſe we may obſerve, that the Angel, who was [a] ſent to expel lapſed Man out of Paradiſe with his *flaming Sword*, betook himſelf as readily to that *ungrateful* Office, as he, that was to carry the *welcome* Tidings of Man's Salvation, [b] *of Peace on Earth, and good Will towards Men:*

[o] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [p] In this Chapter, *Daniel* gives an Account, that an Angel, appearing to him, told him, that he had been contending a great while with the *Prince of the Kingdom of* Perſia, *i. e.* with that mighty Angel, which abetted the *Perſian* Intereſt againſt the *Iſraelites: And lo*, Michael, *one of the chiefeſt Princes*, or greateſt Angels, *came to help me*, Ver. 13. to lend him his Aſſiſtance to enable him to overcome the Angel, that contended with him; and therefore he ſays, (Ver. 20.) that being thus reinforc'd, *he would return, and fight with the King of* Perſia; and, in the very next Words, he tells him, that this *Michael* was the *Prince* of the *Jewiſh* Nation, or the Angel that had the Care and Protection of their Affairs committed to him. From hence the *Jews* have entertain'd a conſtant Opinion, that every Country has a *great* and *potent* Angel, with others ſubordinate, preſiding over it, and that till this Angel, and thoſe under his Command, be overcome, or go away, there is no prevailing againſt that Nation. *Patrick*'s Sermons. [q] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [r] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [s] Chap. xii. 7, 8. [t] *Patrick*'s Sermons. [u] Chap. ii. [x] 1 Cor. xi. 6. [y] *Young*'s, ibid. [z] *Norris*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [a] Gen. iii. 24. [b] Luke ii. 14.

Men: And I make no doubt, but that thoſe Sons of God, *who ſhouted for Joy*, at the Formation of this World's *Fabrick*, will hereafter, upon a Signal given, be full as ready to aſſiſt (as the Scriptures tell us they are to aſſiſt) in its Deſtruction, and fiery *Diſſolution.*

II. *Their Office, with Regard to Men.*

IN this Capacity are the holy Angels appointed to be the Miniſters of the moſt High God. We come now to conſider their Office and Employment, with regard to the Children of Men, thoſe eſpecially who comport themſelves well, and thereupon (as the Apoſtle expreſſes it) *ſhall be Heirs of Salvation.*

1. *To attend on good Men.*

[c] THAT every Man, at leaſt every good Man, has a Guardian-Angel appointed him by God, to take ſpecial Care of him and his Concernments, both ſpiritual and temporal; to proſper him in his Undertakings, and comfort him in his Sorrows, has been a common Opinion among the *Heathens*, and a conſtant and firmly believed Tradition among the *Jews*. The *Jews* found their Belief upon ſeveral Paſſages in Scripture, which they account of undeniable Conſequence; *Jacob*, at his Death, wiſhes [d] that *the Angel, which had redeem'd him from all Evil*, might *bleſs* the two Sons of *Joſeph: Iſaiah* acknowledges, that when the *Iſraelites* were in an afflicted Condition, [e] *the Angel of God's Preſence ſaved them: David* profeſſes himſelf to be of this Perſuaſion, that the Angel of [f] *the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him*; the *Royal Preacher* teſtifies the ſame, when he gives his Hearer this Caution, [g] *Suffer not thy Mouth to cauſe thy Fleſh to ſin, neither ſay thou* † BEFORE THE ANGEL, *it is an Error*; and our *bleſſed Saviour* himſelf ſeems to be of the like Sentiment, when, cautioning all Men to take heed how they offend any of his *little Ones*, i. e. any humble and devout Chriſtian, he ſubjoins this Reaſon, that [h] THEIR ANGELS *do always behold the Face of my Father, which is in Heaven*, i. e. [i] "Thoſe "bleſſed Spirits, which are appointed by God to be their *Guardians* upon Earth, "have, nevertheleſs, their Returns and Recourſe to God's glorious Preſence in Hea- "ven, and a conſtant Acceſs to him, to offer up Complaints and Requeſts in their "Behalf; and therefore it muſt needs be a very dangerous Thing for a Man to "deſpiſe or offend any of them, leſt thereby he provoke thoſe mighty Spirits, to "ſue out, and execute ſome Commiſſion of Vengeance upon him:" For theſe Words of our Saviour, we muſt remember, were ſpoken to the *Jews*, and muſt conſequently be interpreted in a Senſe, agreeable to their Notions and Apprehenſions, whereof the *Guard* and *Tutelage* of Angels was not the leaſt conſiderable.

NAY, not only the *Jews*, [k] but the *Heathens* likewiſe, were of this Perſuaſion; and they, indeed, ſeem to carry the Notion too far, by aſſigning a good Genius to every one *indiſcriminately:* Thus [l] *Menander* tells us, that *every Man, as ſoon as he is born, has his* Genius *to attend and aſſiſt him, as the good Guide of his enſuing Life*; and [m] *Arianus*, upon *Epictetus*, ſpeaking of God, aſſures us, that *he hath given to every Man his peculiar Genius, as his Keeper and Guardian, who is a watchful Guardian, and cannot, by any Means, withdraw from the faithful Diſcharge of his Office.* We need therefore leſs wonder, [n] that we find this Sentiment ſo generally received in the Chriſtian Church, that Men, from their Birth, at leaſt from their *new Birth*, i. e. their Baptiſm, have an Angel, commiſſioned from Heaven, to attend them, and, as they go on in the Chriſtian Courſe, that this Angel is παρεζευγμένος *yoked together with them:* "For Angels (as *Origen* expreſſes it) look upon thoſe, who, "from the Time of their *Baptiſmal* Engagement, imitate God, together with them- "ſelves, as their Friends and Kinſmen; and, upon that Account, hold themſelves "obliged to *work together* for their Safety, and come daily to do them Favours "and good Offices, as if there were a *League* and *Covenant* between them for "that Purpoſe."

2. *To defend us from evil Angels.*

[o] 'TIS very remarkable in the Caſe of righteous *Job*, that, before he was ſubmitted to the Temptations of the Devil, the Devil ſeems to be envious of his outward

[c] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. II. [d] Gen. xlviii. 16. [e] Iſai. lxiii. 9. [f] Pſal. xxxiv. 7. [g] Eccleſ. v. 6.

† Here we have *Angel* in the *ſingular* Number, not Angels in the *plural*, to denote ſome *one certain* Angel, and then this Angel is deſcrib'd, as the Angel before whom, and in whoſe Preſence, the Perſon, who makes the Vow referr'd to, is; and as he is repreſented as the Inſpector and Obſerver of his Words and Actions, this gives us the plain Notion of a *Guardian-Angel*; and, by the Way, we muſt farther obſerve, from this Text, that if it belongs to the Office of our *Guardian-Angel*, not only to ſecure us from Dangers, but to inſpect and govern our Actions, yea, and if Need be, to chaſtize us, when we tranſgreſs and prevaricate. *Bull's* Sermons, Vol. II.

[h] Matt. xviii. 10. [i] *Scott's* Chriſtian Life, Vol. III. [k] *Bull's* Sermons. [l] Απαντι δαίμων ἀνδρὶ συμπαραγατιῖ εὐθυς γινομένω, μυσαγωγὸς τύτυ βίυ ἀγαθός. ——— [m] Καὶ ἐπίτροπον ἑκάστῳ περέστησε τὸν ἑκάστυ δαίμονα. Καὶ παρέδωκε φυλάττειν αὐτὸν αὐτῷ. Καὶ τῦ τὸν ἄκαμπτον καὶ ἀπαράγωγον, Vid. *Bull's* Sermons, Vol. II. [n] *Patrick's* Sermons. [o] *Bull's*, ibid.

outward Security, and happy Condition, [p] *Does* Job *fear God for nought? Haſt thou not made an Hedge about him, and about his Houſe, and about all that he has on every Side? Thou haſt bleſſed the Work of his Hands, and his Subſtance is increaſed in the Land.* The good Man, it ſeems, was ſo fenc'd and ſecur'd on every Side, in his *Perſon*, in his *Goods*, and in his *Relations*, by the Angels of God *encamping round about him*, that all the Power and Policy of the Devil could not make a *Breach* upon him, until God himſelf was pleas'd to prepare the Way: And tho', for the Trial of Men's Faith, and for the Prevention and Chaſtizement of Sin, *that they may be found acceptable in the Day of the Lord*, God may ſometimes withdraw this *Guard* of Angels from his faithful Servants, and ſubmit them and their Concerns to *Satanical* Aſſaults; yet, at the ſame Time, that theſe Purpoſes are thought neceſſary, he never fails to ſend them *Auxiliaries* from above, to aid and aſſiſt them in the unequal Conflict, and to prevent their ſinking under the Load of their Temptation: For ſo we read, that, after our Saviour had been violently ſet upon by the Devil in the Wilderneſs, [q] *good Angels came and miniſtered unto him.* [r] And tho' it does not appear by Words, that they came to his Aſſiſtance, while he was actually *engag'd*, as knowing his Virtue to be impregnable, and in no Danger of being ſeduc'd to ſo foul an Act, *as falling down and worſhipping the Devil*; yet, from this Paſſage, we have good Grounds to hope, that in all our Encounters of this Kind, we, who cannot ſtand the Shock ſo well, we, who *unaſſiſted* cannot ſtand it at all, ſhall not fail to receive timely Relief by the charitable Supplies of thoſe heavenly Hoſts, whoſe Joy and Triumph it is, *to manifeſt God's Strength* in our Weakneſs.

Evil Accidents.

IN what Security the good Man lives, fenc'd againſt the evil Accidents of Life, and protected from the Malice of wicked Men, the Royal *Pſalmiſt* has given us a very elegant and comfortable Deſcription: [s] *He will not ſuffer thy Foot to be moved, and he that keepeth thee will not ſleep: The Lord himſelf is thy Keeper, the Lord is thy Defence upon thy right Hand, ſo that the Sun ſhall not burn thee by Day, neither the Moon by Night; the Lord ſhall preſerve thee from all Evil, yea it is even he that ſhall keep thy Soul, and preſerve thy going out and coming in for evermore*; and by what Means and Inſtruments he does all this, the ſame Royal Author has inform'd us; [t] *for he ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, and keep thee in all thy Ways, and they ſhall bear thee up in their Hands, leſt thou daſh thy Foot againſt a Stone.*

HOW the Angels do this, 'tis not our Ambition to know, ſince, by happy Experience, we find that it is done. This only we may imagine, [u] that as theſe powerful Spirits have a mighty Influence upon *neceſſary Cauſes* (at leaſt upon a great many of them) and can retard or precipitate, can vary or divert their Motions, as they ſee Occaſion; they can, by this Means, prevent a great many *Accidents*, which muſt otherwiſe have come to paſs, had they permitted them to proceed in their *natural Courſe*: And as they have a near Acceſs at leaſt to Mens Imaginations; either by warning us of Dangers approaching, by ſome external Sign, or unaccountable Impreſſion upon our *Fancies*, vehemently ſolliciting us, without any viſible Cauſe or Reaſon, to leave the Path, where the Danger lies; or by injecting ſudden Fears into the Hearts of wicked Men, and brandiſhing horrid *Phantaſms* before their Imaginations (as the Angel did the flaming Sword before *Balaam*) they can prevent their miſchievous Deſigns againſt us.

3. Aſſiſt us in Goodneſs.

BUT the End of their Miniſtry and Attendance about us is not only to defend us from Evil, and reſcue us from Danger, but to contribute their Aſſiſtance likewiſe to the Procuration of all the good Things, we ſtand in need of: And [x] accordingly we may obſerve, that St *John*, in his [y] Salutation of the Churches of *Aſia*, *wiſhes* them *Grace and Peace*, i. e. all *ſpiritual*, as well as *temporal* Bleſſings, not only from *God the Father*, as the *Fountain* of them; and *from Jeſus Chriſt*, as the meritorious *Procurer* of them; but from the *ſeven Spirits*, or chief Angels likewiſe, *that are before the Throne*, as the great *Inſtruments* of Divine Providence in diſpenſing them; [z] which muſt needs imply, that the holy Angels, ſince our Saviour's Return to Heaven, are employed, by the Divine Appointment, to be the Conveyers of ſpiritual Bleſſings to us, from the Holy Ghoſt the *Comforter*.

[p] Job i. 9, 10.
[q] Matt. iv. 11.
[r] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II.
[s] Pſal. cxxi. 3, &c.
[t] Ibid. xci. 11, 12.
[u] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. III.
[x] *Bull*'s, ibid.
[y] Rev. i. 4, 5.
[z] *Patrick*'s Sermons.

SOCRATES, in his Apology, declares, that he was prompted to ſay and do, as he did, in Oppoſition to the deprav'd Sentiments and Practices of the Vulgar, by the Inſtigation of his good *Genius*: But however that was, ſince the Devil is ſaid [b] *to work in the Children of Diſobedience*, making it Matter of his Induſtry to tempt them to Sin, and to ſtir them up to the Commiſſion of it, we cannot but think that good Angels are equally able to do ſomething of a contrary Nature, for the Benefit of the Righteous; that they can guide and direct them inſenſibly to the Means of Religion and Virtue, by the Mediation of their *Blood* and *Spirits*: can ſtir up in their Minds an Inclination to what is virtuous, and, by working upon their *Fancies*, can *ſuggeſt* good Thoughts, *raiſe* holy Purpoſes and Affections, *refreſh* them in their pious Undertakings; and ſo *aſſiſt* and promote the Work of their *Sanctification*: And accordingly any one, that has been exercis'd in the Ways of Godlineſs, muſt have obſerved within himſelf, that oftentimes, he knows not how, the moſt powerful and affecting Thoughts of *Eternity*, and the great Concerns of Religion have ſeiz'd and poſſeſs'd his Soul; and that, even when his Mind has been taken up with other Matters, he has had a ſudden *Suggeſtion* ariſe in his Breaſt, which he could not controul, exciting him to ſome Act of Piety, or other good Work, with an irreſiſtible Force, which in a great Meaſure is imputable to the *Agency* of Angels, directed by the *Superintendency* of the *Holy Ghoſt*.

THE *Holy Ghoſt* indeed is the ſole original Author of our *Sanctification*: He only is able to over-rule our Wills, and rectify our inward Faculties; and therefore, when we aſcribe thus much to the Operation of *Angels*, we mean not to derogate from his gracious Undertaking: On the contrary, we aſſert, that all the Means and Methods of forming holy Diſpoſitions in us, do originally flow from him; and that even, when Angels aſſiſt, the Grace is *his*, and therefore *his* the Glory, becauſe they only act by his *Delegation*.

NAY we aſſert farther, that this Doctrine of *Angelical* Aſſiſtance does not in the leaſt *interfere* with the Power of God's bleſſed Spirit, and that there is a plain Difference between *its* Operation and *theirs*, upon the Minds of Men, which we find St *Bernard* thus diſtinguiſhing: *Angelus*, ſays he, *adeſt Animæ, non ineſt; ſuggerit bona, non ingerit; hortatur ad bonum, non bonum creat*; which in Effect is this,—— "The Angel comes to the Soul, the Holy Ghoſt comes into the Soul; the Angel "ſuggeſts and recommends good Things to us, but the Holy Ghoſt does, by a *pow-* "*erful Energy*, create and plant them in us:" In a Word, the Angels cannot act upon our Souls but *mechanically*, and by the Mediation of our Fancy; but the Holy Ghoſt can come into them, and act *immediately* upon their very Eſſence. It ſeems therefore moſt worthy the Majeſty of God, and moſt ſuitable to our own Diſtance, to believe, that, whatever of God's Pleaſure can be done for our Souls *mechanically*, the Angels are the Inſtruments of doing it; but to work *immediately* upon the Soul, and change and ſanctify it *effectually*, this we affirm, and this we ought to believe, is only the Work of God that made it.

4. Inſpect our private,

ANOTHER Part of the Office and Employment of Angels is to inſpect the *Behaviour*, and take Notice of the *Prayers*, and other good Works of Men upon Earth, in order to make a Report of them, before God in Heaven. [c] That the ancient Chriſtians look'd upon Angels, as the Witneſſes of their Actions, in Conſideration of which, they were excited to do well, and to behave themſelves with Care and Circumſpection, is manifeſt from that ſevere Charge, which St *Paul* gives his Son *Timothy*, [f] *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the elect Angels, that thou obſerve theſe Things.* As if he had ſaid, "The *Elect*, i. e. the choice and "principal Angels are Witneſſes of what I ſay, and of all the Charge, that is im- "poſed on thee, and undertaken by thee; they will obſerve thy Behaviour and "Demeanour in the Church of God, being as ſo many Governors, ſet over Men "by the Father of all; and accordingly they will accuſe, or acquit thee, at the "great Day of Retribution." And the ſame Meaning ſeems to be ſuggeſted [g] in another Place by this Apoſtle, where he would have the *Corinthians* think, that Angels are preſent in their *ſacred Aſſemblies*, and ſo, out of Reverence to ſuch great Miniſters of God, appointed to attend there, to be careful how they admitted of any Thing indecent or immodeſt at their Meetings.

And religious Behaviour.

THESE Courtiers of Heaven indeed ſeem ambitious [h] *to look* into the important Matters of Chriſtianity: They bend their glorious Heads (as the Expreſſion intimates)

[a] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [b] Eph. ii. 2. [c] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [d] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [e] *Patrick*'s Sermons. [f] 1 Tim. v. 21. [g] 1 Cor. xi. 10. [h] 1 Pet. i. 12.

intimates) and ſtoop down to pry into the ſacred *Myſteries* of our holy Religion; They *learn from the Church the manifold Wiſdom of God*, as the Apoſtle affirms; and therefore no Wonder, that they are preſent at the *Places*, where theſe Things are commemorated. And if they are preſent in our religious Aſſemblies, we cannot ſuppoſe, that they are *there* as idle Auditors and Spectators, that have nothing elſe to do, but only obſerve and gaze upon our holy Solemnities; and therefore we muſt conclude, that their Buſineſs is to aſſiſt us in our religious Performances; to remove our Indiſpoſitions; and recollect our Wanderings; to fix our Attention, excite our Affections, and inflame our Devotions; and when our Devotions are thus qualified, to join their Supplications to ours, for their better Acceptance at the Throne of Grace: In which Senſe that Paſſage in the *Revelation* may not improperly be underſtood, [k] *that an Angel came, and ſtood at the Altar, having a Golden Cenſer, and there was given unto him much Incenſe, that he ſhould offer it with the Prayers of all Saints, upon the Golden Altar, which was before the Throne.*

GOD indeed knows, and takes notice of every Thing that good Men do: He records it, to Perpetuity, in the faithful Regiſter of his omniſcient Mind; and yet he would have his Angels to be conſcious of our good Actions, not only that they might congratulate our Happineſs, as *Fellow-Servants* under the ſame common Lord; but might be Witneſſes likewiſe of his righteous Judgments, Aſſerters of our Innocence, and ready to confront that grand [l] *Accuſer of the Brethren*, when Chriſt ſhall come from *Heaven with Millions of his holy Angels to judge the World, according to his Goſpel.*

FROM what has been ſaid then we cannot but obſerve, how graciouſly kind theſe great and glorious Spirits are, in doing all good Offices, that may tend to our Salvation; in reſtraining, and pulling us back from Sin; in exciting, and ſolliciting us to what is good; in promoting our Sanctity, in helping our Devotion, in recommending our Prayers, and, when we have done any Thing commendable, in carrying the News, and making a favourable Report thereof, to their great Maſter and ours.

5. Aſſiſt us in Death, and convey our Spirits into Paradiſe.

AND as they are thus aſſiſtant to us, in working out our Salvation, thro' the Courſe of our Lives; [m] ſo, at the Hour of Death, they ſtand by, to help and comfort us, in that needful, and diſmal Time, in that laſt, and great *Conflict* of frail Mortality with Death, and the Powers of Darkneſs; to receive our naked Spirits into their Embraces, and to conduct them ſafe to thoſe bleſſed Abodes, which the Divine Goodneſs has provided for their Reception. For be the Place of Paradiſe where it will, [n] ſince the *lower Regions*, thro' which we are to paſs, are peſter'd with *Apoſtate* Spirits, which, like *Birds of Prey*, are continually lying in wait, to ſeize upon the Souls of Men, as ſoon as they are ſeparate from the Body; the bleſſed Angels are appointed, to take all pious Souls into their *Cuſtody*, and to guard them ſafe and ſecure thro' the Enemies Quarters, into their bleſſed Habitations: And 'tis not improbable, that theſe evil Spirits do diſtinguiſh what Souls belong to them, and what do not, by ſeeing who are left deſtitute, and who are attended with this *celeſtial* Guard of Angels.

The Uſes of this Doctrine.

THUS we have gone as far, as Scripture leads us, in the Diſcovery of the Nature and Offices of good Angels: And (not to let go ſo comfortable a Doctrine without ſome proper Application) [o] this may ſerve to remind us of the wonderful Vouchſafement of God unto Mankind, while we conſider that our preſent State, how contemptible ſoever it may appear to be in other Reſpects, yet is honour'd with the Attendance of ſuch excellent Creatures. It may ſerve to recommend that Part of Devotion, wherein pious Chriſtians are wont to implore of God their Succour and Protection; but it gives no Countenance to our paying that Devotion to them which they themſelves are known to abhor; [p] *See thou do it not, I am thy Fellow-Servant: Worſhip God:* And laſtly, it may ſerve to diſpoſe our Minds to a proper *Reverence* of the holy Angels, i. e. to think on them, as conſtant *Witneſſes* of our Behaviour; to bear an awful Regard to their Preſence and Inſpection; and to take Care that they, who wait on us for our Good, be not griev'd or frighten'd from their Station, by our unworthy Deportment.

IN every Place, in every Corner therefore, revere the Preſence of thy Angel; and do not that before him, which thou wouldſt be aſham'd to do before a Man like

[i] Eph. iii. 10. [k] Rev. viii. 3. [l] Ibid. xii. 10. [m] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [n] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. III. [o] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [p] Rev. xxii. 9.

like thyſelf. [q] *Keep thy Foot more eſpecially, when thou goeſt into the Houſe of God,* and be very devout, and ſincere in what thou offereſt unto him, becauſe his *holy Angels* are aſſembled there, and are ſtrictly obſerving thy Carriage and Behaviour. And as they are thy Obſervers, ſo be thou *theirs*, and ſet their Example before thee, for thy Imitation. Imitate their exalted Love (the Source and Fountain of all their Services) to their Creator, *in loving the Lord thy God with all thy Heart.* Imitate their exalted Praiſes, in the beſt Tribute of Thankſgiving that thou canſt pay, and thy conſtant Communion in religious Offices. Imitate their Charity, in the free Extenſion of thy Love and Aſſiſtance to thy weak or indigent Brother; and imitate their great and wonderful Condeſcenſion, in thinking no Office below thy Dignity, that contributes to the Relief of his Neceſſity, or the Benefit of his immortal Soul.

SECT. III.

Of the EXISTENCE *and* EMPLOYMENT *of Evil* ANGELS.

THE Angels were at firſt all created good and obedient to their Maker's Will, but the Divine *Revelation* teaches us, that ſome of them [r] *ſinned*, and [s] *kept not their firſt Eſtate*, but *left their own Habitation*; and ſo, of the moſt bleſſed and glorious, became the moſt vile and miſerable of all God's Creatures. They were expelled from the Regions of Light, that bleſſed Abode they once enjoyed, and caſt down *to Hell, to be reſerved in everlaſting Chains, under Darkneſs, unto the Judgment of the great Day*: With Heaven, they loſt their *heavenly* Diſpoſition, that delighted once in doing good, and praiſing God; and fell into a ſettled Rancour againſt him, and Malice againſt Man, that bears his Image. Their inward Peace and Tranquillity were gone; all Deſire and Ability of doing good departed from them; and, inſtead thereof, Rage, Fury, and revengeful Thoughts, Horror, Diſtraction, and Deſpair took Poſſeſſion of them, and created an *eternal Hell* within them.

Their Exiſtence.

THAT there are ſuch wicked and *apoſtate* Spirits, is but too evident, from the Power and Poſſeſſion they have gained in the World: For, how diffident ſoever we may be of the ſeveral modern Accounts of *Sorcery* and *Witchcraft*; how incredible ſoever we may ſuppoſe the Meetings of *Witches*, and their *Transformations*, their *Compacts* with the Devil, and *fœderal* Solemnities, their *ludicrous*, as well as *miſchievous* Pranks and Practices to be; yet, if we believe the Divine Authority of the Scripture, we cannot but think, that the many Laws provided in the *Old Teſtament* [t] againſt *Wizards*, and ſuch *as had familiar Spirits*, and the many Inſtances, *in the New*, of Perſons poſſeſſed with Devils, which, the *Evangeliſts* tell us, our bleſſed Saviour caſt out, are ſo many Arguments in Atteſtation of this Truth: And though (bleſſed be God) he does not permit theſe malicious *Fiends* ſuch Liberty now in *Chriſtian* Countries, (in which Senſe thoſe Words of our Saviour, [u] *I beheld* Satan, *as Lightning, fall from Heaven*, may not improperly be underſtood) yet, if we believe the ancient Writers of the Church, *Poſſeſſions*, at the firſt preaching of the Goſpel, were frequent, and the Number of *Dæmoniacks* not a few: If we believe the Teſtimony of Travellers, in ſeveral Countries, that are deſtitute of the true Knowledge of God, [x] theſe infernal Spirits, even to this Day, appear frequently, are worſhipped publickly, and exerciſe an open and palpable Tyranny upon the poor deluded People: If we believe the Confeſſions of ſome *good Men*, who complain of the Temptation of *horrid* and *blaſphemous* Thoughts, which nothing but the Injection of an inviſible and wicked Agent can occaſion; or if we conſider the Practices of too many *bad Men*, their bloody Murthers, and execrable Oaths, and abominable Luſts, which human Nature (without the Inſtigation of the Devil) could never prompt them to; which gratify no Paſſion or Appetite, but ſeem merely to be done becauſe they are *monſtrouſly* wicked; if we conſider theſe Things, I ſay, we cannot but be convinced, that, even in Chriſtian Countries, this Adverſary and his Aſſociates have

[q] Eccleſ. v. 1. [r] 2 Pet. ii. 4. [s] Jude, *ver.* 6. [t] Exod. xxii. 18. Lev. xx. 27. [u] Luke x. 18.

[x] Several Writers, not only *Papiſts*, but *Proteſtants*, teſtify, that the Infidels of *America* are haunted, and ſcared by theſe wicked Creatures, who meet them, at all Times, in frightful Shapes. Particularly of the People of *Braſil*, it is related by *Maffeus*, that they commonly carry Fire with them when they go abroad, thinking thereby that they defend themſelves againſt the Devils, who make them do Homage, and worſhip them with the profoundeſt Humility. For the further Proof of this Matter, ſee *Prodage*'s poſthumous myſtical Theology, *Baxter*'s Diſcourſe of Apparitions, *Lavater & Logerus de Spectris, Boiſardus de Spirit. Apparit.* &c.

have too large a Sway, and, while they only try and exerciſe the *Righteous*, reign very powerfully *in the Children of Diſobedience*. In ſhort, the Scriptures have taken ſuch Care to acquaint us with the *Origin* and [y] *Fall* of theſe once celeſtial Creatures; with their [z] Names and [a] Numbers, their [b] Government and [c] Orders, their [d] woeful Eſtate and [e] Puniſhment, their [f] malicious Deſigns and Employments, that no one can doubt of their Exiſtence, who believes theſe holy Oracles to be true; nor can any one endeavour to diſpoſſeſs his Mind of this Perſuaſion, without tempting God to give him up to a *ſtrong Deluſion, that he may believe a Lye*.

Their Fall, and probable Occaſion of it.

WHEN, and for what *Offence*, theſe apoſtate Spirits fell from Heaven, and plunged themſelves into ſuch an Abyſs of Wickedneſs and Woe, are Queſtions very hard, if not impoſſible, to be determined by any clear Evidence of Scripture: All we learn from thence is, that, before the Fall of Man, there was a fallen Angel, the firſt and chiefeſt of the fallen Angels, that, under the Form of a Serpent, ſeduced Man to Diſobedience, and therefore called [g] *the old Serpent*, [h] *and a Murtherer from the Beginning:* But how long his *Fall* preceded Man's *Creation*, we have no Intimation, nor can it be determined, for what particular Fault and Crime, he, and his Aſſociates, fell.

SOME of the [i] *Jews*, as well as Chriſtian [k] Fathers, were of Opinion, that the Sin of Angels, which threw them into the Condition of Devils, was *Carnality*, and that they *left their own Habitation*, or were caſt out of Heaven, for luſting to converſe with Women upon Earth: An Opinion founded upon a Miſtake in the Interpretation of theſe Words, [l] *the Sons of God ſaw the Daughters of Men that they were fair*, which are not to be underſtood of *Angels*, but of the religious Men of that Age, who, according to Scripture-Stile, are, in other Places, *called the Sons and Children of God:* And theſe religious Men (if we will believe the beſt Expoſitors) were the Poſterity of *Seth*, in whoſe Family the Worſhip of the true God was preſerved, who, taking to Marriage *the Daughters of Men*, i. e. the Deſcendants of wicked *Cain*, did, by that Union, occaſion the general *Corruption* of Mankind, [m] which *Moſes* afterwards relates.

[n] OTHERS have imagined, that the Angels being informed of God's Intentions to create Man after his *own Image*, and to dignify his Nature by Chriſt's aſſuming it, and thinking their own Glory to be *eclipſed* thereby, envied Man's Happineſs, and ſo revolted: But this Opinion, how plauſible ſoever, has not ſuch Countenance either from Reaſon or Scripture, as [o] that, which makes Pride the leading Sin of Angels. For [p] how perfect and excellent ſoever any Creature may be, yet, unleſs it is confirmed and eſtabliſhed in a State of Purity and Holineſs, (which the Angels at firſt were not) it may be ſuppoſed to admire itſelf, and doat upon its own Excellencies, and ſo, by Degrees, come to neglect and diſeſteem God the Author of them, and, in Proceſs of Time, to throw off all Subjection to him. The Man that is guilty of ſpiritual and *phariſaical* Pride, makes every Thing, that is good and commendable in him, the Matter of his Sin; and, in like Manner, theſe ſublime Beings might be puffed up, conſidering the Height and Dignity of their Station, and, the more Perfections they perceived in their Nature, have the greater Temptations to rebel; to which Cauſe of the Angels Apoſtacy, the Apoſtle in theſe Words ſeems to refer us, [q] *leſt being puffed up with Pride, he fall into the Condemnation of the Devil*, where he puts the Sin and Puniſhment of thoſe evil Spirits both together.

[r] HOW *art thou fallen from Heaven, O* Lucifer, *Son of the Morning! How art thou cut down to the Ground, which didſt weaken the Nations! For thou haſt ſaid in thine Heart, I will aſcend into Heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God, I will be like the Moſt High; yet thou ſhalt be brought down to Hell, to the Sides of the Pit.* The Prophet, it muſt be owned, ſpeaks here of proud *Sennacherib*'s Fall, but

[y] John viii. 44. *and* 2 Pet. ii. 4. [z] Their general Names in Scripture are *Sátan*, an Adverſary, *Job* i. 6. Ἀντίδικος, the ſame, 1 *Pet.* v. 8. Κατήγορος, an Accuſer, Rev. xii. 10. Ἐχθρὸς, an Enemy, *Matth.* xiii. 39. Διάβολος, a Calumniator, *Matth.* iv. 8. Their particular Names are *Segnirim*, frightful, *Lev.* xvii. 7. *Shedim*, *Deut.* xxxii. 17. the ſame with *Abaddon* or *Apollyon* in the *Revelation*, Chap. ix. 11. and perhaps of the ſame Sort with *Aſmodæus*, mentioned in the Apocryphal Writings, whoſe Name ſignifies a Deſtroyer. [a] That their Numbers are vaſt, we may learn from their own Confeſſion, *our Name is* Legion, *for we are many*, Mark v. 9. A full and perfect Legion among the *Romans* was ſix thouſand and odd armed Men, which, though put here for an indefinite Number, yet expreſſes to us the vaſt Multitude of Devils, that are up and down in the World: For if there was a Legion in one Man, we may well infer how numerous they are.

[b] Matth. xii. 26. [c] Eph. vi. 12. [d] Jude, *ver.* 6. [e] Matth. v. 22. [f] 1 Pet. v. 6. [g] Rev. xii. 9. [h] John viii. 44. [i] *Joſephus* and *Philo*. [k] *Origen, Tertullian, Juſtin Martyr*, &c. [l] Gen. vi. 2. [m] Ver. 6. [n] *Iræneus, Lactantius, Gregory Nyſſ.* &c. [o] *Chryſoſtome, Theodoret, Athanaſius*, &c. [p] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion, Book II. [q] 1 Tim. iii. 6. [r] Iſa. xiv. 12, &c.

the Analogy of the Compariſon will not ſuffer us to doubt, but that he had the Angels likewiſe in his View, and intended to intimate, that Pride had deſtroyed this *Babylonian* Tyrant, as it had formerly done the *Angelic* Spirits. And this, by the Way, may ſuggeſt the Reaſon why this ſuperior Order of Creatures was for ever paſſed by in the *Redemption* of the World, while Man and his Race were admitted to Mercy. God, no doubt, could have *redintegrated* the Nature of Angels, and made them as glorious Creatures as they were before. He could have beſtowed Redemption and Salvation on them, in the ſame Manner that he did upon loſt Man: But it was his Pleaſure to ſhew the Riches of his Grace towards us, and not towards them; *towards us*, becauſe our Station and Perfections are not ſo conſpicuous, and our Sin, though *voluntary*, was, in ſome Meaſure, occaſioned by their Temptations; but not *towards them*, becauſe they wilfully abandoned the greateſt Happineſs, that Creatures could enjoy, and fell from the higheſt Top of Honour and Excellency, voluntarily, and without any Manner of Solicitation: And ſince their Sin was the *firſt*, it might further be thought expedient, that *Rigour* ſhould begin, where the Offence firſt began, in order to deter others from the like Provocations; and for this Reaſon, ſome have imagined, that the ſad Proſpect of their Brethren's Ruin and Apoſtacy, is, among others, one powerful Means to preſerve the *elect* Angels in a State of Impeccancy.

The Reaſon of their Non-Redemption.

Their Miniſtry and Employment.

"BUT if theſe evil Spirits are ſuch *inveterate* Enemies to God and Goodneſs; "if ſo outrageouſly bent upon Man's Ruin, that, *like roaring Lions, they go about* "*ſeeking whom they may devour*; why does not God rid himſelf and us of theſe "Adverſaries, and extinguiſh their Nature at once, ſince they are irrecoverably loſt?" This is a Queſtion that may well enough be aſked; and, in order to give it a proper Reſolution, it may be obſerved, that the Devils themſelves, though they have left their Station above, are nevertheleſs ſubject to the Divine Command and Juriſdiction; that they can do nothing, but by the particular Permiſſion and Appointment of Heaven; that they cannot refuſe doing any Thing, that God's infinite Wiſdom puts them upon; and, conſequently, under this View, are to be conſidered, as much the Inſtruments of Providence, as the holy Angels themſelves, and their Services, (though they intend it not ſo) by God's wiſe Diſpoſal and Management, redound equally to his Glory, and the Welfare of his faithful Servants. For ſince this World is a State of *Probation*, wherein Difficulties are neceſſary to exerciſe our Virtues, [t] the Wiſdom of God thinks fit to employ the Malice of theſe wicked Spirits, in order to make our Faith, and Patience, and Reſignation to his Divine Will more conſpicuous; and, by the continual *Alarms* of theſe our reſtleſs Adverſaries, to keep us upon our Guard, that we may be [u] *ſober and vigilant*, and, conſidering the Hoſt that is ſet in Array againſt us, [x] *Principalities, and Powers, and ſpiritual Wickedneſs in high Places*, more deſirous *to put on the whole Armour of God, that we may be able to ſtand againſt the Wiles of the Devil* and his Aſſociates.

To try the Good, and puniſh the Wicked.

SINCE the moſt righteous Men are ſubject to Faults, and the Wicked, without Correction, would become intolerable; God makes uſe of theſe diabolical Spirits for the Chaſtening of the one, and the Puniſhment of the other. In the Caſe of St *Paul*, we read, that [y] *a Meſſenger of Satan was ſent to buffet him, i. e.* an evil Spirit was ſent from Satan, the Prince of Devils, to inflict [z] ſome corporal Pain and Diſeaſe on him; which the Apoſtle calls *a Thorn in his Fleſh, i. e.* as grievous and uneaſy to be borne, as a poignant Thorn ſticking in any ſenſible Part of the Body; and the Reaſon of this Infliction, he tells us, was, *leſt he ſhould be exalted above Meaſure, through the Abundance of his Revelations.* In the Caſe of St *Peter*, we read, that [a] *Satan had deſired to have him, that he might ſift him as Wheat, i. e.* lay ſome great and ſevere Affliction upon him; and though his Requeſt was not granted, yet from hence we may learn, that as the Devil is ſometimes called [b] the *Accuſer of the Brethren, which accuſes them before God Day and Night*, is continually exaggerating their Crimes, and demanding them of God, to be ſubmitted to his Aſſaults and Puniſhments; ſo, when

[s] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [t] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. III. [u] 1 Pet. v. 8.
[x] Eph. vi. 11, 12. [y] 2 Cor. xii. 7. [z] That by a *Thorn in the Fleſh*, we are to underſtand ſome bodily Diſeaſe in St *Paul*, extraordinary painful and troubleſome to him, and therefore aptly called a *Thorn* for its Sharpneſs and Pungency; and a *Thorn in the Fleſh*, for the Seat of it, which was his Body; the conſentient Interpretations of moſt Doctors of the Church, who have happened to make mention of this Text, and may be ſuppoſed to underſtand St *Paul*'s Hiſtory beſt, are ſufficient to convince us. What particular Sickneſs or Infirmity of Body it was, whether a violent *Head-Ach*, as St *Jerom* aſſures us was the antient Tradition; or the *Cholick*, as *Aquinas* upon that Place tells us, ſome thought; or the *Falling Sickneſs*, as others have imagined, I will not determine; but it ſeems plain and evident to me, that a bodily Sickneſs and Infirmity it was. *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [a] Luke xxii. 31.
[b] Rev. xii. 10.

when his Accuſations prove juſt, and their Crimes are become enormous, God is ſaid [c] *to deliver them up unto Satan, for the Deſtruction of the Fleſh*; making uſe of him as a *Lictor* or *Executioner*, to inflict the Expreſſes of his Wrath, either in *bodily* or *ſpiritual* Calamities, upon ſuch *Malefactors*.

THERE is a farther Uſe, that God may be ſuppoſed to make of the Miniſtry of evil Angels; and that is, their *hardening* and *confirming* obſtinate and incorrigible Sinners in their wicked Purpoſes. For when Men have long reſiſted the Grace of God, broke through his Perſuaſions, and baffled all his Arts of ſaving them; he many times withdraws the Aids of his bleſſed Spirit and holy Angels, and abandons them to the Powers of Darkneſs; who from thenceforth tempt and ſeduce them at Pleaſure, and lead them on from one Commiſſion to another, until they have *filled up the Meaſure of their Iniquity*. [d] And this, I conceive, is the Meaning of God's *hardening Sinners*, ſo often mention'd in holy Scripture, which cannot imply, that God, by any poſitive Act of his own, infuſes any ſinful Quality into Mens Wills, to excite them to ſin, for *as he cannot be tempted with Evil, ſo neither tempteth he any Man*; but only that when Men have a long while harden'd themſelves againſt the powerful Impreſſions of his Grace, and, in the Purſuit of their wicked Courſes, have turned a deaf Ear to all his Intreaties to the contrary, he then (as a juſt Puniſhment for their incorrigible Obſtinacy) takes from them his Grace and Protection, and leaves them to the Power and Poſſeſſion of the Devil, who hurries them into Vice, and never ceaſes urging and preſſing them forward, from one Degree of Wickedneſs to another, until he has *ſear'd* and harden'd them into final and incurable *Impenitence*.

To harden them here.

THERE is one Purpoſe of God more, to which theſe infernal Spirits are applicable; and that is, the Execution of his Vengeance upon the Wicked and Impenitent in the Life to come. For, as they have been very induſtrious in *tempting* us to Sin here, there is no Queſtion to be made, but that it will become ſome Part of their Employment, to *torment* us for it hereafter; to object our Sins continually to us, to reproach us with the Folly of them, to put us in mind of that diſmal Futurity we muſt ſuffer for them; and by this Means inceſſantly ſting us with *Swarms* of dire Reflections and tormenting Thoughts. As *Spirits*, they have Power to act upon our Souls, and fill them with *preternatural* Horrors; and, as *malignant Spirits*, they can want no Will to plague and torture us, when we ſhall be left to their Mercy, and they have free Scope to exert their Fury upon us, and glut their hungry Malice with our Torment and Vexation.

And torment them hereafter.

THESE are ſome of the Reaſons, for which the wiſe Diſpoſer of all Things continues theſe wretched Creatures in Being, not only as ſtanding Monuments of his Diſpleaſure againſt their *Apoſtate* Race, but as Inſtruments likewiſe in his Hand, to puniſh the Wicked, and try and exerciſe the Righteous. Theſe curſed Spirits, however, deſign nothing but Ill in what they do; they have no Regard to the Will of God, nor any Conſideration of his Commands. The Love of *Miſchief*, and the Gratification of their *Malice*, are the only Motives of their Actions; and therefore the Wiſdom of God is more remarkable, in making them act contrary to their Intentions; and, at the laſt great Day, his Juſtice and Goodneſs too ſhall be made conſpicuous, when the Wonders of his Adminiſtration, in controuling and managing their *Devices*, ſhall appear, and all their Attempts redound upon themſelves, as additional Sins, to increaſe the Weight of their Condemnation.

IN the mean Time, what has been ſaid of theſe once-illuſtrious Beings, now ſunk into ſuch an horrid State of Depravity, may afford us, at any Time, an *awful* Contemplation to conſider, what ſad Havock Sin makes, even in the moſt ſublime Natures, when once it gets Poſſeſſion, and what great Reaſon we have, at all Times, to attend to the Apoſtle's Admonition: [e] *Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take Heed leſt he fall*: [f] *For if God ſpared not the Angels that ſinned, but caſt them down into Hell, and delivered them into Chains of Darkneſs, to be reſerved unto Judgment*; if theſe bright *Intelligences* found no Favour in his Sight, when they rebelled againſt him, *how ſhall we eſcape*, if we fall into the like Confederacy? Their Fate is *made an Enſample unto thoſe that ſhould*, at any Time, *live ungodly*; and the ſame Lord, that uſed ſuch Severity towards them, *knows* likewiſe *how to reſerve all unjuſt* and unrighteous Men *unto the Day of Judgment, to be puniſhed*.

An Inference from the whole.

[c] 1 Cor. v. 5. [d] *Scott's* Chriſtian Life, Vol. III. [e] 1 Cor. x. 12. [f] 2 Pet. ii. 4. 9.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the CREATION *of the Viſible* WORLD.

WE have hitherto been contemplating the *inviſible* Realms of *Light*, and the Nature of thoſe *intellectual* Beings, that were ordained by their Maker to be Inhabitants thereof, though ſome of them rebelled againſt him, and were *depoſ'd* from their bleſſed Abode: and are now coming down to the Regions *below*, in order to fix our Obſervations more eſpecially on that *terraqueous Globe*, which the Bounty of Heaven has appointed for our *Habitation*. It differs indeed from the Celeſtial *Manſions* above, in that it was formed out of *pre-exiſtent Matter*, which, in all Probability, they were not; but then the Matter, out of which it aroſe, was ſo *rude* and *indigeſted*, ſo unapt to receive that beautiful Form, which the Almighty *Artiſt* put upon it, as ſtill to deſerve, though in a *ſecondary* Senſe only, the Name of a *Creation*.

The viſible World made out of a Chaos.

THAT it was an old *Tradition* among the Heathens, that the World, by ſome omnipotent Agent, was created out of a *Chaos*, *i. e.* a confus'd, inordinate Heap of Matter, we have the Hiſtories of the moſt [b] antient Nations, and the Teſtimony of their beſt Authors, [c] both Poets and [d] Philoſophers. That this Tradition of the *Chaos* is no Way repugnant to the Holy Scriptures, but, on the contrary, very conſonant and agreeable thereunto, is manifeſt from the Hiſtory and Deſcription, that *Moſes* gives of the Creation, where he does not ſay, that God, at once, made all Things in their full Perfection, but that *in the Beginning he created the Earth*, i. e. the Matter whereof the *Chaos* was compoſed, *which was without Form*, [e] without any Shape or Order; *and void*, without any Thing living or growing in it; *and Darkneſs was upon the Face of the Waters*, nothing was ſeen for Want of *Light*, which lay buried in this vaſt *Abyſs*.

The Chaos. what.

ACCORDING to the received Opinion, and the Repreſentation, that this inſpir'd Author ſeems to convey to us, this *Chaos* [f] was a fluid Maſs, wherein were the Materials and Ingredients of all Bodies, but mingled in Confuſion with one another; ſo that heavy and light, denſe and rare, fluid and ſolid Particles were jumbled together; and the Atoms, or ſmall conſtituent Parts of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth, (which have obtained the Name of *Elements*) were every one in every Place, and *all* in a wild Confuſion and Diſorder.

When turned into an habitable World.

WHEN it firſt pleaſed the great Creator of all Things to change the Face of this *primordial* Maſs, and out of ſo much Confuſion to raiſe ſuch a beautiful Fabrick, though it may, in ſome Meaſure, be gather'd from Scripture; yet has it not yet been ſo preciſely done, but that *Chronologers* have been divided about it: [g] For, to ſay nothing of the *Computation* of the LXX Interpreters, who place the Creation of the World 5500 Years before the Nativity of our Lord; even thoſe, that follow the *Hebrew* Text, are not agreed in their Account: For the *Jews* make the World only 3760, whereas moſt of the *Chriſtian* Chronologers will have it to be much about 4000 Years older than Chriſt. So that, by them, 5727 Years is thought a moderate Computation of the World's *Antiquity*.

WHY

[a] Vid. *Grot. de Verit. Chriſt. Rel. Ray's* Phyſico-Theological Diſcourſes. [b] What the Opinion of the *Egyptians* was, we have the Words of *Diodorus Siculus* to convince us, *Cum primum Res univerſæ exiſtere cæpêre, unius vultûs fuiſſe Cælum & Terram, permixtâ eorum Naturâ; poſteaquam diſceſſiſſent à ſe iſta corpora, mundo contigiſſe, eum quem nunc videmus, Ordinem*, &c. [c] *Heſiod*, who, for Antiquity, may contend with *Homer*, has, in the Beginning of his *Theogonia*, a Deſcription of the Creation:

Ἤτοι μὲν πρώτιστα Χάος γένετ', αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
Γαῖ' εὐρύστερνος, &c.

As has *Ovid* likewiſe in the Beginning of his Metamorphoſis:

Ante mare & terras, & quod tegit omnia Cœlum,
Unus erat toto naturæ vultus in Orbe,
Quem dixêre Chaos. Rudis indigeſtaque moles,
Nec quicquam niſi Pondus iners, congeſtaque eodem
Non bene junctarum diſcordia ſemina Rerum, &c.

[d] The like Account we have likewiſe in the antient Philoſopher *Anaxagoras*, who begins his Philoſophy with theſe Words:

Πάντα χρήματα ἦν ὁμοῦ, εἶτα Νοῦς ἐλθὼν αὐτὰ διεκόσμησε.

[e] *Patrick's* Commentary. [f] Vid. *Burnet's* and *Whiſton's* Theories. [g] *Curcell. Inſtitut.* Lib. III.

WHY God suffered the *Chaos* to continue so long, before he transformed it into an *habitable* World, is a Question only resolvable into his Divine Pleasure. [h] There is nothing, according to any Ideas we have of his *moral* Perfections, to fix the Creation of any Thing sooner or later, than his own *arbitrary* Will determined; only we may imagine that, after the Revolt of so many Angels, God, intending to create a new Race of Creatures, to supply their Place, and fill up the Vacancy in Heaven, and withal resolving to make Trial of their Obedience, before he admitted them into his *beatifick* Presence, singled out one, (as perhaps there might be many *Chaotick* Bodies in the Universe) placed at proper Distance from his own *Empyreal* State, to be the Habitation of the Creatures, he was going to make; but delay'd the *fitting it up* for them, until the Time of their Creation was approaching. *Why no sooner.*

[i] IN what Season of the Year this Habitation of theirs was prepared for them, whether in the *vernal* or *autumnal* Equinox, is another Question, that has divided the Opinions of the Learned. The common Voice of *Chronologers* is for the *vernal* Equinox, as the propereſt Season for *Seeds*, deposited in the new-formed Earth, to spring up and fructify; besides the Sanction, that seems to be given to this Opinion, by the Words of God himself, at the Institution of the Passover; *this Month (viz.* the Month of *Nisan*, which falls in the *vernal* Equinox) [k] *shall be unto you the Beginning of Months; it shall be the first Month of the Year.* God's commanding the *Israelites* however (as [l] others have observed) upon their Return out of *Egypt*, to esteem the Month *Nisan* the *first* of their Year, seems to imply, that, till that Time, it had not been so esteemed by them; and though, in Commemoration of their *Deliverance* from *the House of Bondage*, they made it (as God had appointed them) the Beginning of their *sacred Year*; yet the Beginning of their *civil* Year was, in all Ages, the first Day of their *autumnal* Month *Tisri*, which accordingly was honoured with an extraordinary *Festival*, [m] the Feast of *Trumpets*, while the Beginning of their *sacred* Year, the first of *Nisan*, had no such Solemnity annexed to it. *In what Season of the Year.*

IT is to be observed likewise, that the Feast of *In-gathering*, or of *Tabernacles*, (which was about the *Autumnal* Equinox) is said [n] *to be at the End of the Year*, and where the *old* Year ended, the *new* undoubtedly did begin. [o] There is likewise a manifest Convenience in introducing Mankind, and other living Creatures into a World, well stored with all Manner of *Provision* for their Sustenance, (as it is in *Autumn*) and not in the Beginning of *Spring*, which would have looked like *bringing them into an empty House*; and for these Reasons, the Maintainers of this *Hypothesis* conclude, that the World was created, and consequently, the *first* Day of the ancient and *Patriarchal* Year began in the *Autumnal Equinox*.

BY what Means this World was created and the ancient and deformed *Chaos* changed into a *regular* and delightful Place; how far the *immediate* Hand of God, and how far the *Laws of Nature* were concerned in the Alteration; whether in every Step the Divine Power and Interposition exerted itself, or some Things were left to their own *Operation*, guided and assisted only by their first *Mover*, are Difficulties, not so easy to be determined; because it is a Matter of no small Nicety to distinguish between those Parts of the *Mosaick* Creation, that are *mechanically* to be accounted for, and those, wherein the miraculous *Energy* of Almighty God interposed. *In what Manner.*

[p] A DIVINE Energy, say the warmest Abettors of *mechanical* Principles, must certainly be admitted in this Case, where a new World was to be formed, and a wild *Chaos* reduced to a fair, and regular, and permanent *System*; and yet, there are sundry Passages, even in the *Mosaick* Account, such as, *let the Earth bring forth Grass*; *let the Earth bring forth the living Creature after his Kind*; *and it did so*, which referred something at least to the Agency of *second Causes*, after God had endowed them with a *prolifick* Quality: Whereupon they conclude, that, whatever is *eminently* above the Power of *second Causes*, such as the Production of Matter out of nothing, the Formation of the Seeds of all Animals and Vegetables, the Creation of our first Parents, and inspiring them with immortal Souls, are the sure Result of God's omnipotent Power, and to him only to be ascribed; but whatever is of a lower Denomination, and comes under the Compass of *mechanical*

[h] *Fidde's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [i] Curcell. Instit. *ibid.* [k] Exod. xii. 2. [l] *Whiston's* Theory. [m] Lev. xxiii. 24, 25. [n] Exod. xxiii. 16. [o] Curcell. Instit. *ibid.* [p] *Whiston's* Theory.

Cauſes, this they think might very well be effected by Matter and Motion, ſet only on work by *infinite Wiſdom*, and ſuſtained in their Being and Operation by *infinite Power*: And, upon this Suppoſition, they begin ſuch *Theories*, as we come now to conſider.

SECT. I.

Dr BURNET *and Mr* WHISTON'S *Theories examined.*

WE have had *two* learned Men, of our Age and Nation, that have both ſhewn great Skill in this Kind of Writing; the one, by the Richneſs of his *Stile* and *Fancy*, and the other, by the Strength of his Parts, and [q] Streſs of Contrivance, have carried the Credit of THEORIES as far as they well can go; but, after all their Pains and curious Diſquiſitions, they have not been able to give us any *ſatisfactory* Account of the World's *Formation*.

The Subſtance of Dr. Burnet's *Theory.*

THE Former of them ſuppoſes, "That the *Chaos* was a confuſed *fluid* Maſs, "much of the ſame *Make* with what we have deſcribed, under the Influence and "Direction of God indeed, but left to the general Action of *Nature* to work itſelf "into Shape: That, upon God's giving the World, [r] the heavieſt and groſſeſt Parts "did ſink down towards the Middle of this Maſs (for there he ſuppoſes the *Center* "of its *Gravity*) hardened by Degrees, and conſtituted the *interior* Parts of the "Earth: That the reſt of it, which ſwam above, was, by the ſame Principle of "*Gravity*, divided likewiſe into two Orders of Bodies, the one *liquid*, like Water, "the other *volatile*, like Air: That the fine Parts, diſintangling themſelves from "the reſt, did mount upwards, and, having Motion enough to keep themſelves "upon the Wing, did play in open Spaces, where they conſtituted that Body, "which we call *Air*: That the other Parts, being groſſer, ſettled in a Maſs toge-"ther, upon the Body of the Earth, and compoſed, not only *Water* ſtrictly ſo "called, but all Manner of *liquid* Bodies, belonging to the Earth: That of theſe "liquid Bodies there are *two* Kinds, one light and *oily*, and the other *lean* and "more ponderous, which naturally ſeparate one from another, as in Water and "Oil; ſo that the light and oily Part of the Maſs got above the other, and ſwam "uppermoſt."

THUS far the Theoriſt goes on very well; but his *Hypotheſis*, ſoon after, be-gins to be extravagant. "He ſuppoſes that the *Air*, as yet, was thick, groſs, and "dark; that there was Abundance of *terreſtrial* Particles ſwimming in it; the *hea-"vieſt* of which ſubſided ſoon, but the *leſſer* and lighter remained in the Air; and "though they ſunk down, as well as the other, yet it was very *leiſurely*, and after a "long Space of Time: That, in their *Deſcent*, they met with that *oily* Liquor upon "the Face of the Deep, which intangled and ſtopped them from paſſing any far-"ther; that, there mixing with this *unctuous* Subſtance, they compoſed a certain "*Slime*, or ſoft and light Earth, ſpread upon the Face of the Waters; that this thin "and tender *Orb* increaſed more and more, as the little earthly Parts, that were de-"tained in the Air, could make their Way to it; 'till at length, by a continued "Acceſſion of Parts, this *oily* Liquor was all ſucked up and incorporated into one "Subſtance, which, in Proceſs of Time, grew *ſtiff* and *firm*; and became, at laſt, "an *habitable* Earth, *ſmooth* and *uniform*, *without Mountains*, and *without a Sea*."

The chief Matters in it confuted.

[s] AFTER this Manner has the *Theoriſt* formed his *Antediluvian* World: But alas! how little Truth and Solidity is there in all this fine *Fiction!* His very firſt Suppoſition, that the primitive *Chaos* was a *fluid Maſs*, is ſcarce allowable, ſince the greateſt Part of terreſtrial Bodies (as far as we can diſcern) are hard and ſolid; and Stones and Metals (which make not the leaſt Part of them) are incapable of being *liquified* by Water: Nor can we ſee any Reaſon, why there might not be huge Lumps of *firm* and *ſolid* Matter, jumbled together, and ſwimming up and down, ſome on the Surface, and ſome within the Fluid of it. His Laws of *Gravitation* ruin the whole Contrivance; for, if every Thing muſt ſubſide according to its *ſpecific* Gravity,

[q] *Baker*'s Reflections upon Learning. [r] Vid. *Burnet*'s Theory of the Earth, Vol. I. [s] *Keil*'s Examination of Dr *Burnet*'s Theory.

Gravity, the Earth, being heavier than the Water, muſt neceſſarily place itſelf nearer the Center, and ſo leave the Waters to cover the Face of the whole Orb. His fat and *oily Liquid*, to catch the *terrene* Particles, as they deſcended, is but a weak *Salvo*, becauſe it is impoſſible that Oil, or any other Liquor, ſhould ſuſtain ſuch an immenſe heavy *Orb*, wherein ſuch prodigious Quantities of Stones and Minerals are contained, and which, if left to their own Motion, muſt of Neceſſity ſink to the Bottom. In this *primitive* Earth indeed, he affirms that there was no ſuch Thing as Metals and Minerals; but how *Tubal Cain*, before the Flood, could be the [t] *Inſtructor of every Artificer of Braſs and Iron*, or how an *Ark*, to contain all *Terreſtrial* and *Aerial* Animals, could be built without Iron, is a Thing inconceivable. His incloſing the whole Maſs of Waters within an *incruſted* Earth, is an idle Invention; ſince thereby he deprived the World of the Benefit of a *Sea*, and all Advantages of *Navigation*; of the Pleaſure of Rivers and Fountains, ſo neceſſary for the Accommodation of Life; and [u] of the Fruitfulneſs of Clouds and Vapours, that are exhaled by the Sun, to feed the Plants of the Earth with the *Balm* of Dews, and the *Fatneſs* of Showers. His excluding the *annual* Motion of the Earth, and allowing it only a ſimple Motion round an *Axis*, *parallel* to the Poles of the *Ecliptick*, leaves a great Part of the World *uninhabitable*, and takes away the bleſſed Viciſſitude of *Times*, and *Seaſons*, and *Years*; and, to name no more, his excluding all Hills and Mountains out of the Creation, merely to make a *ſmooth* and *uniform Convexity* of the Earth, is a very wild and extravagant Fiction: For, beſides that theſe Mountains yield Food for ſeveral Animals, deſigned by Nature to live upon them; and ſupply us, from *without*, with many excellent *Plants*, and, from *within*, with many uſeful *Metals*; [x] by condenſing the Vapours, and ſo producing Rain, and Fountains, and Rivers, they give the very Plains and Valleys themſelves the Fertility they boaſt of. *Theſe ſhapeleſs and ill-figured old Rocks and Mountains* then (as the Theoriſt is pleaſed to call them) from whence we dig Gold, and Stone, and Minerals, are of ſuch ſingular Uſe in their Kind, that we can hardly think the little *phantaſtical* Pleaſantneſs of an *even* Superficies any tolerable Compenſation [y] *for the chief Things of the ancient Mountains, and for the precious Things of the laſting Hills*. Nay, we may appeal to the Senſe of Mankind, if a Land of Hills and Valleys has not more Pleaſure and Beauty both, than any uniform *Flat*, which *then* only affords Delight, when it is viewed from the Top of an Hill. [z] What were the *Temple* of *Theſſaly*, ſo celebrated in ancient Story for their unparallelled Pleaſantneſs, but a *Vale* divided with a River, and terminated with Hills? Are not all the Deſcriptions of *Poets* embelliſhed with ſuch Ideas, when they would repreſent any Places of *ſuperlative* Delight, any bliſsful Seats of the *Muſes* and *Nymphs*, any ſacred Habitations of *Gods* and *Goddeſſes*? They will never admit that a wide *Flat* can be pleaſant, no not in the very [a] *Elyſian* Fields; *They* too muſt be diverſified: Swelling Aſcents, and declining Valleys, are their chief Beauties; nor can they imagine [b] even *Paradiſe* a Place of Pleaſure, or Heaven itſelf to be [c] Heaven, without them.

MANY more Exceptions might juſtly be made both againſt the Form of the *primitive* Earth, and the Manner of its *Production* according to this *Theoriſt*; and the Boldneſs he makes with the holy Scriptures, when at any Time he finds himſelf at a Plunge, might be juſtly cenſured: But what has been ſaid is enough to convince us, that there is no accounting for the wonderful Works of God by the ſtated Rules of *Matter* and *Motion*; that he, who attempts it, runs himſelf immediately into Difficulties, which all his *Suppoſitions* are not enough to clear him of; and [d] that, how eaſy ſoever

[t] Gen. iv. 22. [u] *Bentley*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lecture. [x] This End and Uſe of Mountains I find aſſigned by Dr *Halley*, in his Diſcourſe concerning the Original of Springs and Fountains, in theſe Words: *This, if we may allow* final Cauſes, *ſeems to be the Deſign of the* Hills, *that their Ridges being placed thro' the Midſt of the Continent, might ſerve, as it were, for* Alembics *to diſtil freſh Water, for the Uſe of Man and Beaſt, and their Heights to give a Deſcent to thoſe Streams, that run gently, like ſo many Veins of the* Microcoſm, *to be the more beneficial to the Creation.* [y] Deut. xxxiii. 15. [z] Vid. Ælian. var. Hiſt. Lib. iii.

[a] At Pater Anchiſes penitùs Convalle virenti
Hoc ſuperate jugum. *Et ibid.* & Tumulum capit. VIR. Æn. vi.

[b] Flow'rs worthy of Paradiſe, which not nice Art,
In Beds and curious Knots, but Nature boon
Pour'd forth profuſe on Hill, and Dale, and Plain. *Paradiſe Loſt*, Book iv.

[c] For Earth hath this Variety from Heaven,
Of Pleaſure ſituate in Hill and Dale.

[d] As never any Book was fuller of Errors and Miſtakes in Philoſophy, ſo none ever abounded with more beautiful Scenes, and ſurprizing Images of Nature; but I write only to thoſe, who might perhaps expect to find true Philoſophy in it; they, who read it as an ingenious *Romance*, will ſtill be pleaſed with their Entertainment. *Keil*'s Examination of Dr *Burnet*'s Theory, *ad finem*.

ſoever it may be for a fine *Genius* to write an entertaining *Romance*, all the *mechanick* Principles in the World will not enable him to write a ſound *Tract* of Philoſophy upon the Subject.

The Sum of Mr. Whiſton's *Theory.*

THE other *Theoriſt* ſhews a greater Regard to Scripture, and has avoided many Difficulties, that were chargeable upon his Predeceſſor: He proceeds too upon more *philoſophical* Principles, but has ſuch bold and adventurous Suppoſitions, as are liable to juſt Exception. "He ſuppoſes, [e] that the *Moſaick* Account of the Creation extends no farther, than to this *ſublunary* World; that the Sun, Moon, and Stars "were created before, and only made *viſible* and conſpicuous on the *fourth* Day; "[f] that the ancient *Chaos*, the Origin of the Earth, was the *Atmoſphere* of a *Comet*; "that the *ſix Days* of the Creation were equal in Length to *ſix Years*; and that, tho' "the *Annual* Motion of the Earth commenced at the Beginning, yet its *Diurnal* "did not till after the *Fall* of Man."

Refuted.
1. The Creation extended beyond the Earth.

How far he may be right, as to the Extenſion of the Creation, has, in ſome Meaſure, [g] been conſider'd before: His Arguments, it muſt be granted, have their Weight, but ſtill it is certain, [h] that the Moon, at the Time of the *Moſaick* Creation, was form'd, or at leaſt plac'd in its *Orbit*, and made to turn round the Earth; for no *Comets* have any *ſecondary* Planets which move round them: And if the Moon, at the Time of the *Moſaick* Creation, was either created and form'd, or at leaſt brought into a new *Orbit*, and made to move round us, in order to give Light in the Night-Seaſon, we muſt be forc'd to acknowledge, that, when God is ſaid to have made the Moon, there muſt be ſomething more intended, than a mere rendering it *viſible*: And, becauſe the Word *(made)* is equally applied both to the Sun and Moon, there is Reaſon to believe, that it ought to be taken in the ſame, *i. e.* a *literal* Senſe, when ſpoken of both.

2. The Chaos not the Atmoſphere of a Comet.

2. THE *Atmoſphere* of a *Comet*, how ſimilar ſoever he might think it, and proper for the *original* Matter of this Earth, yet wanted this *eſſential* Quality, *viz.* that whereas the *ſacred* Hiſtory repreſents the primitive *Chaos* as a very dark and *obſcure* Body, thoſe, that have made their Obſervations, tell us, that not only the *Atmoſphere* of a *Comet* is a *bright pellucid* Fluid, through which the Beams of the Sun freely diffuſe themſelves, and are many of them reflected back again to us; but that the *Central Solid* itſelf, by Reaſon of its near Approach to the Sun, is often heated to an intenſe Degree; and whatever *ſolid* Bodies are heated to an intenſe Degree, are always clear and *luminous*.

[i] THEY obſerve farther, that the greateſt Part of thoſe *Solids*, which compoſe the upper *Stratum* of the Earth, conſiſts of Stones, Sand, and Gravel, which, upon being very much heated, melt and turn into Glaſs: If any of theſe therefore had been in the *Comet's Atmoſphere*, upon its Approach to the Sun, they muſt have neceſſarily melted, and compos'd a *Fluid*, which, upon the Comet's cooling again, would appear in the Form of Glaſs; but of this we ſee not the leaſt Tokens in the preſent *Texture* of our Earth. Since therefore the *Atmoſphere* of *Comets* is a clear and *pellucid luminous* Body, thro' which we can plainly ſee their *Central* Solids; have Properties *diſtinct*, and perhaps may be made of Matter quite different to our Earth; and ſince the *Chaos*, out of which our Earth was originally form'd, was a dark and confus'd Heap of Bodies, without the leaſt Glimmerings of *Light*, (which was not created till the *firſt* Day) it is plain, that, whatever Boaſt the *Theoriſt* may make of the Invention, this *Chaos* could never be the *Atmoſphere* of a *Comet*.

3. The Diurnal *Motion of the Earth before the Fall.*

3. THAT *the Diurnal Rotation of the Earth did not commence till after the Fall, ſo that, till that Time, Days and Years were exactly the ſame*, is another Aſſertion in the Theoriſt, juſtly to be held a *Paradox*: [k] For, when we conſider the vaſt and prodigious *Cold*, that muſt be occaſion'd on the Earth, by the *total* Abſence of the Sun, for *one* half of the Year, and the immenſe intolerable *Heat* that muſt enſue upon its perpetual ſhining upon it, for the *other*; we ſhall be led to conclude, either that the Bodies of the *Antediluvian* Plants and Animals were of a different Conſtitution to what they are now, or that they muſt neceſſarily have been ſtarv'd or wither'd, frozen or ſcorch'd to Death, by an immoderate Degree of Heat or Cold.

PLANTS, we know, require a certain determinate Degree of Heat for their Production and Vegetation; a leſs Degree would never bring them to Perfection, and a greater

[e] Vid. *Whiſton*'s Theory of the *Moſaick* Creation. [f] His Hypotheſis. [g] Page 180. [h] *Keil*'s Remarks on Mr *Whiſton*'s Theory. [i] *Keil*, ibid. [k] *Keil*, ibid.

a greater would quite wither them, before their Seeds could be ripen'd, and fit for the Production of new Plants of the ſame *Species*. The Nature of *Animals*, we perceive, is not able to bear two ſuch Oppoſers, as the extream *Heat*, that is cauſed by the Sun, while it ſhineth for one half Year without Intermiſſion, and the extream *Cold*, that muſt ariſe from its Abſence for the ſame Space of Time. For though we ſhould ſuppoſe that the Blood and other Liquors, that run in their Bodies, is of ſuch a *Fervency*, as not to be frozen with the extream Cold; yet it is certain, that they muſt have *evaporated*, and been exhal'd by the extream Heat that ſucceeded it in the *Half-year*'s Day; or, if they were able to ſuſtain ſuch an extream Heat without Evaporation, yet it is ſcarce to be imagin'd how they could preſerve themſelves from freezing, in the extream Cold of an *Half-year*'s Night. The Heat and Cold muſt then have been ſome hundred Times more intenſe, than what we feel it now, and the *Paradiſaical* Life of our firſt Parents not near ſo pleaſant, as ſome have imagin'd; while one half of the Year paſs'd in a cold uncomfortable Darkneſs, and the other in a ſcorching and tormenting Heat. But ſuppoſing our firſt Parents had proper *Conſtitutions*, and primitive Plants and Animals were of a *Texture* able to endure ſuch Extremities; yet, if the Earth had no *Diurnal Rotation*, till after the Fall, and if then only it began to turn round its own *Axis*, there muſt have been ſuch great and extraordinary Changes and Alterations of Heat and Cold introduc'd by this new *Rotation*, as would neceſſarily require new Species of Plants and Animals, of a Make different to the former, ſuch as would better agree with this new Diſpoſition of the Earth, and Action of the Sun, *i. e.* God muſt have created new and different Sets of Plants and living Creatures, or at leaſt quite alter'd and chang'd the Natures of the old Ones; which is incongruous to think was ever done.

Days and Years not the ſame.

INTO ſuch Abſurdities has our *Theoriſt* run himſelf, purely to make Room for his *ſecond* Cauſes to work the World into a regular Order, *leiſurely and gradually*, [l] as he tells us, *without Precipitance, or Acceleration*. The Compaſs of one Day, of four and twenty *ſhort* Hours, he thought too ſmall for ſuch vaſt Productions: On the *third* Day he found *Moſes* relating Works ſo *incompatible*, and on the *ſixth*, ſo *numerous*, that he could not conceive how ſo many, and ſo different Things could be tranſacted in ſo ſhort a Space: And therefore he ſuppoſes, that Days *then* might be as long as Years are *now*, to give Nature Time enough to finiſh her Works, without the Interpoſition of any miraculous *Providence*: Never conſidering, that where an *Almighty Agent* is concerned, (and if any where concerned, certainly in the Work of *Creation*) a Day, an Hour, a Moment, is equivalent to an Age; that the more we aſcribe to ſecond Cauſes, the leſs we impute to the *Divine Efficacy*; and that the longer we *protract* the Time, the more we *impair* the Wonder of the Performance. For this Reaſon, [m] ſome have imagin'd, that even *ſix* Days were too long a Space for God to create the World in; that Time to him is of no Conſideration, who can do every Thing he pleaſes in an Inſtant; and that therefore, tho' he might employ ſome Part of each Day in the Formation of Things, yet it could not be more, than a very ſmall Portion of it, the Space of a Moment, or the Compaſs of a Word's ſpeaking; unleſs we can imagine, ([n] as ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors do) that he made uſe of the *Miniſtry* of Angels, who, being but *finite* Creatures, muſt be ſuppos'd to require Time in their Operations.

THE Truth is, the more we prolong the Work, the leſs we make it the Effect of a Divine Power: And therefore the Account, which *Moſes* gives us of the Formation of Things, if it be not ſo *philoſophical*, muſt be own'd to be more *emphatical*, than what our *Theoriſts* have produced; [o] and tho' it may be no more than *an hiſtorical Journal, or Diary of the Mutations of the Chaos, and of the viſible Works of each Day*; yet, [p] in his *Journal*, we find Matters ſet in a clearer Light, and a fairer Repreſentation of the great Creator's *Power* and *Godhead* given us, than all the laborious Diſquiſitions of the beſt Philoſophers have yet been able to do.

[l] Vid. his Hypotheſis, Page 25. [m] Curcell. Inſtitutiones. [n] The *Jewiſh* Doctors are generally of Opinion, that God employed the bleſſed Angels in the Work of the *Creation*, and therefore they lay it down as a ſtanding *Maxim, that God does nothing without his Council, or without his Family on high. Saurin'* Diſſertations. [o] Vid. *Whiſton*, on the *Moſaick* Creation. [p] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I.

SECT. II.

The MOSAICK *Account of the* CREATION.

That the Mosaick *Account includes the* solar System.

THE better to understand the Account, that the *sacred* History gives us of the Creation, it will be proper to observe, that, however some have extended it to the whole *Universe*, and others reduced it to this *sublunary Globe* only; the *middle* Acceptation, that includes the *solar* System, but pretends to go no farther, seems to be the most probable: The Reason is, because the several Planets, that are contain'd within the *Magnus Orbis*, i. e. the Circle, which *Saturn* describes about the Sun, have so near a *Similitude* and Relation, the same *Form*, the same *Center*, and the same common *Luminary*, with one another; that it is hardly to be imagin'd, but that they were all the Production of one and the same Creation. And therefore, tho' the Historian seems chiefly to regard the *Earth* in his whole Narration, yet there is Reason to presume, that the other Parts of the *Planetary* World went on in the same Degrees of Formation with it.

Why more particular, as to the Earth.

IT is to be observ'd farther, that tho' each of these *Planets* might take up the same Time in its Production, that the *Earth* did; yet it was enough for *Moses*'s Purpose to give an Account exactly of the *sublunary* Creation only, and not to trouble the People's Heads with *Astronomical* Niceties. His Business was to instruct them, that their *Original* was from God, the better to keep them from *Idolatry*; and to relate to them the Creation of Things so far, as was agreeable to Truth, and conformable to their Capacities. To have given them a *false* System of the World, in Compliance to their weak Apprehension, had been declaring himself an *Impostor* to all intelligent Men; and yet to have particularly unfolded all the *Phænomena* of a true one, had been every whit as *absurd*, considering the illiterate People he had to deal with. The Wisdom of God therefore directed his holy Penman to the *middle* and wisest Course, *viz.* to speak exact Truth, but *seasonably* and *cautiously*, so as neither to confound the Minds of the ignorant *Jews*, nor expose himself to the Contempt of the more learned Nations that were about them. He himself, no doubt, who was educated in all the Learning of the *Egyptians*, was well vers'd in the *Vulgar*, or what is usually called the *Ptolemaick Hypothesis*, which came from *Egypt* into *Greece*; and yet we find him not giving the least Glance that Way; which must be imputed to no other Cause, but only the particular Providence of God, over-ruling this inspir'd Person, and obliging him to relate Matters, almost contrary to his own Sentiments, for Reasons best known to his Divine Will.

God's Spirit moving upon the Waters, what.

TO this Purpose we may observe farther, that, before he begins his Account, and undertakes to inform us what particular Creatures were each Day successively brought into Being, as a Thing essential and preparatory to the Work, he tells us, [q] *that the Spirit of God moved upon the Face of the Waters:* For whether *by the Spirit of God* we are to understand [r] his holy and *essential* Spirit, which is the third Person in the ever-blessed *Trinity*; that [s] *plastick* Nature, which, according to some, was made subservient to him upon this Occasion; or some other *Emanation* of the Divine Power, 'tis reasonable to suppose, that its *Incubation* upon the *Chaotick* Mass deriv'd into it a *motive* Faculty, impregnated it with several Kinds of *vital* Influence, and so separated, and digested its confus'd Parts, as to make it capable of Disposition and Order.

Of the first *Day's Work.*

IN this Condition we may suppose the *Chaos* to have been, when the *Fiat* for *Light* was given: [t] Whereupon, all the confus'd, *stagnating* Principles of Matter began to range into Form and Order; the dull, heavy, and terrene Parts, which over-clouded the *Expansum*, had their Summons to retire to their respective Centers: They presently obey'd the Almighty's Orders, and Part of them subsided to the Center of the *Earth*; some to *Jupiter*, some to *Saturn*, and others to *Venus*, *&c.* till the Globes of these several *Planets* were compleated. And as the grosser Parts subsided, [u] the *lighter* and more *tenuous* mounted up, and the *lucid* and

[q] Gen. i. [r] *Hale*'s Originat. of Mankind. [s] *Cudworth*'s Intellectual System. [t] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I.

[u] Ignea Convexi vis & sine pondere Cœli
Emicuit, summâque Locum sibi legit in arce:
Proximus est Aër illi Gravitate Locoque:

Densior

and *fiery* Particles being lighter than the reſt, aſcended higher, and, by the Divine Order, meeting together in a Body, were put in a *circular* Motion, and, in the Space of a natural Day, made to viſit the whole *Expanſion* of the *Chaos*; not only to make a Separation of the *Light* from *Darkneſs*, and thereby a Diſtribution of *Day* and *Night*, [x] but to *facilitate* the Work likewiſe, and forward the *Digeſtion* of the remaining Parts of the Creation.

Of the ſecond *Day's Work.*

THUS, on the *firſt* Day, the bright and *active* Element of Fire was extracted from the *Chaotic* Maſs, as on the *ſecond*, what we properly call the *Air*, though our Tranſlation (in Imitation of the *Latin*, which has followed the [y] *Septuagint* a little too cloſely) has ſtiled it the *Firmament*. The original Word ſignifies properly an *Expanſion*, and means here all that extended Space, that makes up the Earth's *Atmoſphere*; and therefore the only Difficulty, in this Day's Work, is to know, what we are to underſtand by *the Waters, that are above the Firmament*. [z] That the Moon has Waters *analogous* to our Seas, is plain, not only from the different Reflection of Light from her different Parts, but from the very Shape of *Seas* and *Iſlands*, that we may perceive in it; and that the other Planets have the ſame, is highly probable, from their great Similitude to one another. Now we ſuppoſe, that, before the Work of this ſecond Day, all this *Planetary* Water lay *undiſtinguiſhably* diſperſed throughout the *Expanſion* of the *Chaos*, and, together with the *Æther*, made up a *pellucid* Body; ſo that the Buſineſs now was, to make a Diviſion of theſe Waters, and diſtribute them, in proper Portions, to their reſpective *Planets*: And, accordingly, as ſoon as the *Almighty* gave the Word, all the *aqueous* Parts of this great *Pellucid* ſubſided towards the *Centers* of the Planets, and were circumfus'd about their Globes. Thus the *Expanſum* was cleared off a ſecond Time, by the Subſidence of the *aqueous* Particles, which *Moſes* calls a *dividing of the Waters under the Firmament, from the Waters which are above the Firmament*; for the *Waters under the Firmament* are the Waters of the Earth, and the *Waters above the Firmament* are [a] thoſe of the *Moon*, and other *Planets*, which, ſince this *ſecond* Day's Work, are *diſtinguiſhed*, but lay confuſedly diſperſed in the great *Expanſum* before.

The firſt Part of the third *Day's Work.*

THUS, on the *ſecond* Day, the *beautiful* Element of *Air* was extracted; and one Part of the Buſineſs of the *third*, was to ſeparate the other remaining Elements, *Water* and *Earth*: For the watery Particles, as we ſaid, clearing the *Expanſum*, and falling upon the *planetary* Orbs, muſt be ſuppoſed to cover the *Face of the Earth*, as well as other Planets; when the great Creator gave the Command, for *the Waters to be gathered into one Place, and the dry Land to appear*. Whereupon, the mighty Mountains inſtantly reared up their Heads, and the Waters falling every Way from their Sides, ran into thoſe large extended Valleys, which this Swelling of the Earth, in *ſome* Places, had made for their Reception in others.

How the Earth might be raiſed above the Waters.

WHETHER this Separation of the Land and Water, was done by the *immediate* Application of God's Almighty Power, or by the *Intervention*, and Inſtrumentality of *ſecond Cauſes*, is not ſo eaſy to determine: To *excavate* ſome Parts of the Earth, and raiſe others, in order to make the Waters ſubſide into proper *Channels*, is thought a Work not ſo comporting with the Dignity and Majeſty of God; and [b] therefore ſome have thought, that it might poſſibly be effected by the ſame Cauſes, that *Earthquakes* are, *i. e.* by *ſubterraneous Fires*, and *Flatus*'s. What incredible Effects the Accenſion of *Gunpowder* has, we ſee every Day; how it rends Rocks, and blows up the moſt ponderous and ſolid Walls, Towers, and Edifices, ſo that its Force is almoſt irreſiſtible; and why then might not ſuch a proportionable Quantity of the like Materials, ſet on Fire together, raiſe up the Mountains, how great and ponderous ſoever,

Denſior his Tellus, Elementaque grandia traxit,
Et preſſa eſt gravitate ſuâ; circumfluus Humor
Ultima poſſedit, ſolidumque coërcuit Orbem. OVID. Metam.

[x] *The Opinion of our learned Commentator, Biſhop* Patrick, *is much the ſame, as to the Regulation of this Day's Work:* It ſeems to me moſt rational, *ſay he*, by this *Light*, to underſtand thoſe Particles of Matter, which we call *Fire* [(whoſe two Properties every one knows are *Light* and *Heat*) which the Almighty Spirit, that formed all Things, produced, as the great Inſtrument for the Preparation and Digeſtion of the reſt of the Matter, which was ſtill more vigorouſly moved and agitated, from the Top to the Bottom, by this reſtleſs Element; till the purer and more ſhining Parts of it, being ſeparated from the groſſer, and united to a Body fit to retain them, became Light.

[y] The LXX Interpreters, in tranſlating the *Hebrew* Word, the *firm* or *ſolid*, have followed the Philoſophy of the firſt Ages; for the *Ancients* fancied that the Heavens were a *ſolid Body*, and that the Stars were *faſtened* therein, which perhaps was likewiſe the Notion of *Elihu*, Job xxxvii. 18. ſince he repreſents the Heavens to be *firm* or *ſolid*, like a molten Looking-Glaſs. *Saurin*'s Diſſertations on the *Old* and *New Teſtament*.

[z] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I.

[a] Our excellent Commentator ſuppoſes the *Waters above the Firmament* to be thoſe, that hang in the Clouds; but the Notion of their being *planetary* Waters ſeems more reaſonable, becauſe at this Time there were no Clouds, neither had is as yet rained on the Earth, *Gen.* ii. 6.

[b] *Ray*, of the Chaos, and *Patrick*'s Comment.

ſoever, and the whole Superficies of the Earth, above the Waters, and ſo make Receptacles for them to run into? Which Opinion I ſhould not venture to mention, but that it ſeems, in ſome Meaſure, to be countenanced by the Pſalmiſt's Authority, who, after he had ſaid, that [c] *the Waters ſtood above the Mountains*, immediately adds, *at thy Rebuke they fled, at the Voice of thy Thunder* (an *Earthquake*, we know, is but a *ſubterraneous* Thunder) *they haſted away, and went down to the Valleys beneath, even unto the Place, which thou hadſt appointed for them.*

The ſecond Part.

THUS, on the *third* Day, were all the ſimple and *elementary* Bodies compleated; and then the *Hiſtorian* proceeds to relate, in what Manner all *mixt* Bodies, and ſuch as were compounded of the firſt-extracted Elements, came to be produced. For the Earth, being now ſeparated from the Waters, and intended for the Habitation of Man and Beaſts, that were afterwards to be created, was firſt of all furniſhed with ſuch Things, as were proper for their Support; *Graſs* for Cattle, and Herbs and Fruit-Trees, for the Nouriſhment of Man. Immediately therefore, upon the Divine Command, the Earth was covered with *verdant Herbage*, and Vegetables of all Kinds were produced in their full Proportion, laden with Fruit, and not ſubjected to the ordinary Courſe of *Maturation*. [d] For, how great ſoever the Fecundity of the *primogenial* Earth might be, yet it is ſcarce to be imagined, how Trees and Plants could be ripened into full Growth and Burden of Fruit, in the ſhort Period of a Day, any other Way, than by Virtue of a *ſupernatural* Power of God, [e] which firſt brought together thoſe Parts of Matter, that were fit to produce them; then formed every one of them, and determined their ſeveral Kinds; and at laſt provided for their Continuance, by a curious *Incloſure* of their *Seed*, in order to propagate their *Species*, even unto the End of the World.

Of the fourth *Day's Work.*

THE Divine Hiſtorian having thus informed his Reader how God had finiſhed this lower World, and furniſhed it with all Manner of Store, recounts in the next Place, what, on the *fourth* Day, he did in the *Regions* above, and how he made two *great Lights* (for ſo they may be juſtly called, in reſpect to the Service they do us) *the Sun to rule the Day, and the Moon to rule the Night*. The *Moon*, as well as the other Planets, we ſuppoſe to go along with the Earth in its Formation, and to advance in Proportion as it did; though it is only then ſaid to be *made*, when the reflected Rays of the Sun made it *viſible* to the Earth; but the Sun was of a different Make and Matter. [f] That great *flaming* Light, which we ſuppoſe to have been extracted on the *firſt* Day, and to move about the *Chaotic* Maſs, for two Days after, was certainly of great Uſe in the Production of the *Æther*, the *Separation* of the Water, and the *Arefaction* of the Earth, which required a more violent Operation, than was neceſſary, or indeed ſuitable to thoſe ſmaller Alterations, that were afterwards effected. Nor can it be thought, but that, had this great *fiery* Body continued its *Revolutions* about the World, it would have been too hot and intenſe, both for the Production and Conſervation of Mankind, and thoſe other Animals, that were now to be created: 'Tis reaſonable to imagine therefore, that God, on this Day, caſt it into a proper *Orb*; placed it at a convenient Diſtance from the Earth, and other Planets; and, giving it a twofold Motion, the *one*, to diſtinguiſh the Day from the Night, and the *other*, to mark out the various Seaſons of the Year, ſuch as Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter, did form it into that glorious *Luminary*, we are, every Day, ſo much indebted to.

Of the fifth *Day's Work.*

AFTER the Formation of *inanimate* Creatures, the holy Penman, on the *fifth* Day, proceeds to the *animate:* And becauſe Fiſhes and Fowls are not ſo *perfect* in their Nature, not ſo *curious* in their bodily Texture, nor ſo *ſagacious* in their Inſtinct, as *terreſtrial* Creatures are; he therefore begins with the *leſs*, and goes on to the *more* perfect, until he comes to the *Top* of the Animal-Creation, which is *Man*.

THAT Fiſhes and Fowl had the ſame *Original*, and were both produced out of the *Waters*, *i. e.* out of ſuch Matter, as was mixed with the Waters, which contained many Things beſides ſimple Water, the great Congruity there is in their Natures (for they are both *oviparous*, which makes them more *fruitful* than the Beaſts of the Earth, and *both* ſteer and direct their Courſe by their Tail) is a ſufficient Indication. [g] Whether God created, at firſt, a great Number of every Kind of Animals all the Earth over, in their proper Places and Climates, or only two of each *Species*,

[c] Pſal. civ. 7, 8. [d] *Hale*'s Origination of Mankind. [e] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [f] *Hale*'s Origination of Mankind, and *Patrick*'s Commentary. [g] *Ray*, of the Chaos.

Species, a *Male* and a *Female*, from which all the reſt proceeded, by Way of *Generation*, is a Queſtion debated among the Learned; and ſome have been apt to imagine, that, from the *Analogy* of Mankind, which was created but two in Number, the ſame Order was obſerved in the Production of all other Creatures: But the contrary Opinion ſeems more conſonant to Scripture, which, in relating of the Creation of *aqueous* Creatures, uſes the Word *abundantly*; [h] *and God ſaid, let the Waters bring forth abundantly* the moving Creature that has Life: whereupon it immediately follows, that the *Waters did bring them forth abundantly:* So that, at leaſt of Birds and Fiſhes, there were many Individuals at firſt created; and what is peculiar to this Day's Work, [i] here is the firſt Mention made of God's *bleſſing* his Creatures, bidding them *to be fruitful and multiply*, i. e. he gave them, at their firſt Creation, a *prolifick* Virtue, and a natural *Inſtinct* for Generation, whereby they might not only preſerve their *Species*, but multiply their *Individuals*.

THUS every Thing being put in due Order, the Earth covered with Plants, the Waters ſtored with Fiſhes, the Air repleniſhed with Fowl, and the Fire placed at a proper Diſtance, to give a convenient Warmth and Nouriſhment to them all; to make this ſublunary World a ſtill more comfortable Reception for Man, in the former Part of the *ſixth* and laſt Day, God created the *Terreſtrial* Animals, which our Hiſtorian diſtributes into three Kinds; 1. *Beaſts*, by which we underſtand all *wild* and *ſavage* Creatures, ſuch as Lions, Bears, and Wolves. 2. *Cattle*, all *tame* and *domeſtick* Creatures, deſigned for the Uſe of Men, ſuch as Oxen, Sheep, and Horſes. And, 3. *Creeping Things*, ſuch as Serpents, Worms, and other Inſects; but [k] whether theſe ſeveral Creatures were, at firſt, produced in their full State and Perfection, or God only created the Seeds of all Animals, (*i. e.* the Animals themſelves in *little*) and diſperſed them over the *ſuperficial* Part of the Earth, giving Power to that *Element*, aſſiſted by the *genial* Heat of the Sun, to *hatch* and bring them forth, has been a Queſtion. It ſeems more rational, however, to ſuppoſe, that God did not commit the Formation of Things to any *intermediate* Cauſes, but [l] himſelf created the firſt *Set* of Animals in the full *Stature* and Perfection of their *ſpecifick* Natures, and gave to each Species a Power afterwards, by *Generation*, to propagate its Kind. The Account indeed tells us, that God commanded the Earth to produce ſuch and ſuch Animals; [m] *Let the Earth bring forth the living Creature after his Kind*, but then it immediately follows, that *God made the Beaſts of the Earth, and every Thing that moveth, after his Kind:* So that the proper Intention of the Words muſt be, that God himſelf *effectually* formed them, and made uſe of the Earth only as the *Matter*, whereof he conſtituted their Parts. For, however Inſects and other *equivocal* Animals may, by the Heat of the Sun, be generated, (though [n] this is confuted by *modern* Experiments) [o] yet it is certainly impoſſible, that any of the *perfect* Species can, either *naturally* or *accidentally*, be produced by any Preparation of Matter, or by any Influence of the Heavens, without the *miraculous* Interpoſition of Almighty Power.

The firſt Part of the ſixth *Day's Work.*

THUS *the Heavens and the Earth were finiſhed*, (for the Creation of Man will be Matter of a diſtinct Conſideration) and it may be perhaps worth our while, to ſtop here a little, and obſerve, that, of all the Accounts, which, in all Nations, have been pretended to be given of the *Origin* of the World, this is the wiſeſt, and moſt *philoſophical:* Which, conſidering the low Ebb that Learning was at, in the *Jewiſh* Nation, is no ſmall Argument of its *Divine Revelation*. [p] What a wretched Account was that of the *Egyptians*, from whence the *Epicureans* borrowed their *Hypotheſis*, that the World was made by *Chance*, and Mankind grew out of the Earth, like the *Pumkins!* What ſtrange Stories does the *Grecian* Theology tell us of Οὐρανὸς and Γῆ of *Jupiter* and *Saturn!* And what ſad Work do their ancient Writers

[h] Gen. i. 20. [i] *Limborch*'s Syſtem. [k] *Ray*, on the Chaos. [l] *Hale*'s Origination.
[m] Gen. i. 24, 25. [n] That no *Inſect* or Animal did ever proceed *equivocally*, unleſs in Caſes miraculous, (as in *Egypt*, by the Divine Judgments) but are all generated from Parents of their own Kind, *Male* and *Female*, is manifeſt from the Experiments of the *learned* and *ſagacious* Naturaliſt *Franciſco Redi*, who made innumerable Trials, with the putrid Fleſh of all Sorts of Beaſts, and Fowls, and Fiſhes, and Serpents; with corrupted Cheeſe, and Herbs, and Fruits, and even Inſects themſelves; and yet conſtantly found, that all theſe Kinds of Putrefaction never produced any one Animal by *ſpontaneous* Formation. For when he ſuffered all theſe ſeveral Things, at different Times, to putrify in *hermetically-ſealed* Glaſſes, or (leſt the Excluſion of the Air might be ſuppoſed to hinder the Experiment) in Veſſels covered with fine Lawn, ſo as to admit the *Air*, and keep out the *Inſects*, no living Thing was ever produced there, though he expoſed them to the Action of the Sun, in the warm Climate of *Florence*, and in the kindeſt Seaſon of the Year. But when the Glaſſes were open, and Inſects were permitted to go in, there aroſe Creatures then indeed out of the corrupt Matter; but then they were only of ſuch Species as he ſaw go in, and feed, and depoſit their Eggs: From whence we may conclude, that no dead Fleſh, or putrified Bodies, nor indeed any Thing, but what has Life, can produce an Inſect. *Bentley*'s Sermons, at *Boyle*'s Lecture. [o] *Hale*'s Origination. [p] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I.

make, when they come to form Men and Women out of *projected* Stones! The *Chineſe* are accounted a wiſe People, and yet the Articles of their *Creed* are ſuch as theſe,—" That one *Tayn*, who lived in Heaven, and was famous for his Wiſdom, " diſpoſed the Parts of the World into the Order we find them; that he created, " out of nothing, the firſt Man *Panſon*, and his Wife *Panſone*; that this *Panſon*, " by a Power from *Tayn*, created another Man, called *Tanhom*, who was a great " *Naturaliſt*, and thirteen Men more, by whom the World was peopled; till after " a while the Sky fell upon the Earth, and deſtroy'd them all; and that the wiſe " *Tayn* afterwards created another Man, called *Lotziram*, who had two Horns, and " an *odoriferous* Body, and from whom proceeded ſeveral Men and Women, who " ſtocked the World with the preſent Inhabitants." But, of all others, the *Mahometan* Account is the moſt ridiculous; for it tells us, that the firſt Things that were created, were the Throne of God, *Adam*, Paradiſe, and a great *Pen*, wherewith God wrote his *Decrees*; that this *Throne* was carried about upon Angels Necks, whoſe Heads were ſo big, that Birds could not fly, in a thouſand Years, from one Ear to another: That this great Pen is a Journey of five hundred Years long, and one of eighty Years broad; that the Stars are Firebrands, thrown againſt the Devils, that would invade Heaven: That the Heavens are propped up by the Mountain *Kaff*, which is made all of *Emerald*; that the Moon is as big as the Sun, only the Angel *Gabriel* ſpreads his Wing over Part of it: And that the Earth ſtands upon the Top of a great *Cow*'s Horn; that this Cow ſtands upon a white *Stone*, this Stone upon a *Mountain*, and this Mountain upon God knows what; with many more Abſurdities of the like Nature.

THESE are ſome Accounts of the World's Creation, that have had many *Followers*, and ſome *Believers:* But alas! how ridiculous are they, when we come to compare them with what we read in the Book of *Geneſis*; where every Thing is eaſy, and natural, comporting with God's Majeſty, and not repugnant to the Rules of Philoſophy! Were we to judge of *Moſes* at the Bar of Reaſon, merely as an *Hiſtorian*; had we none of thoſe *ſupernatural* Proofs of the *Divinity* of his Writings, which ſet them above the *Sphere* of all *human* Compoſitions; had his Work none of that manifeſt Advantage of *Antiquity* above all others we ever yet ſaw; and were we not allowed to preſume, that his living nearer the Time, which he makes the *Period* of the World's Creation, gave him great Aſſiſtances in Point of *Tradition*; were we, I ſay, to wave all this, that might be alledged in his Behalf, yet the very Manner of his treating the *Subject*, gives him a *Preference* above all others: Nor can we, without Admiration, ſee a Perſon, that had none of the *Syſtems* before him, which we now ſo much value, giving us a clearer Idea of Things, in the Way of an eaſy *Narrative*, than any *Philoſopher*, with all his *hard* Words and Inventions, has yet been able to do; and, in the Compaſs of two ſhort *Chapters*, compriſing all, that has yet been advanced with Reaſon, even from his own Time to this very Day. Nor is it an unlikely Thought, that the Senſe of being ſo far outdone, in a *philoſophic* Enquiry, by a plain *Hiſtorian*, has raiſed the Indignation of *ſome*, and given Birth to the few trifling *Objections*, that have been made againſt him.

SECT. III.

Exceptions to the MOSAICK *Account anſwered.*

1. Of the Omiſſion of Meteors and Minerals.

ONE Exception againſt this Hiſtory of the Creation is, that *Moſes* has omitted two great *Integrals* of the ſublunary World, *Meteors* and *Minerals*, and made no Mention of their Original. [q] But, as theſe two Bodies are a Kind of *accidental* Production out of other *Elements*, that he has accounted for, they could not well fall under his Conſideration, becauſe, at the firſt Formation of the World, they were not in Being. *Meteors* are formed, in the upper Regions of the Air, by the *Appoſition*, or *Mixture*, of divers *Exhalations* from the other Parts of the Univerſe; and *Minerals* ſeem to be *Concretions* and *Digeſtions*, in the Bowels of the Earth, either by the Power of *celeſtial*, or by the Force of *internal* and connatural Fire. Which Way ſoever we ſuppoſe theſe Bodies to be ingendered, 'tis plain, that they were not the Production of the *ſix* Days Work, but the *ſpontaneous* Effects of

[q] *Hale*'s Origination..

of Nature afterwards, and ſuch as could not come under the Obſervation of an Hiſtorian, that gives us only the *Original* of Things, and not their future *Tranſformations.*

LIGHT before the *Sun* is another Exception, and [r] ſeems as incongruous to ſome, as a *Shadow* without a *Body*, or an *Effect* without a *Cauſe*. But ſince Darkneſs, in all Ages, has been the chief Idea Men have had of a *Chaos*, it may reaſonably be ſuppoſed, that the firſt *Remove* from ſuch a *Chaos*, muſt be a Tendency to *Light*; and that this Tendency might be effected, in the Manner that we have deſcribed, by the Subſidence of the *groſſer*, and the Aſcenſion of the *lighter* and more *luminous* Parts, in the very Inſtant that God gave the Command. *2. Light before the Sun.*

HOW the Waters could be diſpos'd of, and all the Channels of the great Deep hollowed out in one Day's Time, has been a Matter of ſome Admiration: [s] But 'tis a Wonder, that no wiſe Man ſhould be ſtartled at, that Almighty God ſhould do That in four and twenty Hours, which he might, if he pleaſed, have done in an Inſtant. We ourſelves, in a Moment's Time, can mold a Bit of moiſt Clay into what Form we will; we can make it *round* or *oval*, *convex* or *hollow*, or how we pleaſe; and why may we not then ſuppoſe, that Almighty God might, in as little a Time, have formed the Earth into what Figure he thought fit and collected the Waters into a Place appropriated for them? Waters indeed, in the ordinary Courſe of Things, move juſt ſuch a Pace, and no faſter; but there is no Reaſon, that God, in his Creation of the World, ſhould be tied up to the *dull* Motions of his Creatures; ſince the Motion of all Bodies, as every one allows, may be made infinitely faſter or ſlower, as he pleaſes to determine it. *3. Channels made for the Sea.*

THE Production of Plants, before the Formation of the Sun, is thought another *Soleciſm*: [t] But why, at the firſt Creation of Things, ſhould there be that Need for a Sun? In the natural Production of Plants indeed, there is an abſolute Neceſſity for it, to open the Fibres, to raiſe the Juices, and unfold the Coats and Leaves of the *Embryon-Plant* in the Seed; but, in the Caſe now before us, there were no Coats and Leaves to be unfolded; for God formed the Plants *immediately* out of the common Matter, and in their full Perfection, ſo that the Seed was the *Production* of the firſt Plants, and not the *Parent* of them. But, granting that a *vital Warmth* was requiſite for the firſt Production of Things, yet this vaſt *luminous* Body, which we ſuppoſe extracted out of the *Chaotic* Maſs the *firſt* Day, was certainly ſufficient for that Purpoſe; and might make the Earth, impregnated by the Moiſture of circumfus'd Waters, as haſty in putting forth Plants, and all other Kinds of Herbage, as we can well deſire, ſuppoſing the Thing to be done by the *Inſtrumentality* of *ſecond* Cauſes. *4. Plants before the Sun.*

THE allowing *ſix* Days for the Work of the Creation, which ſome think too *long*, and others too *ſhort* a Space, is another great Fault found with the *Moſaick* Account; and therefore, to clear our Hiſtorian of both theſe, 'twill be proper to ſuggeſt ſome Reaſons, why the Formation of Things might require ſuch a determinate Time, and no longer. *5. Why God employ'd ſix Days in the Creation.*

IT is very probable, from what has been ſaid before, [u] that Angels were created, when the *ſupreme* Heavens were made, at leaſt, ſome conſiderable Time, before the Production of this *viſible* World. 'Tis certain, that they had an Exiſtence, before the Foundations of the Earth were laid, and [x] glorified God for his Goodneſs in creating it. Now Angels, tho' they be great and glorious Beings, are yet of a *finite* Nature, and unable to comprehend the wonderful Works of God. There are ſome Things, that theſe *celeſtial* Creatures, as the Apoſtle teſtifies, [y] *deſire to look into*; and the more they are let into the Knowledge of the Power and Wiſdom of God, the more they are incited to praiſe him. That therefore they might have abundant Matter for this heavenly Exerciſe, the whoſe *Scene* of the Creation, according to the ſeveral Degrees and Natures of Things, ſeems to have been laid open in Order before them; whereby they muſt have had a more full and comprehenſive View of the Divine Attributes therein exhibited, than they could have had, in caſe the World had *ſtarted* forth in an Inſtant, and *jumpt*, as it were, into this beautiful Frame and Order all at once: Juſt as he, that ſees the whole Method and Contrivance of any curious Piece of *Art*, values and admires the *Artiſt* more, than he, that beholds it in the *Groſs* only. *1. With Reſpect to Angels.*

GOD

[r] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [s] *Nicholls*, ibid. [t] *Nicholls*, ibid. [u] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, Vol. II. [x] Job xxxviii. 7. [y] 1 Pet. i. 12.

GOD was pleaſed therefore to diſplay his Glory before the Angels, and, by ſeveral Steps and Degrees, to excite their Praiſe, and Love, and Adoration, which moved them to *Songs* and *Shouts of Joy*. By this Means, his Glory, and their own Happineſs was advanced, much beyond what it would have been, had all Things been created and ranged into their proper Order, in one Moment. By this Means, they had Time to look into the firſt *Principles* and Seeds of Things, and every Day preſented them with a glorious *Spectacle* of new Wonders; for the more they ſaw, the more they knew, and the more they know of the Works of God, the more they for ever love and adore him.

2. *And Men.* [z] BY this *ſucceſſive* and *gradual* Production of Things in ſix Days at the Creation, the Glory of God is likewiſe more manifeſt to *Men*, than it would have been, if all had been done at once, or by ſlow and tedious Methods. It is generally acknowledged, that *Moſes* has given us ſuch an Account of the Creation, as is more *intelligible*, and better adapted to moſt Men's Capacities, than the boaſted *Theories*, which ſome would obtrude upon us: Now, whatever Reaſons can be aſſigned, why the Creation ſhould be *deſcribed*, as it is in the Book of *Geneſis*, the ſame Reaſons will hold good, why it ſhould, in the ſame Manner, have been *effected*; for if it be more ſuitable to the Capacities and Apprehenſions of Men, to have it ſo *related*, 'tis more ſuitable to the ſame Capacities, to have it ſo *perform'd*.

THE Heavens, and all the Hoſt of them, we may ſuppoſe, were made in an Inſtant, becauſe there were *then* perhaps no other Creatures, to whom God might diſplay the Glory of his Works; and as they were made in an Inſtant, we have little or no Perception of the Manner, wherein they were made: But now, in the *leiſurely* Procedure of the Earth's Formation, we ſee, as it were, every Thing ariſing out of the *confus'd Maſs*; firſt the *ſimple* Elements, and then the *compounded* and more curious Creatures, and are led on Step by Step, full of Wonder and Admiration, until we perceive the *whole* compleated. Angels are [a] *the chief of the Ways of God*, i. e. the moſt excellent of all his Works; and yet, becauſe we have not their Creation diſtinctly related to us, we have but imperfect Notions of their Nature, and ſmall Conceptions of the Almighty's Glory in creating them; whereas the Formation of Man, delivered as it is, with all its *Apparatus*, Order, and Proceſſion, ſtrikes the Mind with a competent Conception how [b] *God formed him out of the Duſt of the Ground, and breathed into his Noſtrils the Breath of Life, and ſo Man became a living Soul.*

IF God then, in Condeſcenſion to our Capacities, divided the Creation into ſtated *Periods*, and prolonged the *Succeſſion* of what he could have finiſhed in ſix Moments, to the Term of ſix Days, that we might have clearer Notions of his eternal Power and Godhead, and, every Day of the Week, new and particular Works to celebrate him for; this Condeſcenſion ſhould be far from tempting us to loſe Sight of him, by ſuppoſing, either that he took a longer Time in the Work, or left it to the Management of *natural* Cauſes. If the miraculous Power of God interpoſed, *ſix Days*, for Diſtinction's Sake, were ſufficient: If all was committed to the Agency of natural Cauſes, *ſix thouſand Ages* would not have been enough. Inſtead of *cavilling* at the Method of God's Operations therefore, the proper Effect, that the Contemplation of them ſhould have upon us, is, to beget in us the higheſt Eſteem and Veneration of him, from the many fair Characters of his infinite Goodneſs, legible in every Step of his Proceeding; to engage us, with all due Thankfulneſs, to acknowledge, that [c] *the Earth was made by his Power, the World eſtabliſhed by his Wiſdom, and the Heavens ſtretched out by his Diſcretion*; and, upon the Conſideration of theſe great Tokens of *Omnipotence*, to poſſeſs our Minds with the deepeſt Humility; often revolving with ourſelves, and often admiring with the Royal Prophet, [d] *What is Man, that God is ſo mindful of him!* [e] For a *Nothing* to himſelf muſt every one appear, that looks abroad upon the other Parts of the Creation.

[z] *Jenkins's* Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, Vol. II. [a] Job xl. 19. [b] Gen. ii. 17. [c] Jer. x. 12. [d] Pſal. viii. 4. [e] *Newcome's* Catech. Serm. Vol. I.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the CREATION *of* MAN.

THAT Mankind has not continued in an infinite *Succeſſion*, from Generation to Generation, but, at one Time or other, was *originally* made by Almighty God, is ſufficiently evident, not only from the plain Abſurdity of an [a] *infinite Succeſſion*, but from all the Arguments likewiſe, that we formerly made Uſe of, to prove the *recent* Date of the World's Formation. That the univerſal Species of Mankind has had a *gradual* Increaſe, notwithſtanding what War, and Famine, and Peſtilence, and Floods, and Conflagrations, and other calamitous Cauſes have retarded it, is manifeſt from the Hiſtory of the *Jewiſh* Nation, from the Account of the *Roman Cenſus*, and [b] Regiſters of our own Country, where the Proportion of Births and Burials is found, upon Obſervation, to be yearly, as fifty is to forty. Now if Mankind do increaſe, though never ſo ſlowly, but one Couple, ſuppoſe, in an Age, 'tis enough to evince the Falſhood of *infinite* Generations already expired. For though we ſhould ſuppoſe ten thouſand Millions of Couples now in being, yet it is but going ſo many Ages back, and we come to a ſingle *original Pair*; and 'tis all one, in Reſpect of eternal Duration, yet behind, whether we begin the World ſo many Millions of Ages ago, or date it from the late *Æra* of about *ſix thouſand* Years. *Mankind not from Eternity.*

THAT the *Origin* of Mankind is not to be aſcribed [c] to the *Influence* of Stars, upon ſome extraordinary *Conjunction*, the *Action* of the Sun upon duly-prepared Matter, the fortuitous *Concourſe* of Atoms, or any other Method, wherein *Chance* and Accident had the Guidance, is plain from the admirable Contrivance and Structure of the human Body, even without any additional Proof from the Powers and Properties of the Soul. For when we conſider the many *conſtituent* Parts of the Bodies of Men, all admirably compacted into ſo noble an *Engine*, that in each of the very Fingers, for Inſtance, there are Bones, and Griſtles, and Ligaments, and Membranes, and Muſcles, and Tendons, and Nerves, and Arteries, and Veins, and Skin, and Cuticle, and Nail; together with Marrow, and Fat, and Blood, and other *nutricious* Juices; all theſe ſolid Parts, of a determinate Size, and Figure, and Texture, and Situation; and each of them made up of *Myriads* of little Fibres, and Filaments, not diſcoverable by the naked Eye; when we conſider, I ſay, how innumerable Parts muſt conſtitute ſo ſmall a Member, as the Finger; we cannot look upon *it*, or the whole Body, wherein appears ſo much Fitneſs, and Uſe, and Subſerviency to infinite Functions, any otherwiſe, than as the Effect of Contrivance and Skill, and conſequently, the Workmanſhip of a moſt intelligent and beneficent Being. And though now the Propagation of Mankind be in a ſettled Method of Nature, which is the Inſtrument of God; yet we cannot but believe, that the firſt Production of Mankind was by the immediate Power of the *Almighty* Author of Nature, and that all *ſucceeding* Generations of Men were the Progeny of one *primitive Couple*. *But made by God.*

[a] *The Arguments from Eternity I have purpoſely omitted, becauſe ſomewhat metaphyſical; but find a very learned Divine of our Church, ſetting them forth in a pretty clear Light.* Infinite Generations of Men, *ſays he*, are already paſt and gone; but whatever is now paſt, was once actually preſent; ſo that each of theſe infinite Generations was once in its Turn actually preſent: Therefore all, except one Generation, were once future, and not in Being; which deſtroys the very Suppoſition. For either that one Generation muſt itſelf have been *infinite*, which is Nonſenſe; or it was the *finite* Beginning of infinite Generations between itſelf and us, *i. e. Infinity* terminated at both Ends, which is as much Nonſenſe as before. Again, infinite paſt Generations of Men have been once actually preſent: There may be ſome one Man, ſuppoſe then, that was at infinite Diſtance from us now; therefore that Man's Son likewiſe, forty Years younger, ſuppoſe, than his Father, was either at infinite Diſtance from us, or at finite: If that Son too was at infinite Diſtance from us, then one infinite is longer, by forty Years, than another; which is abſurd: If at finite, then forty Years added to *finite* make it *infinite*, which is as abſurd as the other. Once more, the Number of Men, that is already dead and gone, is infinite: But the Number of the Eyes of thoſe Men muſt neceſſarily be twice as much, as that of the Men themſelves; and that of the Fingers ten Times as much, and that of the Hairs of their Heads thouſands of Times: So that we have here an infinite Number twice, ten Times, and thouſands of Times as great, as another, which is a Contradiction again. Thus we ſee it is impoſſible in itſelf, that any *ſucceſſive Duration* ſhould be actually and poſitively *infinite*, or have infinite Succeſſions already gone and paſt. *Bentley*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lecture. [b] Vid. Obſervations on the Bills of Mortality. [c] *Bentley*, ibid.

Adam *the firſt of Mankind.*

THAT this primitive Couple were the ſame with what the Hiſtory of the Creation mentions, muſt depend upon the Truth and Veracity of *Moſes*, whoſe Character we have conſidered, and the Date and Authority of whoſe Writings we have examined into [d] before: Only there is an Objection or two, which ſome of a *captious* Spirit have drawn from the Hiſtory itſelf, which muſt be obviated, before we can proceed to diſcuſs the Manner of their *Formation*.

The Objection of the Preadamites.

"THAT *Adam* and *Eve* were the *primigenial* Parents of the World, ſay they, is "no Way evident from the Hiſtory of *Moſes*, who means no more, than that they "were the Progenitors of the Race of the *Jews*: [e] For he not only relates *two* "Creations, one [f] of Mankind in general, and [g] another of the *ſacred* Race; but "gives us ſtrong Intimations likewiſe, that there were ſeveral more Men in the "World, when *Adam* and *Eve* were created. Elſe, how could he ſay, that *Cain* "was a [h] *Tiller of Ground*, which muſt pre-ſuppoſe all the Artificers, that have "Relation to Tillage; that he was afraid every [i] one that *found him, would ſlay* "*him*, which implies a great Number in the World; and above all, that he went "[k] *into the Land of* Nod, married *a Wife, and builded a City*, which certainly ſig-"nifies that there were both Women for him to marry, and Men to inhabit his "City. From all which it is evident, ſay they, that the *Jewiſh Hiſtorian* never "intended to write of the *primitive* Parents of all the World; ſince, within a few "Lines, he lets fall ſo many Expreſſions, that denote the contrary, but only to give "us an Account of the Origin of the *Jews*, as other Hiſtorians have done of other "Countries."

Anſwered.

NOW, tho' it cannot be denied, that *Moſes* might principally deſign to give us an Hiſtory of the *Jewiſh* Nation; yet, in the Beginning of his Account, and till they came to be diſtinguiſhed from other Nations in the Patriarch *Abraham*, he could not have *that* under his peculiar Conſideration. He acquaints us, we find, with the *Origination* of the firſt of other Animals, whence they aroſe, and in what Manner they were perfected; and when he came to treat of the Formation of human Creatures, 'tis but reaſonable to imagine, that he intended likewiſe to be underſtood of the firſt of their Kind. Now, that *Adam* and *Eve* were the firſt of their Kind, [l] the Words of our bleſſed Saviour, [m] *From the Beginning of the Creation, God made them Male and Female*, are a full Confirmation; becauſe he produces the very ſame Precept, that was applied to *Adam* and *Eve* at their Creation, [n] *therefore ſhall a Man leave his Father and Mother, and cleave unto his Wife:* And that there could be none before them, the Reaſon [o] *why* Adam *called his Wife's Name* Eve, *becauſe ſhe was the Mother of all Living*, i. e. the Perſon, that was the *Root* and *Source* of all Mankind, that was to be upon the Earth, is a plain Demonſtration: For if ſhe was the *Mother of all Living*, there certainly was no Race of Men or Women before her.

THO' therefore *Moſes* may make a double Mention of *Adam*'s Creation, yet this is properly to be imputed to nothing elſe, but the Method and Manner of writing his Hiſtory; [p] who having, in the *firſt* Chapter, given an Account of the ſix Days Creation in general, in the *ſecond*, re-aſſumes the Argument, and treats of the Creation of Man in particular. Now to *refer* a very remarkable Paſſage in order to re-aſſume it, and ſpeak of it more fully in another Place, is a Thing common to all *Hiſtorians*; but more eſpecially requiſite in this Caſe, where the *Dignity* of Man, the *Lord* of the Creation, was concerned, and every one is ſuppoſed curious to know the Riſe and Origin of his *Primogenitors*. It may be obſerved farther, that the *Moſaick* Hiſtory, eſpecially in its *Introduction*, is ſo very ſhort, and comprizes the Tranſactions of ſo many Years in ſo ſmall a Compaſs, that it is not to be wondered at, if many Things are omitted, and that the Reader is obliged to ſupply, with his Imagination, the Defect of the Account in ſome Particulars. Though therefore we ſhould allow, [q] that by the Word *Nod*, we are to underſtand a Country, (whereas it may as well ſignify a *Fugitive*, and ſo the Senſe will be, that Cain *lived a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Land)*; and tho' we ſhould grant, that there was a conſiderable Number of Men and Women in the World at that Time; [r] yet we may ſtill ſuppoſe, that they were the Deſcendants of *Adam* and *Eve*, who might have a great many Children and Grand-Children, that are not expreſsly mentioned by *Moſes*; ſuch as might be *Smiths* and *Carpenters* to

[d] Vid. page 25, &c. [e] Dyreri Præadamitæ, Lib. iii. Cap. 4. and *Blunt*'s Oracles of Reaſon, page 218. [f] Gen. i. 27. [g] Ibid. ii. 9. [h] Ibid. iv. 2. [i] Ibid. iv. 14. [k] Ibid. iv. 16, 17. [l] *Edwards*'s Survey of Religion, Vol. I. [m] Mark x. 6. [n] Gen. ii. 24. [o] Ibid. iii. 20. [p] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [q] *Nicholls*, ibid. [r] *Edwards*, ibid.

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to ſupply others with the Inſtruments of *Agriculture*; though, in the Infancy of the World, 'tis very probable, that the Art of *Tillage* was not yet come to ſuch Perfection, but that *Cain* might make uſe of *wooden* Ploughs and Spades, and, inſtead of *Knives* and *Hatchets*, form his Tools with ſharp *Flints* or *Shells*, which were certainly the firſt Inſtruments of *Cutting*.

IT was, in all Probability, in the hundred and twenty-ninth Year of *Adam*'s Age, that *Abel* was ſlain; for the Scripture ſays expreſly, that *Seth*, [s] who was given in the Lieu of *Abel*, was born [t] in the hundred and thirtieth Year; very likely the Year after the Murther was committed, to be a Comfort to his diſconſolate Parents; ſo that *Cain* muſt be one hundred and twenty-nine Years old, at leaſt, when he took his Flight; at which Time, there might be a *competent* Stock of Mankind upon the Face of the Earth, to the Number, it may be, of an hundred thouſand Souls, conſidering the *primitive* Fecundity. For if the Children of *Iſrael*, from ſeventy Souls, in the Space of two hundred and ten Years, became ſix hundred thouſand fighting Men, (though great Numbers of them died during the Increaſe) we may well enough ſuppoſe, that the Children of *Adam* might amount to a hundred thouſand, in a hundred and thirty Years, which are almoſt five Generations. *Cain* therefore might very well find a Wife in another Land, build a City, and grow out of the Knowledge of many, when there was ſuch a Number of People in the World, not living together all in one Place, but *cantoned* into different Countries.

A. M.	30	10
	60	100
	90	1,000
	120	10,000
	130	100,000
		111,110
	Subtract	1
		111,109

"BUT if *Adam* and *Eve* were the firſt Progenitors of all Mankind, (to ſuppoſe "them created in Beauty and Perfection) we muſt ſuppoſe that they were *white* at "firſt; and if ſo, whence come all the *Blacks*, that are now in the World? They "muſt certainly be another Generation of Men; and whether *antecedent* or *ſubſe-*"*quent* to *Adam*, ſeem to have no *Relation* to him, but to be rather a diſtinct Species "of themſelves, and made by God at another Time." *The Objection of the* Blacks. The *Mahometans*, to obviate this Difficulty, have a very *ridiculous* Notion, *viz.* that God made the firſt Man, like a *Magpie*, part *black*, and part *white*, which occaſioned his Poſterity to be of different Complexions: But there ſeems to be a much better and more rational Way of accounting for it. [u] We all ſee, how the Hair and Colour of Mens Bodies differ, according to the Clime they inhabit, and their greater or leſſer Diſtance from the Sun. The *Danes* and *Swedes*, the *Engliſh* and *Scotch*, being far to the *North*, have generally a brown, fair, or yellowiſh Hair, and ſomewhat lank; the *Spaniſh*, *Italians*, *Greeks*, and *Arabians*, have black Hair, ſomewhat curled, and ſo proportionably all other Nations, that live to the South. The *Europeans* have generally a clear, white Skin; the *Aſiaticks* a more tawny one, as being nearer the Sun; but the *Æthiopians*, living in the Midſt of a mighty *Continent*, where they are refreſhed by no cool *Breezes* from the Sea, where the Air is continually heated by ſweeping along over fiery Sands, and the Sun, not only *vertically* over them, but reflected with Violence from their vaſt Mountains, muſt neceſſarily be more *black*, than any other Nation. Now, if the Warmth of *Aſia* is of Efficacy enough to make the Skin of the People *tawny*, and to curl their Hair; we may eaſily ſuppoſe, that the intenſe Heat of *Æthiopia* is ſufficient to make its Inhabitants much *blacker*, and to criſp their Hair into a Sort of a Friz. We may therefore very well conclude, that the firſt Colony, which ſettled in any Country of extraordinary Heat, received a great Change in their Complexion, proportionably to the Heat of the Climate, and became very *tawny*, much beyond the *Arabians*, and inclinable to *Blackneſs*, as the Sun was more intenſe upon them. Hence, in a Generation or two, that high Degree of Tawnineſs became the *Nature*, and from thence, the *Pride* of the Inhabitants. The Men began to value themſelves chiefly upon this Complexion, and the Women to affect them the better for it; ſo that their Love to their Huſbands, and daily Converſation with them, had a conſiderable Influence upon the *Fruit* of their Wombs, and made each Child grow blacker and blacker, according to the Fancy and Imagination of the Mother. Upon this Suppoſition, the Children thus produced muſt, every Birth, approach nearer to an abſolute *Blackneſs*; and as their tender Bodies came to be expoſed naked (as the Manner of ſuch Countries is) to the violent Heat of the Sun, their Skins muſt needs be ſcorched extraordinarily, and

Their Complexion accounted for.

[s] Gen. v. 3. [t] Ibid. v. 3. [u] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I.

and by that Means contract a *Blackneſs*, far ſuperior to that of their Parents. By ſuch Degrees as theſe, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe that People of the faireſt Complexion, when removed into a very hot Climate, may, in a few Generations, become perfect *Negroes*; beſides, what ſome have imagined, that this Blackneſs was at firſt *preternatural*, [x] and a ſignal Judgment inflicted upon *Ham*, the Son of *Noah*, for *diſcovering his Father's Nakedneſs*, and that all People of that Complexion, are the unhappy Progeny of that *undutiful Son*.

THESE two Objections, that ſtood a little in our Way, and ſeemed to call in Queſtion *Adam*'s *Primacy*, being thus got over, we may now take a clearer View of the new-created World, and of that Part of the Six-days Work, that, as yet, was *uncompleated*.

SECT. I.

Of the Manner of MAN's *Creation.*

Man, why not created till the ſixth Day.

IT were no hard Matter to ſhew, [y] that none of the preceding Days were ſo proper for the Creation and Introduction of Man, as this, wherein every Thing, that could be ſubſervient to him, and advance his Felicity, was perfected. When the *Light* had been penetrating into, and clarifying the dark and thick *Atmoſphere*; when the *Air* was freed from its noiſome Vapours, and become pure, and clear, and fit for his *Reſpiration*; when the *Waters* were ſo diſpoſed, as to miniſter to his Neceſſities by *Miſts* and *Dews* from Heaven, and by *Springs* and *Rivers* from the Earth; when the Surface of the Earth was become dry and ſolid for his Support, and cover'd over with Trees, Shrubs, Plants, Herbs, Graſs, and Flowers, for his Suſtenance and Delight; when the glorious *Firmament* of Heaven, and the beautiful *Syſtem* of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, was laid open to his Contemplation, and, by their powerful Influences, appointed to diſtinguiſh the Seaſons, and make the World a fruitful and delicious Habitation for him; when, laſtly, all Sorts of Animals, in the *Seas*, in the *Air*, and on the *Earth*, were ſo ordered and diſpoſed, as to contribute, in their ſeveral Capacities, to his Benefit and Delight; when all theſe Things, I ſay, were, by the Care and Providence of God, prepared for the Entertainment of this principal *Gueſt*; 'twas *then*, and not till then, that Man was created, and introduced into the World; *then*, and not before, that he was conſtituted the *Lord* and *Governor* of the Whole; in which Procedure, the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of the Creator, and the Honour and Dignity of his principal Creature here below, were equally conſulted.

The ſolemn Manner of doing it.

THIS, upon many Accounts, being the propereſt Time for Man's *Introduction*, we may obſerve, that the Sacred Hiſtory has made a ſignal Diſtinction between him and other Creatures; [z] that the Creation of his Body, as well as his Soul, is mentioned in a Manner, highly proper to awaken our Obſervation, and repreſented as a more eſpecial Effect of Counſel and Deliberation; *Let us make Man.* [a] Not that the *Divine* Wiſdom ſtood in Need of the *Counſel* or Concurrence of others, or himſelf made the leaſt *Pauſe* or Heſitation in what he was going to perform, (for, *known unto him are all his Works from the Beginning*, and, by one ſimple and *indiviſible* Act, he both foreſees what is to be done, and judges and determines it) but the Expreſſion is added as a Mark of *Attention*, and to ſignify the Pre-eminence of the Creation of Mankind, above the reſt of the viſible World. And [b] conſidering, indeed, that Man was to be a Creature intirely different from all the reſt, as being compounded of a *ſpiritual* and *immortal* Soul, and of a *material* and *corruptible* Body, and in both theſe to be made *in the Likeneſs of God*, and conſtituted his *Deputy* and *Vicegerent* among the Creatures here below; conſidering this, I ſay, it was but fit and reaſonable, that there ſhould be as great a Diſtinction in his *Origination*, as was to be in his Nature and Faculties, his Office and Dignity, his Capacities and Happineſs. [c] The Doctors of the *Jewiſh* Church are of Opinion, that this Deliberation was *real*, and held with ſuch angelical Beings, as God might employ in the Work of Man's Creation; but that this Opinion is deſtitute of Reaſon, and the Angels themſelves incompetent for the Work, is what we ſhall obſerve hereafter. Moſt of the modern *Expoſitors* account it only a *majeſtick* Form of Speech,

[x] Gen. ix. 25. [y] *Whiſton*'s Theory in the Solutions. [z] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Part I. [a] *Hale*'s Origination of Mankind. [b] *Whiſton*'s Theory in the Solutions. [c] *Hale*'s Origination of Mankind.

Speech, as nothing is more common than for Perſons inveſted with Sovereign Authority, to ſpeak in the *plural* Number, eſpecially when they are about to deliver any important Order or Command. It has been obſerved however, that as there were no Men, and conſequently no *great* Men, when this was ſpoken; ſo there was no ſuch Title among *that* Rank of Perſons, for many Ages after *Moſes*: Their common Cuſtom was, in all their publick Inſtruments and Letters, (the better to inhance the Notion of Sovereignty) to ſpeak in the *firſt* Perſon, as 'twas in our Nation [d] not long ago, and is in the Kingdom of *Spain* to this very Day. And therefore we may, [e] upon the Authority of ſeveral great Fathers of the Church, conclude, that this Language of *Moſes* repreſents God ſpeaking as he is, *i. e.* in a *Plurality of Perſons*, and holding a Conſultation (as it were) of the holy *Trinity*, about making and forming of Man.

HOWEVER this be, 'tis certain, that the Force and Energy of the Expreſſion denotes thus much, —— that the Production of Mankind was ſo immediately the Work of Almighty God, that the Power of no *ſubordinate* Intelligence could be capable of it. [f] Angels indeed are wiſe and powerful Beings, and their Knowledge of Nature, by the Application of *Actives* and *Paſſives*, may, in ſome Meaſure, enable them to form an *Inſect*, or perhaps a *compleat* Animal: But the curious Structure of the Body of Man, the Accommodation of it to Faculties, and the furniſhing it with Faculties, that are accommodated to it, (even as to its animal Life) imports in it a Wiſdom and Efficacy, far above the Power of any created Nature to effect. For to make the whole Man compleat, there muſt be an Harmony and due Proportion obſerved between the *Parts* of the Body, and the *Faculties* of the Soul; and conſequently, as much Skill and Dexterity required, in the Formation of one, as the other. But now, if an Angel, or any other Being leſs than infinite, is confeſſedly unequal to the making of a Soul, it can never be ſufficient to make a fit *organical* Body, exactly conform and agreeable to it.

His Body made by God alone.

UPON the Whole therefore, we may conclude, that not only the *Soul*, but the very *animal* Nature of Man, nay the very Formation and Deſtination of his bodily Frame, was not only the Work of an *intelligent* Being, but of the infinite and omnipotent intelligent Being, who, in the ſame Moment, both formed his Body, and organized it with the Inſtruments of Life and Senſation. And this may poſſibly ſuggeſt a Reaſon, why, in the Formation of Man's Body, the Wiſdom of God made choice of the *Duſt of the Ground*, or, as it is elſewhere, *of red Clay*, that, from the Incongruity of the Matter, Men might judge of the Difficulty, and learn to attribute the Glory of the Performance to him alone.

[g] SHOULD any of us ſee a Lump of Clay riſe immediately from the Ground into the compleat Figure of a Man, full of Beauty and Symmetry, and endowed with all thoſe Parts and Faculties, that we perceive in ourſelves, and poſſibly far more exquiſite and beautiful: Should we, preſently after this Formation, obſerve him uſing all the Operations of Life, Senſe, and Reaſon; move as gracefully, talk as eloquently, reaſon as juſtly, and do every Thing as dextrouſly, as the beſt accompliſhed Man breathing: The Caſe is the very ſame, and, in the like Moment of Time, was the *Protoplaſt* made in his full Perfection; but, to give the Thing a ſtronger Impreſſion upon our Minds, we will ſuppoſe that this *Figure* riſes by Degrees, and is finiſhed Part by Part, in ſome Succeſſion of Time; and that, when the whole is compleated, the *Veins* and *Arteries* bored, the *Sinews* and *Tendons* laid, the *Joints* fitted, and the *Liquor*, tranſmutable into *Blood* and *Juices*, lodged in the *Ventricles* of the Heart, God infuſes into it a *vital Principle*; whereupon the Liquor in the Heart begins to deſcend, and thrill along the Veins, and an heavenly Bluſh ariſes in the *Countenance*, ſuch as ſcorns the Help of Art, and is above the Power of Imitation: The Image moves; it walks; it ſpeaks; moves with ſuch a Majeſty, as proclaims it the Lord of the Creation, and talks with ſuch an Accent, and Sublimity of Sentiment, as makes every Ear attentive, and even its great Creator enter into Converſe with it: When we ſee all this tranſacted before our

Formed out of the Duſt, to ſhew God's Power.

[d] Before King *John*'s Time, the Kings of *England* uſed the *ſingular* Number, as may be ſeen in the Cloſe of Writs, *Teſte meipſo apud Weſtm.* [e] *Tertullian ad Prax.* Cap. 12. *Athanaſius*, Dialog. 3. *de Trinit. Cyril* of *Jeruſalem*, Catech. 10 *Chryſoſtom*, Hom. 8. *in Gen. Auguſtine, de Civ. Dei*, L. 16. C. 6. with many more, who take this Paſſage in this Senſe. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity. The *Jews* however, upon this Occaſion, relate a Story, that has ſome Semblance of Truth in it: They tell us, that as *Moſes* was writing his Book by God's Appointment, and theſe Words came to be dictated, he refuſed to ſet them down, crying out, *O Lord, would'ſt thou then plunge Men into Error, and make them doubt of the Doctrine of the Unity?* Whereupon it was anſwered by God, *I command thee to write, and if any will err, let them err.* *Saurin*'s Diſſertation. [f] *Hale*'s Origination of Mankind.
[g] Ibid.

Eyes, I ſay, we cannot but ſtand aſtoniſhed at the Thing, and in humble Admiration cry out, *Lord,* [h] *what is Man, that thou art thus mindful of him, and the Son of Man, that thou thus viſiteſt him?* From a Bit of Clay, *thou haſt made him little lower than the Angels, to crown him with Glory and Worſhip; thou makeſt him to have Dominion over the Works of thy Hands, and thou haſt put all Things in Subjection under his Feet*; for the lower the Materials are, the greater is the Skill of the *Divine* Artiſt, to raiſe ſuch a glorious Fabrick out of them: And therefore the Pſalmiſt concludes his Contemplation with theſe Words, *O Lord, our Governor, how excellent is thy Name in all the World!*

2. And to teach us Humility.

BUT God might have a farther Meaning, than his own Glory, in making the *Duſt of the Ground* the conſtituent Matter of Man's Body, and that poſſibly to teach us *Humility*, as oft as we look upon ourſelves, and conſider the Meanneſs of our *Original.* For Pride having lately undone the Angels above, and plunged them into utter Perdition, it became the infinite Wiſdom of God, in this new Production of Creatures, to give them a *ſtanding* Remembrance, and in their very Conſtitution (as it were) to intermix an *Antidote* againſt it, that, whenever their Minds came to be elated *above Meaſure*, they might recover their Temper again, by [i] *looking to the Hole of the Pit, whence they were digged.* 'Tis a ſtrong Sarcaſm, that which we meet with in the wiſe Son of *Sirach*, where he tells us, [k] *that Pride was not made for Man:* [l] For fancy Pride where we will, 'tis no where ſo improper, no where ſo unbecoming, as in Man, whoſe *Make* is of the common Clay, as putrid and contemptible, as that of other Creatures, and who every Day [m] *may ſay to Corruption, Thou art my Father, and to the Worm, Thou art my Mother, and my Siſter.* And therefore God might the rather admit of this debaſing Circumſtance in our Compoſition, on Purpoſe to remind us of our *Pedigree*, when our Proſperity has made us forget him; and in our moſt ſucceſsful *Gale* of Fortune, in our higheſt *Elevation* of Honour, amidſt all the gaudy *Scenes* of Pleaſure, amidſt all the gay *Ideas* of our Wit, and Beauty, and other Accompliſhments, to whiſper this ſad and ſober Admonition in our Ears, [n] *Duſt thou art, and unto Duſt ſhalt thou return.*

The Infuſion of his Soul.

FROM the Formation of *Adam*'s Body, the ſacred Hiſtory comes at laſt to give us ſome Account of the Production of his *Soul.* The ſpiritual and immaterial Nature, the immortal Condition, active Powers, and free and rational Operations, which, in Reſemblance of the Divine Being, the Souls of Men were to participate, could not but require ſome peculiar and extraordinary Conduct in their firſt Production, their Union with Matter afterward, and Introduction into this corporeal World; and accordingly we may obſerve, that whereas in the Formation of all other Animals, 'tis only ſaid, [o] *Let the Earth bring forth the living Creature after his Kind*, in the Caſe of Man's Creation, the Account is, that [p] *the Lord God formed Man out of the Duſt of the Ground, and breathed into his Noſtrils the Breath of Life, i. e.* did ſomething *analogous* to *breathing*, (for God has no Body to breathe with) whereby he infuſed a rational and immortal Spirit (for we muſt not ſuppoſe that God gave any Part of his own Eſſence) into the Man's [q] Head, as the principal Seat thereof, *and Man became a living Soul.*

Which is diſtinct from the Body.

BUT here ſome great and controverted Queſtions meet us, concerning the Nature and Origin of human Souls: As whether they are real and *ſubſtantial* Forms, or only the *finer Parts* of Air or animal Spirits; whether they were all created at *once*, or only *ſucceſſively*, as there is Occaſion; and whether it is the Finger of God, that *immediately* makes them, or they come by Way of *Traduction* from our Parents. The Nature, and Powers, and Immortality of the Soul, I ſhall have Occaſion hereafter to conſider more fully; and ſhall therefore, at preſent, only obſerve, that the Divine Hiſtorian places a manifeſt Diſtinction between *Adam*'s Soul and Body, making the one proceed from the *Duſt of the Earth*, and the other from the *Breath of God*; that, in the Formation of *Adam*, * there is a quite different Procedure uſed, from what we perceive in that of other Animals; for which there can be no Reaſon aſſign'd, if there were not ſomething ſuperior and different in the eſſential Parts of his Conſtitution; that he is ſaid to be made *after the Image of God*, though there is nothing in Man, except his *reaſonable* Soul, that, with any tolerable Pretence, can deſerve that Character; that he became a *living Soul*, which being effected by the Divine Inſpiration, muſt denote ſomething reſemblant of

[h] Pſal. viii. 4, &c. [i] Iſa. li. 1. [k] Ecclus x. 18. [l] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [m] Job xvii. 14.
[n] Gen. iii. 19. [o] Ibid. i. 24. [p] Ibid. ii. 7. [q] The original Word [*Beappo*] ſignifies no more than his *Face*, or *Head*. * *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. II.

of that *Spirituality*, whereby the great Creator of all Things is ſo frequently called the *living God*, and the Angels in Heaven who are Spirits, are likewiſe called [r] his *Sons*.

No Account, one would think, could be deviſed more purpoſely to eſtabliſh the *Diſtinction* of the Soul and Body, and to ſet before our Eyes (as it were) the groſs Compoſition of the *One*, and the Divine and Spiritual Nature of the *Other*; and yet, even from this Repreſentation, [s] ſome have adventured to affirm, "that *God's breath-* *An Objection.*
"*ing into Man the Breath of Life*, means no more, than that he made Matter, or "Man, with his exterior Shape, become a living Creature, ſo that his Soul de-"pended upon the *Organization* of his Body, without ever conveying into him any "ſpiritual *Subſtance*, which they deny the Soul to be."

1. THE Vulgar indeed retain very groſs Notions of *Subſtance*, and, upon the firſt naming it, have immediate Recourſe in their Minds to ſomething that is *ſeen* or *felt*. They call a Piece of Cloth or Plate *ſubſtantial*, that has ſuch a ſufficient *Degree* of Thickneſs, or ſuch a *Quantity* of Matter in it, as will make it hold wearing; and therefore they conclude, that there can be no other proper Notion of Subſtance but it. [t] Now, if *Divines* and *Philoſophers*, when they call a Soul a *ſpiritual Subſtance*, mean a Subſtance in this Senſe, they might be juſtly chargeable with an abſurd and contradictious Notion: But when they declare their Meaning to be, that the Soul is a Subſtance, and of a Nature perfectly different from this, excluſive of all Length, and Breadth, and Thickneſs; a Being, that has ſeveral *Modes* and *Properties* agreeable to its Nature, attending it, and as perfectly *diſtinct*, as thoſe of corporeal Beings are, this carries in it no Impoſſibility or Contradiction; and the Word *Subſtance*, when applied to this Conception, is altogether as proper and intelligible, as when it ſtands for the *groſs* Notion, that the Vulgar have of it. *Anſwered,* 1. *By proving the Soul to be immaterial.*

THAT the Soul of Man, in this higher Senſe, is a *ſpiritual Subſtance*, and independent on the Matter it carries about with it, is evident to any one, that conſiders the Power and Freedom of its Operations, which no *Accident* can be ſuppoſed to have; and which Matter, with all its *Refinements* and *Maturations*, can never be able to perform. Matter, we know, can only act and move, as it is directed, having no Will of its own, nor any Sufficiency to determine the Cauſe of its Motions: And yet, [u] in this Soul of ours, we feel and experience a natural Liberty of acting, even tho' the Force of outward *Objects* come never ſo ſtrongly upon it. Thus, in the Midſt of the Alarms and Shoutings of an Army, of the Noiſe of Drums and Trumpets ringing in our Ears, the Soul can *recollect* itſelf, and reduce its ſcattered Thoughts into profound Contemplation of a ſweet and bleſſed Peace; and when it is preſſed from without, with never ſo much Importunity, to this or that particular Choice, it has it in his Power to reject the Motion, and chuſe the quite contrary. Since therefore the Soul has an *innate* Liberty of acting, and, by the different Preſſures of material Things about it, is undeterminable in its Motions, it muſt hence neceſſarily follow, that it is a Being of *diſtinct Properties* from Matter. And indeed, conſidering how much its Operations do exceed the utmoſt Power of Matter, 'tis pretty ſtrange, that any one ſhould ſo far forſake his Reaſon, as to rank it among *material* Beings. For how is it poſſible, that a Lump of Clay or Dirt, with all the Formation and Refinement imaginable, ſhould ever be able to make a *thinking* Being, or grow up into the Soul of a *Philoſopher?* How is it poſſible, that from the Motion of the Blood and Spirits, which are no more than *globular* Particles of Matter, there ſhould ariſe an *Underſtanding*, that, in the Twinkling of an Eye, can expatiate through the Univerſe; prick out the *Paths* of the heavenly Bodies, and meaſure the *Circles* of their Motion; ſpan the whole *Surface* of the Earth, and dive into its *capacious* Womb, there to diſcover the numerous Offſprings, with which it is continually teeming; that can ſail into the World of Spirits by the *never-varying Compaſs* of its Reaſon, and diſcover thoſe invifible Regions of Happineſs or Woe, which are altogether out of our Sight, whilſt we ſtand upon this *hither* Shore; and, in a Word, that can aſcend from Cauſe to Cauſe, to God, who is the Cauſe of *all*, and fixing its Eyes upon the lovely Object, loſe itſelf in the Contemplation of his Divine Perfections.

THESE

[r] Job ii. 1. [s] Vid. Second Thoughts concerning the human Soul. [t] *Nicholls's* Conference, Vol. II.
[u] *Scott's* Sermons, Vol. II.

And that Matter cannot be made to think.

THESE are Actions of ſo *abſtracted* a Nature, that it ſhocks common Senſe to imagine, how Matter ſhould be capable of effecting them. All that we can poſſibly conceive of Matter is, that it is Something *extended*, and taking up Room, *ſolid*, and *impenetrable*, and capable of receiving different *Figures*; but how can this contribute any Thing towards making a Soul, or a *thinking* Being? One Part of Matter indeed, joined to another, will increaſe *Bulk*, and the Parts, differently ſituated, will produce a new *Figure*, becauſe *Bulk* and *Figure* are *originally* included in Matter; but for Matter to produce a *thinking* Mind, is no more poſſible, than 'tis for a *Mouſe* to write a Book of *Mathematicks*, or the Author of this Book to make an *Angel*.

NAY, there is ſuch an *Incompatibleneſs* between *Matter* and *Thought*, [x] that tho' we will not venture to ſay, that it is out of the Power of God to make Matter *think*, yet this we may affirm with Safety, that 'tis contrary to all our Conceptions, and to the common Ideas we have of the Nature of Things, that he ſhould do ſo. For ſuppoſe any Part of the human Body, the Brain of *Adam* for Inſtance, faſhioned out of the Earth, and to be made a *thinking* Subſtance by Almighty God; yet, upon God's giving the Command, the *Materiality* of it would be deſtroyed, and it immediately become a *Spirit*, in which Caſe, there would be a double Share of God's Omnipotence required, firſt to annihilate the Matter, and then to produce a Mind or Spirit in its Room; ſo that after all, it would not be the organized Matter, but the new-created Mind, that would be the *thinking* Subſtance. The Truth is, there is no imaginable Way (without adding a Soul to it) of making Matter think, but only God's immediate acting upon it, ſo as to become himſelf the real Cauſe of Thought, and other Operations in it: But then, this Suppoſition deſtroys the Notion of Good and Evil, makes Man unaccountable for all his Immorality, and fixes the Imputation of every Thing upon God. 'Tis God, that thinks in us wickedly; 'tis God, that commits the lewd Action; 'tis God, that falls into Error; 'tis God, that makes the wrong Choice; 'tis God, in ſhort, that does all thoſe enormous Crimes, for which Men ſuffer the Law, and die ignominiouſly: Which are Inferences to be deteſted, and full of horrid Blaſphemy. So impoſſible it is, in the Nature of Things, to make Matter and Motion the Parent of the Soul!

2. Whether our Souls were pre-exiſtent, *or no.*

THE next Queſtion is, [y] whether the Souls of Mankind (that of *Adam* included) were all created *at once*, in order to be united to certain Bodies, which ſhould be prepared afterwards for their Reception; or whether they are *ſucceſſively* created, as the Bodies, they are to *inform*, are made fit to receive them? Thoſe, that maintain Pre-exiſtence of Souls, pretend, in the firſt Place, "that they have the Current of "all Antiquity, both *Heathens* and *Chriſtians*, on their Side, and then argue; that "it is incongruous for God to be ſaid to have *finiſhed his Work* on the *ſixth*, and to "have *reſted from his Labour* on the *ſeventh* Day, when (in Reſpect of ſome of the "*nobleſt* Productions, and that in the moſt *numerous* Inſtances of it) it was but juſt "*begun*; that it was more ſuitable to his Wiſdom, to have exerted his Power all in "*one Act*, which would have anſwered the Purpoſe as well, than to be perpetually "*creating*, and infuſing new Souls, as Infants are begot all the World over; and "that our Saviour's not anſwering the Queſtion of the *Jews (whether the Man, "that was born blind, had himſelf ſinned, or his Parents)* when they are preſumed "to ſpeak the current Opinion at that Time, is a tacit Argument of his Approba-"tion of it: And therefore they infer, that the Souls of all Mankind were created "at once, [z] poſſibly in the Morning of the World, when *Adam*'s was made, and "in ſuch infinite *Myriads*, as ſhould be ſufficient to inform all the Bodies, that "might be born into the World, as long as the World ſhould endure."

THOSE, that hold the contrary Opinion, lay it down for a *Poſtulatum*, that Souls can only be ſuppoſed to be united to Bodies (eſpecially upon the preſent Stage of Life) by Way of *Puniſhment*. "[a] Now Puniſhment, *they ſay*, implies (in the very "Reaſon and Deſign of it) a *Conſciouſneſs* of the Crime, for which we are puniſhed: "whereas there does not, at any Time, appear the leaſt Apprehenſion in the Soul "of any Thing done by it in a former State; and yet, without ſome *Senſibility* of "the Crime, for which we ſuffer, the Juſtice of God, in our Sufferings, will appear "purely *vindictive*, and deſtitute of thoſe *ſalutary* Reaſons, for which they are ſent "upon us in this Life.".

THEY

[x] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. II. [y] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [z] *Moor*'s Divine Dialogues.
[a] *Fiddes*'s, ibid.

THEY argue farther, [b] that, properly ſpeaking, there is no Forgetfulneſs in a Soul, its Forgetfulneſs is only *accidental*, and occaſioned by the Impediment of Fleſh; and therefore, tho' the Generality of Men live contented under this Impediment, yet ſome there are, who endeavour to refine and ſpiritualize themſelves; and yet none of theſe can recover the leaſt Notice of what they were in their *prior* State. "We find not ourſelves, *ſay they*, ſo very forgetful in this Life: Some great "and momentous Paſſages will be ever ſtarting up before us, and making us "remember them, whether we will or no; and therefore it is very ſtrange, that no "*Tranſaction*, in our *antecedent* Life, no Senſe of the Place, and Manner wherein "we lived, nor any Remembrance of the Cauſe, for which we were ſent into theſe "Bodies, ſhould ever once come acroſs our Thoughts. A State of Pre-exiſtence "therefore with them is an idle *Dream*: Man is by Nature a compound Creature; "and as the Body cannot ſubſiſt without the Soul, ſo neither can the Soul be perfect "without the Body, which is one eſſential Part of the whole; and therefore they "conclude, that if the Soul *pre-exiſted*, Man muſt have been *originally* created in "a State of *Imperfection*, and after a Manner derogatory to the Action of an All-"wiſe God."

THIS is the Subſtance of their Arguments: [c] But our Saviour, having left the Queſtion *undetermined*, when he had a fair Opportunity of reſolving it, has left us likewiſe to judge of it, as a Point of *Speculation*, about which we may determine ourſelves ſafely, on either Side, that ſeems to carry the ſtronger Reaſons of human Probability.

3. *Whether* ex traduce *or no.*

THE other Queſtion is, whether our Souls come by immediate *Infuſion* from God, or by Way of *Traduction* from our Parents. Thoſe, that maintain the *latter* Opinion, are apt to argue, [d] that, as God inveſted all other Creatures with a Power of propagating their *Species* in its full Perfection; ſo it is preſumable, that he endowed Mankind with the ſame, otherwiſe that Bleſſing, given to our firſt Parents preſently after their Creation, [e] *to be fruitful, and multiply, and repleniſh the Earth*, was not given in the ſame full and extenſive Signification to them, as it was to *Brutes*, which is hard to imagine. Children, we ſee, *ſay they*, reſemble their Parents in the Diſpoſition of their Minds, as much as the outward Lineaments of their Bodies. A Proclivity to Wickedneſs, which ſome Children diſcover, cannot be ſuppoſed to proceed from God; and muſt therefore be *congenial* with the Soul, which was tainted, in its Generation, by the Depravity of its Parents: So that, when *Adam* is ſaid to [f] *beget his Son* Seth *in his own Likeneſs, and after his Image*, in the ſame Manner, that he himſelf is ſaid to be the *Image of God*, (which chiefly conſiſted in his Soul) it muſt be ſuppoſed, without ſtraining the Words, that he begot his Soul and Body both: For we cannot conceive it a Work ſo becoming the Majeſty and Purity of God, to be inceſſantly making Souls, and oftentimes obliged to infuſe them into Bodies, proceeding from ſuch foul and inceſtuous Mixtures, as his Nature abhors, and his Laws have ſeverely prohibited.

THOSE, that ſuſtain the other Side of the Queſtion, ſuppoſe, that all Mankind receive their Souls, in the ſame Manner that *Adam* did from God; becauſe they cannot conceive, how we can maintain their *Incorruption* and *Immortality*, upon any other *Hypotheſis*. If the Soul be propagated by Generation, *ſay they*, then does it proceed either from both the Parents jointly, or from the Father only; if from both the Parents jointly, then it is a Compound of both their Souls, and conſequently, liable to Corruption; if from the Father only, then was Chriſt, who had no Father upon Earth, deſtitute of an *human* Soul, and conſequently no true and perfect Man. And therefore to obviate theſe, and many more Abſurdities of the like Nature, they affirm, that God has declared himſelf to be the [g] *Father of Spirits* in a peculiar Manner; that all good Men, in all Ages, have lived with this Perſuaſion, [h] *that the Spirit of God made them, and the Breath of the Almighty gave them Life*; and died in this Belief, that [i] *when the Duſt returns to the Earth, as it was, the Spirit ſhall return unto God, who gave it*. Tho' therefore God has committed the Formation of our Bodies, in a great Meaſure, to the Agency of *ſecond Cauſes*, yet our Souls, *ſay they*, are Beings of ſuch Value in his Eſteem, that to himſelf he has reſerved the Production of them, and that we intrench very much upon his *Prerogative*, when we pretend to aſſume it ourſelves.

[b] *Young*'s Sermons. [c] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [d] Curcell. Inſtitutiones. [e] Gen. i. 28.
[f] Ibid. v. 3. [g] Numb. xvi. 22. [h] Job xxxiv. 14. [i] Eccleſ. xii. 7.

In ſhort, [k] the Notion of *propagating* human Souls by Way of *Traduction*, is ſo inconſiſtent with the *Simplicity* of immaterial Beings, or the *Senſibility* of any ſuch Power in us; is ſo injurious to God's watchful *Providence*, and ſo repugnant to the plain Senſe of his Word, beſides the bad Uſe that Men of profane Principles may make of it; that great Care ſhould be taken, how we give Countenance to ſuch Suggeſtions, as tend to invalidate the Power of God in any Inſtance, and to weaken the Sinews of Religion, by depreciating the Worth of our *immortal* Souls. ——But to return to our Hiſtorian.

The Formation of Eve.

It is not to be doubted, but that *Eve, the Mother of all Living*, was created by Almighty God, on the ſame Day with her Huſband; for ſo it is ſaid, that on the *ſixth* Day, [l] *Male and Female created he them:* The Hiſtorian therefore only *reaſſumes* the Argument, in the *ſecond Chapter*, to give us a more full and particular Account of the *Origin* of that illuſtrious Creature, which was briefly and compendiouſly delivered in the firſt. To this Purpoſe he informs us, how, *after the Lord God* had finiſhed his Work upon *Adam*, and made him complete in every Part, he [m] *cauſed a deep Sleep to fall upon him.* [n] The ancient, both *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* Writers do generally agree, that this *Sleep*, which *Adam* was caſt into, before God formed *Eve* out of him, was not only intended, as an *Expedient* for the Performance of the wonderful Operation in him without Senſe of Pain, but as an *Extacy* likewiſe, (for [o] ſo the Word is tranſlated by the *Septuagint*) wherein was repreſented to his Mind both what was done to him, and the Myſtery thereof; and whereby he was prepared for the Reception of that [p] Divine Oracle, which preſently, upon his awakening, he uttered; like that *deep Sleep*, which God ſent upon [q] *Abraham*, when, by the Spirit of Prophecy, he meant to acquaint him with thoſe Events, which were to happen to his Poſterity ſome Ages after.

However this be, the Hiſtorian continues to acquaint us, that, during this Sleep, [r] God *took a Rib* out of the Man's Side, and of that Rib *made a Woman.* But here a Queſtion or two will ariſe, why God ſhould make Choice of a *Rib* above all other Parts; how *Adam* could ſpare a Rib, and yet remain perfect; and what poſſible Proportion there could be between ſo ſmall a Portion of Matter and the Woman's Body?

Why ſhe was made of a Rib.

Now, in Anſwer to theſe Queſtions, [s] we need not, in the firſt Place, grant, that the *original* Word ſtrictly ſignifies a *Rib*; the *Septuagint* all along tranſlate it by the *Greek* Word πλεύρα, which we call a *Side*, and according to this Signification, all the Difficulty of the Thing vaniſhes, and the plain and eaſy Signification of the Paſſage will be this,——That God took ſome Part of *Adam*'s Body, about his Side, cloſed up the Orifice again, and out of this Subſtance formed *Eve:* And where, I pray, does all the *Oddneſs* of this Account lie? For if God deſigned any *myſtical* Meaning in the Tranſaction, this certainly was the propereſt Part for him to make Choice of. To have formed the Woman out of the *Head*, would have entitled her to a *Superiority*, that God did not intend for her: To have made her of an inferior and more diſhonourable Part, would not have agreed with that *Equality*, which ſhe was appointed to: And therefore he took her out of the Man's *Side*, to denote the Obligations of the ſtricteſt *Union* and *Society*; [t] to breed the greater Love between him and her, as Parts of the ſame *Whole*; and to recommend Marriage to all Mankind, as founded in Nature, and as the *Re-union* of Man and Woman. There was no Occaſion then for *Adam*'s loſing a *Rib*, according to this Acceptation: [u] But admitted it was a Rib that he loſt, why might not God ſupply him with another, or make [x] *the Fleſh, which he cloſed up in the Stead thereof*, ſoon grow into the *Solidity* of one? There's no diſputing what God can do; and therefore he that conſiders an Acorn, or a Muſtard-Seed, the one becoming a ſpacious Tree, and the other a large Plant, will ſoon find Reaſon to be convinced, that the Man's Rib, in the Hand of *Omnipotence*, was Matter enough for the Compoſition of the Woman's Body.

No Mention indeed is made (which ſome may make another Objection) of the *Inſpiration* of the Woman's *Soul*; [y] for the Hiſtorian only means here to repreſent what was peculiar in the Woman's Compoſition, *viz.* her Aſſumption from the Man's Side: What relates to the Creation of her Soul therefore muſt be preſumed to go before, and is indeed ſignified in the Preface God makes upon this intended Formation:

[k] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [l] Gen. i. 27. [m] Ibid. ii. 21. [n] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. [o] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [p] See Gen. ii. 23, 24. [q] Gen. xv. 12, &c. [r] Gen. ii. 21, 22. [s] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [t] *Patrick*, ibid. [u] Gen. ii. 21. [x] *Nicholls*, ibid. [y] *Patrick*, ibid.

Formation: [z] *It is not good that Man ſhould be alone: I will make him an Help* MEET *for him, i. e.* of the like *eſſential* Qualities with himſelf; (ſo the *original* Word means, and ſo the vulgar *Latin* has tranſlated it) for we cannot conceive, of what great Comfort this Woman would have been to *Adam*, had ſhe not been endowed with a *rational* Part, capable of converſing with him; had ſhe not had, I ſay, the ſame Underſtanding, and Will, and Affections, [a] though perhaps in a lower Degree, and with ſome Accommodation to the Weakneſs of her Sex, to recommend her Beauty, and to endear that *Softneſs*, wherein ſhe had certainly the *Pre-eminence*.

THUS were the firſt Man and Woman made in the full Perfection of their Nature, inveſted with Power and Dominion over all other Creatures, and placed in a *Paradiſe*, where the Ground was fruitful, and all its Fruits delicious; and where the Air and Seaſons of the Year were ſo ſerene and temperate, that they wanted nothing to defend them from the Injuries of the Weather. Here it was, that God deſigned that Man ſhould live an happy and delightful Life, until his *Tranſlation* ſhould enſue. Here it was, that God intended to raiſe up to himſelf another *Race*, to ſupply the Place of thoſe, that had revolted: And, to this Purpoſe, here it was, that God himſelf condeſcended to make the *Eſpouſals*, (if I may ſo ſay) and to join this Man and this Woman together in the State of Marriage. For when the ſacred Story tells us, that God *brought the Woman to him*, the Meaning is, not that he barely *conducted* her to the Place, where *Adam* was, but that he preſented her, in the Capacity of a *matrimonial* Father, and gave her to him to be his wedded Wife.

Hail wedded Love, myſterious Law, true Source
Of human Offſpring, ſole Propriety
In Paradiſe, of all Things common elſe!
By Thee adult'rous Luſt was driven from Men
Among the beaſtial Herds to range; by Thee
Founded in Reaſon, loyal, juſt, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the Charities
Of Father, Son, and Brother, firſt were known.
Perpetual Fountain of domeſtick Sweets!
Here Love his golden Shafts employs, here lights
His conſtant Lamp, and waves his purple Wings,
Reigns here, and revels.——

MILTON's *Paradiſe Loſt*, Book IV.

AND ſo I leave this happy Pair, to take a nearer Survey of the Perfections of their Nature.

[z] Gen. ii. 18.

[a] Our incomparable *Milton*, whom I take to be a good *Commentator* upon this Part of Scripture, in his *ſublime Poem* upon our firſt Parents, has given us a true State and Deſcription of *Eve*'s Perfections, both in Body and Mind, where he brings in *Adam* recounting to the Angel the *Superiority* of her Charms;

- - - - - - - - - - - - But here
Far otherwiſe, tranſported I behold,
Tranſported touch, her Paſſion firſt I felt
Commotion ſtrange, in all Enjoyments elſe
Superior, and unmov'd, here only weak
Againſt the Charm of Beauty's powerful Glance——
Tho' well I underſtand, in the prime End
Of Nature, her th' *Inferior*, in the Mind
And inward Faculties, which moſt excel;
In outward alſo her reſembling leſs
His Image, who made both, and leſs expreſſing
The Character of that Dominion giv'n
O'er other Creatures; yet when I approach
Her Lovelineſs, ſo abſolute ſhe ſeems,
And in herſelf compleat, ſo well to know
Her own, that what ſhe wills to do, or ſay,
Seems wiſeſt, virtuouſeſt, diſcreeteſt, beſt.
All higher Knowledge, in her Preſence, falls
Degraded; Wiſdom, in Diſcourſe with her,
Loſes diſcountenanc'd, and like Folly ſhews.
Authority and Reaſon on her wait,
As one intended firſt, but after made
Occaſionally; and, to conſummate all,
Greatneſs of Mind and Nobleneſs their Seat
Build in her loveliеſt, and create an Awe
About her, as a Guard Angelick plac'd.

Book VIII.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of the IMAGE *of* GOD *in* MAN.

'Tis hard to conceive what the Divine Image was.

WHAT the *Image* of God, impreſſed upon Man in the State of his *Integrity*, was, is as difficult a Matter for us, [b] who date our Ignorance from our firſt Being, and were all along bred up with the ſame Infirmities about us, wherewith we were born, to form any adequate Perception of, as it is for a *Peaſant*, bred up in the Obſcurities of a *Cottage*, to fancy in his Mind the unſeen Splendors of a *Court:* And therefore we have the leſs Reaſon to wonder, that we find ſo many learned Men running into ſuch different Opinions concerning it.

Different Opinions about it.

[c] *PHILO*, among the *Jews*, tells us, that the *Image of God* was only the *Idea* of human Nature in the Divine Underſtanding, by looking on which, he formed Man; juſt as an *Architect*, about to build an Houſe, firſt delineates the *Scheme* in his Mind, and then proceeds to erect the *Fabrick*. But this Opinion, how true ſoever, does not come up to the Point in Hand; for it makes no Diſtinction between Man and other Creatures, (ſince they were likewiſe made according to their *ideal Image* in the Divine *Intellect*) though it be manifeſtly the Intent of the Scripture-Account to give him a particular *Preference*.

[d] *ORIGEN*, among antient Chriſtians, will have it to be the Son of God, who is called [e] *the expreſs Image of the Father*; but there is no ſuch Reſtriction in the Words of *Moſes:* They are delivered in the *plural* Number, and therefore cannot, without Violence, be applied to one ſingle Perſon in the Godhead: And, among the *Moderns*, ſome have placed it in *Holineſs*, while others have thought it more properly ſeated in *Dominion*; but theſe are only ſingle *Lines*, and far from coming up to the whole *Portraiture*. The Divine Similitude, in ſhort, is a *complex* Thing, and made up of many Ingredients; and therefore (to give our Thoughts a Track in ſo ſpacious a Field) we may diſtinguiſh it into *natural* and *ſupernatural*; and, accordingly, ſhall firſt conſider the *ſupernatural* Gifts and Ornaments, and then thoſe *natural* Perfections and Accompliſhments, wherein this *Divine Image* in our firſt Parents may be ſaid to conſiſt.

Illuſtrated by a Compariſon.

[f] AN eloquent Father of the Church has ſet this whole Matter before us in a very apt *Similitude*, comparing this *animated* and *living* Effigies of the King of Kings, with the Image of the Emperor, ſo expreſſed by the Hand of the Artificer, either in *Sculpture* or *Painting*, as to repreſent the very Dreſs and Enſigns of the Royal Majeſty; ſuch as the *Purple Robe*, the *Scepter*, and the *Diadem*. For as the Emperor's Image does repreſent, not only his Countenance, and the Figure of his Body, but even his Dreſs likewiſe, his Ornaments, and Royal Enſigns; ſo Man does then properly repreſent in himſelf the Image and Similitude of God, when to the Accompliſhments of Nature (which cannot totally be extinguiſhed) the Ornaments of Grace and Virtue are likewiſe added; *when* [g] *Man's Nature* (as he expreſſes it) *is not cloathed in Purple, nor vaunts its Dignity by a Scepter or Diadem, (for the Archetype conſiſts not in ſuch Things as thoſe) but, inſtead of Purple, is cloathed with Virtue, which, of all others, is the moſt Royal Veſtment; inſtead of a Scepter, is ſupported by a bleſſed Immortality; and, inſtead of a Diadem, is adorned with a Crown of Righteouſneſs.*

It conſiſted, 1. In ſupernatural Gifts, as to his Soul.

THAT our firſt Parents, beſides the Seeds of *natural* Virtue and Religion ſown in their Minds, and beſides the *natural* Innocence and Rectitude, wherein they were created, were endowed with certain Gifts and Powers *ſupernatural*, infuſed into them by the Spirit of God, is manifeſt, not only from the Authority of [h] Chriſtian Writers, but from the Teſtimony of *Philo* the *Jew* likewiſe, who is very full of ſublime Notions concerning the *Divine Image*, and, [i] in one Place more eſpecially, expreſſes himſelf to this Purpoſe: *The Creator made not any Soul*, ſays he, while incloſed *in a Body, able of itſelf to ſee and know its Maker; but, conſidering how vaſtly advantageous ſuch Knowledge would be to Man, (for this is the utmoſt*

[b] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [c] De Mundi Opificio. [d] *Edwards*'s Survey of Religion, Vol. I. [e] Heb. i. 3. [f] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. [g] Οὐ πορφυρᾷ περικειμένη, οὐδὲ σκήπτρῳ ἢ διαδήματι τὴν ἀξίαν ἐπισημαίνουσα. Greg. Nyſſen. Lib. de Hom. Opificio, *Cap.* IV. [h] *Vid.* in Bull's *State of Man before the Fall*, a long Detail of Authorities, from the *primitive* Fathers, to this Purpoſe. [i] Ψυχὴν οὐδεμίαν τῷ σωματι ὁ ποιῶν ἐξεργάζετο ἱκανὴν ἐξ ἑαυτῆς τὸν ποιητὴν ἰδεῖν, &c. Lib. quod Det. Potiori inſid. ſoleat. *Page* 171.

utmoſt Bound of his Felicity) he inſpired into him, from above, ſomething of his own Divinity, which, being inviſible, impreſſed upon the inviſible Soul its own Characters; that ſo even this earthly Region might not be without ſome Creature made after the Image of God: Where he manifeſtly places the Image of God, (*i. e.* the Perfection of it) after which *Adam* was created, in thoſe *Divine Characters*, which were impreſſed upon the Soul in his Creation; or in that ſupernatural Gift and Faculty, whereby he was enabled to attain the Viſion of God: And this he aſſerts to be the *recondite* Senſe of *Moſes*'s Words, in the Hiſtory of Man's Creation.

Proved from Scripture.

AND indeed we need go no farther than this Hiſtory of *Moſes*, to prove the very Point, we are now upon: For, whereas it acquaints us, [k] that the firſt Man, in his State of Integrity, was able to ſuſtain the Approaches of the *Divine Preſence*, and converſe with his Maker in the ſame Language; 'tis reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that it was a particular Vouchſafement to him, to *confirm* his Mind, and *enlighten* his Underſtanding in this Manner; becauſe no Creature is fit to converſe with God, without *Divine* Illumination, nor is any Creature able to bear his *majeſtick* Appearance, that is not prepared for it by a *Divine* Power.

WHEREAS it tells us, that [l] *the Lord God formed every living Creature out of the Ground, and brought them unto* Adam, *to ſee what he would call them; and whatever he called them, that was the Name thereof*; it can hardly be ſuppoſed, conſidering the Circumſtances of the Thing, but that this was the Effect of ſomething more than *human Sagacity*. That, in an infinite *Variety* of Creatures, never before ſeen by *Adam*, he ſhould be able, on a ſudden, without Labour or *Premeditation*, to give Names to each of them, ſo adapted and fitted to their Natures, as that God himſelf ſhould approve the *Nomenclature*, is a Thing ſo aſtoniſhing, [m] that we may venture to ſay, no ſingle Man, among all the *Philoſophers* ſince the Fall; no *Plato*, no *Ariſtotle*, among the *Ancients*; no *Des Cartes* or *Gaſſendus*, among the *Moderns*; nay, no *Academy*, or *Royal Society* whatever, durſt have undertaken it.

WHEREAS it informs us, that *Adam* no ſooner ſaw his Wife brought unto him, [n] but he told exactly her *Original*, and gave her a Name *accordingly*, though he lay in the profoundeſt *Sleep* and Inſenſibility all the while, that God was performing the wonderful Operation of taking her out of his Side; this can be imputed to nothing, but either an immediate *Inſpiration*, or ſome *prophetick Viſion*, as we ſaid before, that was ſent upon him, while he ſlept. [o] From the *Conformity* of Parts, which he beheld in that *goodly* Creature, and her near Similitude to himſelf, he might have conjectured indeed, that God had now provided him the *meet Help*, which before he wanted; but 'tis ſcarce imaginable, how he could ſo punctually deſcribe her *Original* and Manner of Formation, and ſo ſurely *propheſy* what the general Event would be to his Poſterity, for the Sake of her Sex, *to leave Father and Mother, and cleave to their Wives*; otherwiſe than by ſome *divine Illumination*, "which enabled him, "(as [p] one expreſſes it) to view *Eſſences* in themſelves, and read *Forms* without the "Comment of their reſpective *Properties*: Which enabled him to ſee *Conſequents* "yet dormant in their *Principles*, and *Effects* yet unborn, and in the Womb of "their *Cauſes*: Which enabled him, in ſhort, to pierce almoſt into future *Contin-*"*gents*, and improved his *Conjectures* and Sentiments even to *Propheſy*, and the Cer-"tainties of *Prediction*."

And as to his Body.

THESE ſeem to be ſome of the *ſupernatural* Gifts, and what we may call the chief *Lines*, wherein the *Image* of God was ſo conſpicuous upon *Adam*'s Soul: And there was this ſupernatural in his Body likewiſe, that, whereas it was made of the *Duſt of the Earth*, and, in its Compoſition, conſequently corruptible; either, by a Power continually proceeding from God, [q] whereof the [r] *Tree of Life* was the Divine Sign and *Sacrament*, or by [s] the *inherent* Virtue of the Tree itſelf, perpetually repairing the Decays of Nature, it was to enjoy the Privilege of *Immortality*: Not ſuch an Immortality, as the glorified Bodies of Saints ſhall hereafter poſſeſs; for they ſhall be made wholly *impaſſible*, and ſet free from the Reach

[k] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. [l] Gen. ii. 19. [m] The Knowledge of *Adam* is highly extolled by the *Jewiſh* Doctors. Some of them have maintained, that he compoſed two *Books*, one concerning the *Creation*, and the other, about the *Nature of God*. Nay, ſome of them go farther, and advance ſuch fabulous Stories upon this Head, as are fit only to amuſe Children. They tell us, that *Adam*'s Knowledge was not only equal to that of *Solomon* and *Moſes*, but exceeded even that of the *Angels*; and for the Proof of this, they mention the Inſtance before us, —— that the Angels, having ſpoke contemptibly of Man, God made Anſwer, that the Creature, which they deſpiſed, was their Superior in Knowledge; and to convince them of this, he brought all the Animals to them, and bid them name them; which they being not able to do, he propoſed the Thing to *Adam*, and he did it preſently. *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [n] Gen. ii. 21. [o] *Bull*'s Sermons. [p] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [q] *Hopkins*'s Doctrine of the two Covenants. [r] Gen. ii. 9. [s] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. and *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I.

of outward Impreſſions, and the Diſcords of *elemental* Mutinies, that might impair their Vigour, or endanger their Diſſolution: But an Immortality by *Donation*, and the Privilege of an eſpecial Providence, which engaged itſelf to ſway and over-rule that natural Tendency which was in Man's Body to Corruption; and, notwithſtanding the *Contrarieties* and *Diſſenſions* of a *terreſtrial* Conſtitution, to continue him in *Life*, as long as he ſhould continue himſelf in his *Obedience*.

2. In the Rectitude of the natural Faculties of the Soul.

ANOTHER chief Part of the Divine *Image* and Similitude in our firſt Parents, was, an univerſal *Rectitude* in all the Faculties belonging to the Soul. Now, the two great Faculties, or rather *eſſential Acts* of an human Soul, are the *Underſtanding* and *Will*, [t] which, though for the clearer Conception of them, we may conſider *ſeparate*, are, in their Operations, ſo blended and united together, that we cannot properly think them *diſtinct* Faculties. 'Tis the ſame individual Mind, that ſees, and perceives, as well as chuſes, or rejects the ſeveral Objects, that are preſented to it: When it does the *Former*, we call it the *Underſtanding*, and when the *Latter*, the *Will*; ſo that, they are both *radically* and *inſeparably* the ſame, and differ only in the *Manner* of our conceiving them. Nay, the cleareſt and only diſtinct Apprehenſion we are able to form of them, even when we come to conſider them ſeparately, is only this, that the *Underſtanding* is neceſſarily determined in the Judgment it makes, the *Will* is free in the Acts of its Choice or Refuſal; that the *Underſtanding* is chiefly converſant about *intelligible*, the *Will* about *eligible* Objects; and that the one has *Truth*, the other *Goodneſs* in its View and Purſuit.

THERE are, beſides theſe, belonging to the Soul of Man, certain Paſſions and Affections, which have chiefly their Reſidence in the *ſenſitive* Appetite; and however, in this lapſed Condition of our Nature, they may many Times *mutiny* and *rebel*, yet, when kept in due Temper and *Subordination*, are excellent *Handmaids* to the Soul. [u] The *Stoicks* indeed looked upon them all as ſinful *Defects*, and Deviations from right Reaſon; but 'tis ſufficient for us, that our bleſſed Saviour, who took upon him all our *natural*, but none of our *ſinful* Infirmities, was known to have them; and that our firſt *Progenitor*, in the State of his greateſt Perfection, was not devoid of them. Let us then ſee, how far we may ſuppoſe, that the Image of God, after which the firſt Man was made, might be impreſſed upon each of theſe.

[x] HIS *Soul* in itſelf was a rational Subſtance, immaterial and immortal, and therefore a proper Repreſentation of that ſupreme Spirit, whoſe *Wiſdom* is *infinite*, and *Eſſence eternal*.

[y] HIS *Underſtanding* was, as it were, the upper *Region* of his Soul; lofty and ſerene, ſeated above all ſordid *Affections*, and free from the Vapours, and Diſturbances of inferior *Paſſions*. Its *Perceptions* were quick and lively, its *Reaſonings* true, and its Determinations juſt. A *deluded* Fancy was not then capable of impoſing upon it, nor a *fawning* Appetite of deluding it to pronounce a falſe or diſhoneſt Sentence. In its *Direction* of the inferior Faculties, it conveyed its Suggeſtions with Clearneſs, and enjoined them with Power; and though its Command over them was but *ſuaſive*, yet it had the ſame Force and Efficacy, as if it had been *deſpotical*.

HIS *Will* was then very ductile and pliant to the Motions of right Reaſon. It purſued the Directions that were given it, and *attended* upon the Underſtanding, as a *Favourite* does upon his Prince, where the Service is both *Privilege* and *Preferment*; and while it obeyed the Underſtanding, it commanded the other Faculties, that were beneath it, gave Laws to the *Affections*, and reſtrained the *Paſſions* from licentious Sallies.

HIS *Paſſions* were then indeed all *ſubordinate* to his *Will* and *Intellect*, and acted within the Compaſs of their proper Objects. His *Love* was centered upon God, and flamed up to Heaven in direct Fervours of Devotion: His *Hatred* (if Hatred may be ſuppoſed in a State of Innocence) was fixed only upon that, which his Poſterity only love, *Sin:* His *Joy* was then the Reſult of a *real* Good, ſuitably applied, and *filled* his Soul, as God does the Univerſe, *ſilently*, and without Noiſe: His *Sorrow* (if any ſuppoſed Diſaſter could have occaſioned Sorrow) muſt have moved according to the ſevere Allowances of *Prudence*, been as *ſilent* as Thought, and all confined within the Cloſet of the Breaſt: His *Hope* was fed with the Expectation of a better *Paradiſe*, and a nearer Admiſſion to the Divine

[t] *Locke*, upon Human Underſtanding, and *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [u] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[x] *Edwards*'s Survey. [y] *South*'s Sermons, ibid.

Preſence; and (to name no more) his *Fear*, which was then a *Guard*, and not a *Torment* to his Mind, was fixed upon him, who is only to be feared, *God*; but in ſuch a *filial* Manner, as to become an *Awe*, without *Amazement*; and a *Dread*, without *Diſtraction*.

IT muſt be acknowledged indeed, that the Scriptures do not expreſsly attribute all theſe Perfections to *Adam* in his firſt Eſtate; but ſince the oppoſite Weakneſſes now infeſt the Nature of Man *fallen*, we muſt conclude, (if we will be true to the Rule of Contraries) that theſe and ſuch like Excellencies were the Endowments of Man *innocent*: And if ſo, then is there another Perfection ariſing from this *Harmony*, and due Compoſure of the Faculties, which we may call the Crown and Conſummation of all, and that is *a good Conſcience*. For as, in the Body, when the *vital* and principal Parts do their *Office*, and all the ſmaller *Veſſels* act orderly, there ariſes a ſweet Enjoyment upon the *whole*, which we call *Health*; ſo in the Soul, when the ſupreme Faculties of the *Will* and Underſtanding move regularly, and the inferior *Paſſions* and *Affections* liſten to their Dictates, and follow their Injunctions, there ariſes a *Serenity*, and Complacency upon the whole Soul, infinitely beyond all the Pleaſures of *Senſuality*, that, like a *ſpicy Field*, refreſhes it upon every Reflection, and fills it with a joyful *Confidence towards God*.

THESE are ſome of the *natural Lines*, as we have diſtinguiſhed them, that the Finger of God *portrayed* upon the Soul of Man; and, ſo far as a *ſpiritual* Subſtance may be reſembled by a *corporeal*, he was not wanting to his Body likewiſe. [z] The Contrivance of its Parts was with ſuch Proportion and Exactneſs, as moſt conduced to *Comelineſs* and Service: His Stature was erect and raiſed, becoming the Lord of the Creatures, and an Obſerver of the Heavens: A [a] Divine Beauty and Majeſty were ſhed upon it; and this was no vaniſhing Ray, ſoon eclipſed by Sickneſs, or extinguiſhed by Death, but ſhined in the Countenance without Declination. [b] For *Adam* knew no Diſeaſe, ſo long as he refrained from the forbidden Fruit: Nature was his *Phyſician*; and Innocence and Abſtinence would have kept him healthful to Immortality. And from this Perfection of Man's Body, eſpecially that *Port* and *Majeſty* that appeared in his Looks and Aſpect, there aroſe, in ſome Meaſure, another *Lineament* of the Divine Image, *viz.* [c] that *Dominion* and *Sovereignty*, wherewith God inveſted him above all other Creatures: For there is a certain *terrifick* Character (as [d] one calls it) impreſſed on Man by the Creator, which, aſſiſted by that *Inſtinct* of Dread, which he hath equally implanted in their Natures, commands their Homage and Obeiſance, inſomuch that it muſt be Hunger, or Compulſion, or ſome violent Exaſperation or other, that makes them, at any Time, rebel againſt their Maker's *Vicegerent* here below. *And Body.*

THIS is the beſt Copy of the Divine Image that we can draw: Only it may not be amiſs to add, [e] that the *Holineſs* of Man was a Reſemblance of the Divine *Purity*, and his *Happineſs* a Repreſentation of the Divine *Felicity*. And now (to look over it again, and recount the ſeveral Lines of it) what was *ſupernatural* in it, was a *Mind*, fortified to bear the *Divine* Preſence, qualified for the *Divine* Converſe, fully illuminated by the *Divine* Spirit; and a *Body*, that, contrary to its *natural* Compoſition, was indulged the Privilege of *Immortality*. What was *natural* to it, was an univerſal Harmony in all its Faculties; an *Underſtanding* fraught with all Manner of Knowledge; a *Will* ſubmitted to the Divine Pleaſure; *Affections* placed upon their proper Objects; *Paſſions* calm and eaſy; a *Conſcience* ſerene, reſplendent Holineſs, and a *Body* adorned with ſo much Majeſty and Glory, as to challenge the Rule and Juriſdiction of this inferior World. *A Recapitulation of the* Divine *Image.*

IF it be demanded, how much of this Image is defaced; [f] the Anſwer is, that, whatever was *ſupernatural*, and adventitious to Man by the Benignity of Almighty God, as it depended upon the Condition of his Obedience to the Divine Command,

[z] *Bates*'s Harmony of the Divine Attributes. [a] The Signification of the *Hebrew* Word *Adam* is not only *rubmit*, he was red, or ruddy; but means likewiſe as much as *ſplenduit*, he was bright and beautiful. That it bears this Senſe may be gathered from the Word *Adamdameth*, Lev. xiii. 19. where it muſt be rendered *ſhining* or *gliſtering*, or elſe *white* and *ruddy*. That *Adam* ſometimes means the ſame, as *formoſus erat*, is plain from the Word *Admoni*, (which comes from *Adam*) and when applied to *David* (as it is 1 *Sam.* xvi. 12.) muſt mean *beautiful*, as explained in the following Words: And in like Manner *Edom* (which is a Word of the ſame Extraction) muſt be underſtood, *Cant.* v. 10. where the Spouſe ſays of her Beloved, that he is *ruddy*, viz. *comely*, and of a lovely Aſpect. *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I.

'Tis hardly worth mentioning what the *Talmudick* Doctors tell us of the Beauty and Elegance, and vaſt Proportions of *Adam*'s Body, ſince they ſtick not to ſay, that he was ſo exceſſively tall, that, ſtanding on the Earth, he could touch the Heavens with his Hand, and that, when he was driven out of Paradiſe, (tho' there was an Ocean, that parted it from the reſt of the World) yet he waded thro' it. *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [b] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [c] Gen. i. 26. [d] Cornelius Agrippa, de Occult. Philoſoph. [e] *Bates*'s Harmony. [f] *Hale*'s Origination.

mand, upon the Breach of that Command, was entirely loſt: What was *perfective* of his Nature, ſuch as the Excellency of his Knowledge, the Subordination of his Faculties, the Tranquillity of his Mind, and full Dominion over other Creatures, was ſadly impaired; but what was *eſſential* to his Nature, the Immortality of his Soul, the Faculties of Intellection and Will, and the natural Beauty and Uſefulneſs of his Body, do ſtill remain, notwithſtanding the terrible Concuſſion of his Soul.

SECT. III.

Of the End of MAN'S CREATION.

WHAT we have ſaid in the foregoing Chapter, of the *Powers* and *Faculties* of human Nature in general (for what was proper and peculiar to *Adam* comes not now under our Conſideration) may be of ſome Uſe, to give us a *rational* Idea of the *End* and *Purpoſe*, for which God made Man at firſt.

1. *The End of Men to know God.*

IF we reflect, never ſo little, upon the Make and Conſtitution of our Souls, we cannot but perceive, that there is a Faculty in them, which *thinks*, [g] and has not only ſimple *Apprehenſions* of Things, but knows how to connect theſe Apprehenſions into *Propoſitions*, and to draw theſe Propoſitions into rational *Concluſions*. We perceive farther, that this Faculty of Thinking does not ariſe from any Texture of our Bodies, or any *ſenſitive* Things, that are without us; becauſe it takes into it Things, that have no *Affinity* to Matter or Senſe: It *judges* of the Truth or Falſehood of a Propoſition, and ſees whether a Concluſion ariſes from the Premiſes or no: It *conceives* the *abſtracted* Notions of Things, ſuch as a pure Point, Equality and Proportion, Symmetry and Aſymmetry of *Magnitudes*, the Riſe and Propagation of *Dimenſions*, and a thouſand other Notions of the like Nature, that never were in Matter, and conſequently, could never be extracted out of it: Nay, it *corrects* the Errors of our *Imagination*, and demonſtrates Things to be vaſtly different from what our *Senſes* apprehend, or report them; proves, for Inſtance, that the Stars are huge luminous Bodies, tho' they only appear to be ſo many lighted *Candles*, and the Sun ſome thouſand Times larger than the Earth, when to the Eye and Imagination it appears no bigger than a *Buſhel*.

IN this Faculty of Thinking, we may obſerve farther, that there is a ſtrong *Thirſt* and *Deſire* of Knowledge; ſo ſtrong a Deſire, that ſome have bid Adieu to the World, and all the pleaſing Gratifications thereof, to devote their Lives to the Study and Search of *Truth*; and ſo great a *Pleaſure*, that the Succeſſion of Time has been forgot in the Raptures of Contemplation, and an εὕρηκα been thought a ſufficient Compenſation for never ſo many early Riſings and Night-Watchings. We may obſerve farther of this Faculty, [h] that the more Truth and Reality there is in any *knowable* Object, and the farther it is removed from *Non-entity*, the more Worth and Sublimity it has in it; and the farther it tranſcends *ſenſitive* Perception, the greater Joy and Satisfaction it gives the inquiſitive Mind, when once it has attained the Knowledge of it.

NOW if there be ſuch a *Faculty* in us, that can raiſe its Thoughts above the *Sphere* of our Senſes, ſo eager of Knowledge, and ſo infinitely delighted with the Acquiſition of it; we cannot but ſuppoſe, that God has provided every Man with *Objects* ſuitable to this Faculty. And, accordingly, if he opens his Eyes, [i] the ſtupendous Fabrick of Heaven and Earth preſents itſelf to his View; and in it, the moſt expreſs and clear Characters of that glorious and infinite Power, that produced it. [k] He ſees the Earth ſtocked with every living Thing, and Plants in Abundance, for the Service of Life; he ſees the Heavens, beautiful with innumerable Stars of vaſt Bulk and Purity; he ſees thoſe glorious Luminaries the Sun and Moon; he ſees thoſe celeſtial Bodies, how they are regular and perpetual in their Motion, unchangeable in their Natures, and of wonderful Influence upon the World; and tho' himſelf may be ſaid to be an *Abridgement* of it, yet he plainly perceives that it is beyond his Power to make the ſmalleſt Inſect; and therefore he cannot but conclude, that there is ſomething infinitely more powerful and noble, than himſelf, which firſt gave Being to ſo many vaſt and beautiful Creatures. Thus *the inviſible Things*

[g] *Scott*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [h] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [i] *Bates*'s Harmony. [k] Eſſays, concerning Natural and Revealed Religion.

Things of God are known by the Things that are ſeen [l], and in the Contemplation of his Creatures, we aſcend the Chain of Cauſes, until we come to that laſt *Link*, which, as the Poets elegantly feign, was faſtened to the Throne of God, and there we find an *Object* to fill all our *Capacities*, and entertain our moſt eager *Meditations*, as long as Eternity laſts. Thus by a due Conſideration of the Faculty of Man's Underſtanding, we may perceive that one chief *End* of his Creation was to *know* God; in the *Glaſs* of his Creatures, and in the *Volume* of his Will, to ſee and admire his Power, and Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, and Preſence in every Thing; to conſider his Unity, his Eternity, his Immenſity, his Providence, his Juſtice, his Mercy, and thence to form great and noble Notions of his eternal *Power* and *Godhead*, ſuch as may awaken his Fear and Reverence, encourage his Dependency, and be the eternal Subject of his Praiſe.

2. *To delight in him, and ſerve him.*

IF we reflect again upon the Conſtitution of our Souls, we cannot but obſerve, that there is a farther Faculty in them, which *wills*, or has a [m] Liberty of *Choice* or *Refuſal*, according as Objects are repreſented to the Mind, under the Appearance of *Good* or *Evil*; and that, upon the Exerciſe of this Faculty, the *Morality* of our Actions, the Reaſons of Reward or Puniſhment, and whatever is *blameable* or *praiſe-worthy* in us, intirely is ſuſpended. We may perceive farther, [n] that there is in this Faculty a natural Inclination to nothing, but what is *good*, either in Reality or Appearance; for tho' Paſſions and Affections may, many Times, blind the *Underſtanding*, and, by that Means, captivate the *Will*; yet this is an Argument of its great Propenſity to *Good*, that the Things, which are *really* bad and poiſonous, are never embraced or ſought for, until they are gilded over with a ſpecious Semblance of the contrary Quality. Once more, we may obſerve of this Faculty, that it is *influenced* by Objects, in Proportion to their *Eligibility:* Where Things are of an *ambiguous* Nature, it heſitates long, before it makes its Choice; but where they are found to be univerſally and completely *good*, it comes in with a full Tide of its Approbation. It leaves *leſs* for *more* worthy Objects, at leaſt Objects, that are ſo repreſented to the Imagination; [o] and this perhaps may be the Reaſon, why our Minds are ſo *fickle* in their *Options*, and our Deſires always reaching out after new Pleaſures, and purſuing new Poſſeſſions.

NOW if there be ſuch a Faculty in us, as has the *Liberty* of Choice; as chuſes nothing but what ſeems *good*, and purſues its Choice, in Proportion to its *Worth*; there is no Doubt to be made, but that God has provided us with an Object anſwerable to it. [p] *Worldly* Objects, we ſee every where indeed ſurrounding us, and their Power of pleaſing is but too manifeſt from the ſtrange Aſcendant they have upon our Affections: But ſtill we cannot but perceive, as oft as we conſider their empty and unſatisfying Nature, their offenſive Mixtures, and neceſſary Decays, that theſe are not the proper Objects of our Choice; and therefore God, by the Mouth of his *Pſalmiſt*, has been pleaſed to direct us to another: [q] *Delight thou in the Lord, and he will give thee thine Heart's Deſire.* And indeed where can we place our Delight ſo ſuitably as on him, that is the moſt lovely and amiable of all Beings; [r] that is poſſeſſed of all imaginable Beauties and Perfections; perfect Wiſdom, and endearing Goodneſs; tender Mercy, and unerring Juſtice; and has moreover done every Thing for us, that can engage a reaſonable Choice; made us Lords of this inferior World; provided for our Bodies all Kinds of Enjoyment; ſtamped his Divine Image upon our Souls; prepared for us an immortal Heaven; and all this, to engage us to ſerve him with *Willingneſs*, and delight in him with *Chearfulneſs*, not only as our chiefeſt *Good*, but as our beſt *Benefactor*; which is another End of Man's Creation?

3. *To be kind and beneficent to one another.*

IF we look upon ourſelves, we ſhall ſoon perceive, that, of all ſublunary Beings, Man is the moſt adapted to Society; that he has the Seeds of Juſtice, and Kindneſs, and Benignity (which are the Sinews of Concord) born with him, and implanted in his Breaſt; that he has the Gift of *Speech*, whereby he can expreſs his Thoughts, impart his Mirth, his Sorrows, his Secrets; communicate his Counſels, and participate in Compacts, beneficial to himſelf and his Fellow-Creatures. [s] We may obſerve farther, that there is in Man a Fund of Induſtry, and a certain happy Ingenuity in inventing *Arts* and *Sciences*, whether *mechanical* or *liberal*, ſuch as the Arts of Government, *Political*, *Civil*, and *Oeconomical*; the Arts of Huſbandry, and Improvements of Nature for Food and Raiment; the Arts of *Geo-*

[l] *Hale*'s Origination. [m] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity. [n] *Hale*, ibid. [o] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. I.
[p] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [q] Pſal. xxxvii. 4. [r] *Scott*, ibid. [s] *Hale*, ibid.

metry, *Arithmetick*, and artificial Meaſuring of Time; the Arts of *Aſtronomy*, *Navigation*, *Printing*, *Painting*, and the like; which have a mighty Tendency to the Delight and Benefit of Mankind: And therefore we need not queſtion, but that the wiſe God, by putting theſe *Singularities* in our Nature, intended (as another End of our Creation) that we ſhould not only live happily ourſelves, and ſpend our Time in beneficial Occupations, or agreeable Amuſements, but be likewiſe mutually aſſiſtant to each other, Inſtruments for the Good of human Society; and (according to Scripture Stile) [t] *all of one Mind, having Compaſſion one for another*; ſhould *love as Brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering Evil for Evil, nor Railing for Railing, but contrariwiſe Bleſſing, knowing that we are thereunto called, that we ſhould inherit a Bleſſing*.

4. To procreate, and take Care of their Species.

IF we look into the *rational* World in this good Order and Diſpoſition, where Peace and Unity reign, and the Endearments of Love and good Offices interfere between Man and Man; we ſhall ſoon be led to think, that the Earth is no *incommodious* Habitation, and was *primarily* deſigned by God for an happy *Paſſage* (if we will make it ſo) to a better Place reſerved for us in the higheſt Heavens: Conſequently, that our Buſineſs, in this ſhort Settlement here, is not only to *propagate* our Kind, and continue a Succeſſion of rational Creatures in the World until it terminates; but to take Care likewiſe, that whatever *Off-ſpring* deſcends from us, may live to the *Glory* of God, and the *Good* of the Community, wherein they are placed. The poor Brutes, in the beſt Manner they are able, take Care of their Young. They feed them, and attend them, and, till they are able to ſupport themſelves, never leave them, nor forſake them: And therefore, not only *worſe than Infidels*, but even worſe than the Beaſts that periſh, muſt that Parent be, who is forward enough to *beget* Children, but makes it no Part of his Concern to *provide* for them: Whereas his incumbent Duty is, not only to provide for their bodily Suſtenance, (which many fond Parents too prodigally do) but to provide likewiſe for the wholeſome *Nurture* and Well-being of their Souls, and, in the Language of the *wiſe King*, to [u] *train them up in the Way, wherein they ſhould go, that, when they are old, they may not depart from it*. For the proper Intent of our Creation, was not to beget ſuch Children, as might become *Firebrands* in Hell; but ſuch as, in their proper Spheres, might ſhine *like Stars*, and be beneficial to Mankind, while they continued here; and, upon their Removal, be received into *the Aſſembly of the Firſt-born*, and find a joyful Inheritance *with the Saints in Light*.

5. To rule the animal *and* vegetable *World.*

IF we look into the World of Animals, we may perceive a manifeſt Difference in their Make and Diſpoſition; ſome, that we call *Beaſts of Prey*, fierce and ſtrong, and ungovernable; others, that we call *Domeſtick Animals*, tame, and innocent, and ſo very ſerviceable to us, upon many Occaſions, as to deſerve our Favour and Protection. [x] If we look into the *vegetable* Kingdom, we ſhall find Plants and Herbs, ſome more tender and delicate, and ſuch as require perpetual Care and Cultivation; others more hardy and prolific, and ſuch as, without Correction and Reſtraint, would over-run the Earth, and make it a wild Wilderneſs. In Relation therefore to this inferior World of Brutes and Vegetables, Providence intended (as another End of Man's Creation) that he ſhould be his *Vicegerent* here on Earth, his *Steward*, or his *Farmer*, (if I may ſo ſay) to check the Cruelties of the *fiercer*, and to defend the Weakneſs of the *uſeful* Animals; to preſerve the Species of the *tender*, and reſtrain the Redundancy of *unprofitable* Vegetables; and by that Means continue the Face of the Earth in its Beauty and Fruitfulneſs, that both Cattle may increaſe for the Uſe of Men, and [y] *the Vallies ſtand ſo thick with Corn, that they may rejoice and ſing*.

6. To offer up their Praiſes to God.

IF we take a general View of the World, we ſhall ſee every Thing ſtampt with the Divine *Signature* of Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, and Power; not a Blade of Graſs in the Field, nor a Tree in the Foreſt, nor an Inſect on the Mole-hill, but what bears the Inſcription of the great and glorious God; and yet none of theſe can glorify their Maker: They know not their Original, neither are they ſenſible of their Excellence. It ſeems reaſonable to ſuppoſe therefore, that God has placed Man in this *goodly Temple* here below, to be (as it were) the common *High-Prieſt* of this inanimate and irrational World, to offer up the *Praiſes* and Acclamations of his Creatures to the *Throne* of Majeſty, and to perform thoſe *Offices* for them, which *articulately* and *rationally* they cannot do for themſelves. The *Pſalmiſt* indeed calls upon them all to celebrate the Glory of God: [z] *Praiſe him Sun and Moon,*

[t] 1 Pet. iii. 8, 9. [u] Prov. xxii. 6. [x] *Hale's* Origination of Mankind. [y] Pſal. lxv. 13.
[z] Ibid. cxlviii. 3, *&c.*

Moon, praiſe him all ye Stars of Light; but it is not conceivable in what Senſe they can do it, except it be by exhibiting proper Matter for us to praiſe God for them; or, in what Manner we can be qualified to do this Office, unleſs we make it ſome Part of our Study to contemplate their Natures; (which may be another *ſubordinate* End of Man) that, by conſidering their Order, and Uſefulneſs, and *vaſt Extent*, in Compariſon of our *Smallneſs*, we may, with the ſame pious Author upon every Remembrance, be prompted to cry out, [a] *When I conſider the Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers, the Moon, and the Stars, which thou haſt ordained, what is Man, that thou art ſo mindful of him?* &c.

ONCE more, if we look into the World, we ſhall perceive, that God's Goodneſs and Beneficence is *over all his Works*; that he hath made every Thing happy according to its Nature, and given it a *Fruition* proportionate to its Capacity. Since therefore he has inveſted Mankind with ſuch Powers and Faculties, as are not allied to *ſenſual* Enjoyments, 'tis reaſonable to think, that he has provided a ſuitable Fruition for them, both in this Life, and that which is to come. [b] *In this Life*, the Knowledge of him and his Works, the Senſe of his Favour and Protection, a Dependence on his Providence, a Dominion over their Luſts and Paſſions, a Reſignation of their *Wills*, and a Calmneſs and Serenity of Conſcience, whereof the wiſe Heathens made great Eſteem: And *in that which is to come*, an immutable State of everlaſting Happineſs, in the beatifick Viſion of God, and the Fruition of as much of his Goodneſs and Beneficence, as a glorified Soul can contain. *7. To enjoy God both here and hereafter.*

[c] TO conclude therefore, ſince God, of his infinite Wiſdom, has fitted Man for a double End, both to *glorify* him, and *enjoy* him; he has, in order to this, given him a *double Station*, and annexed to each Station a *proper Fruition*. In the Station of this Life, he has furniſhed him with all Conveniencies ſuitable to it; with the Comforts of human Society, the Uſe and Dominion of his Creatures, the admirable Faculties of his Mind, the Books and Inſtructions of his Will and Word, the goodly Works of Creation and Providence, the Tenders of his Grace, the Influxes of his Love, and the Hopes and Anticipations of eternal Happineſs. But all theſe (as he gives us to know) are but ſo many Bounties to make our Paſſage thro' this Life more eaſy to ourſelves, and more ſerviceable to our Lord and Maſter. Our *ſecond* and better Station is beyond the Grave, the Country of our Reſt and Happineſs, our *Home*, and the *End* of our Being; where we ſhall behold the Glory of the glorious God, and enjoy that Bleſſedneſs, *which Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive.* [d] *Thy Hands have made me, and faſhioned me; O Lord, give me Underſtanding, that, by keeping thy Commandments,* I may attain this End. *Amen.*

[a] Pſal. viii. 3, 4. [b] *Hale*'s Origination of Mankind. [c] *Hale*, ibid. [d] Pſal. cxix. 73.

CHAP. VI.

Of DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

AFTER the Work of the Creation, the *Providence* of God immediately takes Place; for, as ſoon as Creatures are made, they want the Divine Power to ſupport them: No Point of Time can be imagined, wherein they can ſubſiſt without God's *Interpoſition*; and therefore the *Schoolmen* have not improperly called the *Conſervation* of the World a *continued Creation*.

IN the ſtrict and literal Senſe of the Word, and [a] as it is expreſſed in the three learned Languages, *Providence* ſignifies no more, than God's *Foreſight* and Precognition of all Events. The Whole is therefore denominated by a Part; for, in a more general and extended Signification, [b] it denotes "that Care, which God has over "all Things in the World, to preſerve the Being he has given them, and to direct "their *Providence, what.*

[a] Heb. *Haſhgachah*, from *Shagach, prævidit.* Gr. Πρόνοια, from Προνοεῖν, *ante mentem percipere.* Lat. *Providentia.*
[b] *Martin*'s Natural Religion.

" their Motions and Actions to the Ends, that he has propoſed; ſo that nothing " exiſts in the World without his Cognizance, nothing is done without his Concur- " rence, nor can any Thing happen without his Determination."

THE Providence of God therefore, according to this Notion, may not unfitly be reſolved into theſe five Acts. 1. His Knowledge, and Inſpection of all Things. 2. His Preſervation, and Proviſion for all Things. 3. His Concurrence, and Co-operation with all Things. 4. His Rule and Government of all Cauſes. And, 5. His Direction and Appointment of all Events: To each of which we ſhall ſay ſomething *ſeverally*, the better to explain wherein this Work of the *Almighty* does conſiſt; and then proceed to the *Proofs* and *Properties* of it.

The Parts of Providence, 1. Inſpection.

ONE Part of the *Providence* of God conſiſts in his *Knowledge* and *Inſpection* of all Things, without which it would be but badly qualified for the Adminiſtration of the Affairs of the World. For if there is any Thing, whereof we can ſuppoſe the Divine Nature ignorant, or any Thing, that is hid and concealed from its Intuition; the Ignorance of that very Thing may be enough to occaſion infinite Diſorders and Confuſion in the World: And therefore, to obviate all ſuch Surmiſes, the Scriptures aſſure us, [c] that *the Eyes of the Lord are in every Place*, [d] that *they run to and fro throughout the whole Earth*; and [e] that *all Things are open and naked to the* Sight *of him, with whom we have to do:* And to ſatisfy us farther, how ſuch an univerſal *Inſpection* is poſſible, and even neceſſary in God, they inſtruct us, that his Preſence is in every Place, and his Divine Subſtance permeates all Things, whereof the Royal *Pſalmiſt* makes this liberal Confeſſion: *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me, and known me; thou knoweſt my Down-ſitting, and my Up-riſing, and art acquainted with all my Ways; not a Thought* in my Heart, *but thou underſtandeſt it afar off*; not *a Word in my Tongue*, but *thou knoweſt it altogether: Thou haſt beſet me behind and before, and laid thine Hand upon me. Whither then ſhall I go from thy Spirit? And whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence? For thou haſt poſſeſſed my Reins, and covered me in my Mother's Womb.* So impoſſible it is, that an *omnipreſent* Mind ſhould be ignorant of any Thing, and that the Maker of the World ſhould not be preſent with all his Creatures; or that being preſent, and ſeeing all their Actions, he ſhould be an idle and unconcerned Spectator.

How effected.

THOSE indeed that deny a Providence, will not allow, that God ſees and takes Notice of what is done here below. [f] The *Epicureans*, in Compliment to the Superſtition of the World, more than any real Perſuaſion of their own, acknowledged a *Deity*, nay, a Multitude of Deities, ſuch as they were; but they never allowed them to know any Thing of human Affairs, which would have been injurious (as they imagined) to their profound Eaſe and Tranquillity; and therefore kept them at a Diſtance, with their Arms folded up in Heaven, and thereby ſecured themſelves from any fearful Apprehenſions of them. And, in like Manner, wicked Men, in all Ages, as the Pſalmiſt repreſents them, [g] *have ſaid in their Hearts, the Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of* Jacob *regard:* [h] *He hath forgotten; he hideth his Face*; for [i] *how ſhall he perceive? Is there any Knowledge in the Moſt High?* And thereupon [k] *they encourage themſelves in Miſchief, and commune among themſelves, how they may lay Snares:* But to this he gives a ſevere Reproof, and ſhews the Fallacy of ſuch Suggeſtions: [l] *Underſtand, ye Brutiſh among the People, and ye Fools, when will ye be wiſe? He that planted the Ear, ſhall he not hear? He that formed the Eye, ſhall he not ſee? Or he that teacheth Man Knowledge, ſhall not he underſtand?* For if we have theſe Faculties, and can make uſe of them; 'tis not to be ſuppoſed, but that God, who gave us them, has ſomething in his own Nature infinitely ſuperior, that anſwers the Uſe of them. To ſpeak properly indeed, [m] 'tis neither our *Ear* that hears, nor our *Eye* that ſees, but 'tis our Spirit that hears and ſees thro' theſe, as its proper Inſtruments; and though our Spirits are limited to the Uſe and Aſſiſtance of ſuch Inſtruments; yet we muſt not therefore imagine, that the Spirits of a more exalted Order cannot perform all their Perceptions without them. To ſuppoſe this, would be as *abſurd*, as for a Man with weak Eyes to argue, that it is impoſſible for any one to ſee without a *Glaſs*: And therefore, when God is ſaid to have Eyes and Ears, 'tis only in Accommodation to our Mode of Thinking; for when we come to reaſon upon the Point we muſt acknowledge, that it is an Inſtance of his Perfection not to need theſe Helps, which are

[c] Prov. xv. 3. [d] 2 Chron. xvi. 9. [e] Heb. iv. 13. [f] *Sherlock* of Divine Providence,
[g] Pſal. xciv. 7. [h] Ibid. x. 11. [i] Ibid. lxxiii. 11. [k] Ibid. lxiv. 5. [l] Ibid. xciv. 8, 9.
[m] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

are a thouſand and ten thouſand Times ſurpaſſed by the *Immenſity* of that Eſſence, which is every where at once, [n] ſo as to penetrate all Things *within*, like an *univerſal Soul*, and contain all Things *without*, like an *univerſal Place*.

ANOTHER Part of the Providence of God conſiſts in his *Preſervation* of the Being, and *Proviſion* for the Well-being of all Things. For ſince they were brought into Being at firſt by the Contrivance of God's Wiſdom, and the Exerciſe of his Power, they have not their Exiſtence in themſelves, and muſt therefore depend upon the ſame Hand, that gave it for its Preſervation: [o] For where the Foundation of Exiſtence lies wholly in the Power of an infinite Being *producing*, the Ground of Continuance of that Exiſtence muſt lie in the ſame Power *conſerving*. We grant, indeed, that when Things are once in Being, they will continue ſo, 'till ſome greater Force than themſelves puts them out of Being; but then we ſhould conſider, that God's withdrawing his *Conſervation* is ſo great a Force, as muſt needs put that Creature, which had its Exiſtence from his Power, entirely out of Being. The Light of the Sun continues in the Air, and, as long as the Sun communicates it, nothing can extinguiſh the Light, but what muſt put out the Sun: But could we ſuppoſe the Sun to withdraw its Beams, what would become of the Light then? Now this is exactly the Caſe of all Beings, which proceed from an infinite Power: Their Subſiſtence depends upon a continual *Emanation* of the ſame Power, that gave them Being; and when once this Power is withdrawn, all thoſe Beings, which were produced by it, muſt needs *relapſe* into nothing. 2. Preſervation.

[p] THE Works of human Art indeed do often remain many Ages, after the Workman's Hand is withdrawn from them: But the Reaſon is, becauſe there is ſomething between them and nothing, *viz.* the *pre-exiſtent* Matter, of which they are compoſed; whereas the Works of God, being all produced out of *nothing*, have nothing between them but the *creative* Power that produced them: And therefore as Man's Works muſt neceſſarily periſh, were that pre-exiſtent Matter, which ſtands between them and nothing, taken away; ſo God's Works would neceſſarily reſolve into nothing, ſhould that *creative* Power, which ſtands between them and nothing, be withdrawn. [q] By a bare Act of his Will, they paſſed from nothing into Being; and if he ſuſpends that Act, they return again from Being into nothing; which the Author to the *Hebrews* has elegantly expreſſed by God's [r] *holding*, or *bearing up all Things by the Word of his Power*: For as there needs no *poſitive* Action, to make a Thing, which we bear up, fall to the Ground, ſince it neceſſarily falls, if we give it no farther Support; ſo God needs only to withdraw his Hand, and every Thing will return again to the State from which it was taken, *i. e.* to nothing. *How effected.*

'TIS the ſame Almighty Power then, which raiſed the World out of nothing, that keeps it from ſinking into nothing; and the Subſiſtence of Things, at this very Day, is as much the Effect of that Power, as they were the Moment, when they were firſt created: [s] For the World was no more able to give itſelf the *ſecond* Moment of Being, than it was the *firſt*, and the *third*, than the *ſecond*, and ſo on to all the Parts of its Continuance. One Moment of Being is as much as another, and therefore to give a *Second*, requires as much Power, as to give a *Firſt*; and if ſo, then muſt each *ſucceeding* Moment of the World's Duration be derived from the ſame *Principle*, that cauſed it to exiſt the *firſt*; and, accordingly, we may obſerve, that the holy Scripture has connected the Creation and Continuation of all Things both together: [t] *Thou, even thou, art the Lord alone; thou haſt made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Hoſt, the Earth, and all Things that are therein, and thou preſerveſt them all.*

BUT it is not enough for God to *preſerve* all his Creatures in *Being*, unleſs he *provides* likewiſe for their *Well-being*: And therefore, to ſatisfy ourſelves in this Particular, we muſt take a ſhort View of ſome Parts of his Works, in order to perceive how true the Obſervation of the *Pſalmiſt* is, [u] *that the Eyes of all wait upon God, who opens his Hand, and filleth all Things living with Plenteouſneſs.* 3. Proviſion.

IF then we look upon the Earth, whereon we tread, we cannot but perceive how fruitful it is in all Sorts of Animals and Vegetables. [x] What great Diverſity of Trees, all laden with delicate Fruits, *whoſe Seeds are in themſelves*, to perpetuate their Continuance; what an infinite Variety of Flowers, wonderful in their Make, and *For Men.*

[n] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [o] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [p] *Scott*'s, ibid. [q] *Martin*'s Natural Religion. [r] Heb. i. 3 [s] *Scott*'s, ibid. [t] Neh. ix. 6. [u] Pſal. cxlv. 15, 16. [x] Eſſays on Natural and Revealed Religion.

moſt delightful in their Smell; Grains of all Sorts for the Suſtenance of Man and Beaſt; and Herbs of all Kinds, ſome good for Food, and others of ſingular Uſe for Medicines, may we ſee riſing on its Surface! And yet the Earth, out of which all theſe Bleſſings are produced, is nothing but a cold, *inſipid* Maſs of Matter, grateful to no Senſe, and deſtitute of all Warmth and *prolifick* Virtue.

For Animals. IF we paſs into the Region of *Animals*, we may obſerve, that ſome of them are endowed with ſingular Strength and Beauty; others with great Sagacity; all, how ſavage ſoever in their Nature, are tender and ſolicitous for the Preſervation of their Young; and, what is a ſingular Inſtance of God's Care for their *Well-being*, ſuch as are *ravenous*, are few in Number, live in Dens, and are ſeldom ſeen but *ſingly*; ſuch as are more *timorous*, are generally the ſwifteſt, as Hares; or herd together for their Security, as Sheep; and ſuch as are *ſloweſt*, and leſs able to fly from Danger, are either armed with pointed Quills or Pricks, as Porcupines and Hedgehogs; or elſe defended with Shells, as we obſerve in the Tortoiſe, Snails, and diverſe Kinds of Fiſh.

For Countries. BUT, not to expatiate over the ſeveral *Tribes* of Creatures, we will confine our Obſervations to ſome general Proviſions of Nature, which will be enough to convince us of the great Wiſdom and Providence of God, in ſupplying the Wants and Neceſſities of all his Creatures.

Cold. IF we conſider the *Situation* and Temper of the *Northern* Parts of the World, and ſuch as lie towards the *Poles*, we may obſerve, how all Things are expoſed to the Rigours and Severities of the *Froſt* and *Snow*; and yet theſe Inconveniencies are abundantly relieved by the comfortable Proviſion of vaſt *Woods*, which not only furniſh the Inhabitants with a good Supply of *Fuel*, but produce great Quantities of wild Beaſts, whoſe rich and warm Furs are not only a Defence againſt the Injuries of the Climate, but, by being tranſported into other Parts of the World, purchaſe whatever is uſeful and delightful for the Life of Man.

Hot. IF we conſider the *hotter* Regions, which lie under the ſcorching Rays of the Sun, we are informed, that the *Morning-Dews*, which fall in great Abundance, and the cool and refreſhing *Breezes*, which uſually ariſe with the Sun, and grow freſher, as it aſcends, fan the Air, and correct the ſultry Influences of it. Nay, even directly under the *Equinoctial*, we are told, that, during the Time of the greateſt Heats, there fall ſuch vaſt Quantities of Rain, as not only *qualify* the Climate, and refreſh the Air, but make the Soil, in moſt Places, as fruitful, as is any where to be found upon the Surface of the whole Earth.

Barren. *EGYPT* is a Country where it ſeldom or never rains, and conſequently, lying in ſuch a Degree of Heat, could not be inhabited, were it not, in a very ſtupendous Manner, refreſhed and watered by the River *Nile*, which, overflowing the Country in the hotteſt Seaſon of the Year, both moderates the Heat of the Sun, and gives the Land a *Fertility*, ſcarce to be equalled in the habitable World. Nay, even in the *Deſerts*, and ſcorching Plains of *Arabia*, where Water is ſcarce to be met with, how wonderfully has Nature provided for the Exigence of Man by *Camels*, Creatures that are able to bear great Burdens, and go ſeveral Days without drinking; and by *Dromedaries*, that will go an hundred Miles in a Day, and live on a ſmall Quantity of Food, and without Water; ſingular, and wonderful Advantages in thoſe Parts, where there is no Proviſion for Man or Beaſt!

Some remarkable Particulars. [y] WHAT is reported of *Ferraria*, an Iſland belonging to the *Canaries*, ſeems miraculous. The Soil is dry and uncultivated; nor is there a Drop of freſh Water to be found any where, but on the Sea-Coaſt, which is of no great Uſe, becauſe of its Diſtance: And therefore, to ſupply this Defect, there grows, in the Middle of the Iſland, a certain Tree, the like of which is not to be found in the Univerſe. It is always covered with a thick *Miſt* or Cloud, which neither increaſes nor diminiſhes: Its *Leaves* are pointed, like thoſe of a *Walnut-Tree*, and from them there *diſtils* perpetually ſuch a Quantity of pure *Cryſtal Water*, as equals the moſt plentiful Springs, which, being received into Ciſterns, and other Veſſels, ſerves the Occaſions of the whole Iſland.

OF no leſs ſingular and beneficial Virtue is the *Palm-Tree*, though more commonly known, as affording excellent Wine, Fruits, Vinegar, Thread, and Leaves, which make a durable Covering for Houſes; and (to name no more) the [z] Tree, that bears *Cacao*, or the *Indian* Nut, is prodigious in its Uſes; for out of it is yearly drained

[y] Grot. Arthus Ind. Orien. *Cap.* 6.

[z] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

drained a great Quantity of Juice, which, according to the Seaſon it is drawn in, and the different Way of preparing it, taſtes exactly like Oil, or Butter, or Milk, or Wine, for all which it is indifferently uſed; and when it is dried, it imitates Sugar. The Fruit of it uſually makes Bread; the Leaves ſerve for Paper; the Rind affords Materials for Cables and Sails; and the Trunk is employed in the Building of Houſes and Ships. Thus bountiful is Providence in one ſingle Tree! And, if we were to conſult the Writings of modern Botaniſts, we might probably meet with many more Inſtances of the like Nature.

WHAT hath been ſaid is enough to convince us, that God taketh Care *both of Man and Beaſt*; that he provideth for the Maintenance of his Creatures all the World over; and the natural Defects of every Country richly ſupplies, in a very wonderful and ſurprizing Manner: And therefore, not to forget the *Pſalmiſt*'s Recognition upon a Review of this Nature: [a] *O Lord, how manifold are thy Works! In Wiſdom haſt thou made them all: The Earth is full of thy Riches: So is the great and wide Sea alſo, wherein are Things innumerable, both ſmall and great Beaſts. Theſe wait all upon thee, that thou mayeſt give them Meat in due Seaſon; when thou giveſt it them, they gather it; when thou openeſt thy Hand, they are filled with Good; when thou hideſt thy Face, they are troubled; when thou takeſt away their Breath, they die, and are turned again to their Duſt.*

ANOTHER Act of God's Providence is, his conſtant *Concurrence* and *Co-operation* with all Things. For ſince his Eſſence is in every Place, and his Power extended to all Things, the proper End of Power is *Action*; and therefore, wherever God is, he muſt be acting. [b] It may be ſuppoſed perhaps, after the Creation was finiſhed, and every Thing ſettled in a proper Order, that it might then become the Wiſdom of God to withdraw his Hand, and leave all Things to act of themſelves, by Virtue of the *primary* and general Laws of Motion impreſſed on them: But that there are no ſuch Laws of Motion, whereby Things can act *independently* on God, [c] is plain from the Principles of the beſt modern Philoſophers, which demonſtrate, that the Parts of Matter, in what Order ſoever we ſuppoſe them to be diſpoſed, neither *gravitate*, nor communicate Motion, nor, in any Reſpect, act upon one another, but in Conſequence of God's immediate *directing* and *aſſiſting* Hand. And indeed, if we take a ſhort Survey of a very few Things in Nature, we ſhall find their Operations ſo far tranſcending their Capacities, as to neceſſitate the Belief of a Divine *Concurrence* in what they do. The Sun, for Inſtance, (for whether we ſuppoſe the Sun or the Earth to move, 'tis the ſame Thing to our Enquiry) the Sun, I ſay, is void of Underſtanding, and therefore can have no Deſign or Contrivance in it: [d] How then comes it to purſue ſuch a *regular* Courſe in its Motions? What makes this vaſt and mighty Body move round the Earth, rather than any other Part of that infinite Space, wherein it hangs, and, through ſo many Ages, each twenty-four Hours, conſtantly perform its *Period*, without being ſo much as one Moment faſter or ſlower, to give regular Returns of Day and Night to both *Hemiſpheres*? And, ſince it moves equally round the Earth, what makes it not always move in the ſame *Circle*, but every Day ſhift almoſt a Degree farther *Northward* or *Southward*, and that ſo regularly, as, in ſix thouſand ſucceeding Revolutions, always to have obſerved the ſame *Excurrences*, thereby to give the different Seaſons of the Year to all Parts of the Earth? The Revolution of Day and Night, and the Return of annual Seaſons it is not ſenſible that it occaſions, and muſt therefore be every Day under the *Divine* Conduct to direct it into the different Courſes, that produce them; ſo that the Royal *Pſalmiſt* might juſtly ſay unto God, [e] *The Day is thine, the Night alſo is thine: Thou haſt prepared the Light; thou haſt ſet all the Borders of the Earth*, (according to the different Poſitions of the Heavens) *and haſt made Summer and Winter*, according to the Proximity or Diſtance of the Sun.

3. Concurrence.

The heavenly Bodies.

PLANTS, we know, have neither Senſe nor Reaſon to diſcern the Periods of their own *Growth* and *Decay*; and yet, when they have almoſt ſpent themſelves, and are ready to wither and die, they run up into *Seed*, as if they foreſaw their own approaching End, and did thereupon bethink themſelves of propagating their Kind, before it was too late, and leaving a numerous *Poſterity* behind them. Such as are naturally *weak*, and yet ſhoot up on high, run out into little *Strings* or Tendrils,

Plants.

[a] Pſal. civ. 24, &c. [b] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [c] Vid. Sir *Iſaac Newton*'s Principia, and *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, page 215. Vol. II. [d] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [e] Pſal. lxxiv. 16, 17.

Tendrils, with which they lay hold of ſome Thing, that is ſtronger than themſelves, as if they were *conſcious* of their own Weakneſs, and deſignedly twiſted about other Bodies, that were better able to ſupport them. Since therefore they neither know how they *grow*, nor how they *decay*, and are neither ſenſible of their own *Weakneſs*, or the *Strength* of thoſe Bodies they depend on; 'tis evident, that the Providence of God co-operates with them, and not only influences their Growth, but directs them likewiſe to the proper Means of their Safety and Preſervation.

Animals. In the *brute* and *irrational* World, to make the induſtrious Bee one Inſtance for all: With what ſtrange and wonderful Art do theſe little Creatures frame their *Combs*, which they divide into innumerable ſix-corner'd *Cells*, ſupporting them with middle Walls and Pillars, to make them more ſtrong! With what Aſſiduity do they wander up and down, to gather the ſweet Dews of Heaven, from the Herbs and Flowers of the Field, and treaſure them up in their little Houſes, againſt the Approach of Winter! And, when they have filled their Cells, with what Care and Providence do they cloſe, and cover them over with a Sort of thin *Membrane*, leſt any of the grateful *Liquor* ſhould drop out and be loſt! In a Word, with what Order and Regularity do they live, all reſting and labouring together, and, in the Diſcharge of their ſeveral *Offices*, all conſpiring to the ſame Work! Some preſs the Flowers with their Feet: Others gather the Moiſture as it is preſſed, and carry it home; ſome bring the Matter for making the Cells; others diſburthen them of it; others build with it; and others plane and poliſh the Building. Thus all Hands are at Work, to build the Houſe they are to dwell in, to divide it into fit Apartments, and ſtore it with Proviſion againſt the Time of Need. All theſe are great Inſtances of Reaſon and Contrivance, and yet it is certain, that they have no Reaſon of their own. They conſider not, when they begin to build, how needful Houſes are for themſelves and their Winter-Proviſions; nor do they underſtand the Neceſſity there is for dividing them into diſtinct Apartments. They know not the Nature of the ſweet Dews they gather, whether they be Food or Poiſon; and when they gather more than they have preſent Need of, they cannot conceive why they do it. They reaſon not with themſelves that Winter is approaching, wherein neither the Dews, upon which they live, will fall, nor themſelves be able to go forth and gather them; and that therefore it behoves them to ſtore themſelves before-hand againſt the enſuing Famine: Theſe Things they know nothing of, and yet they perform them all with as much Regularity and Art, as if they had thoroughly weighed, and conſidered, and perfectly underſtood the Reaſons of them; which is a plain Evidence, that they are *acted* by ſome ſuperior *Principle*, and guided in their Motions and Contrivances, by the Ordination and Aſſiſtance of Almighty God.

Mankind. We are now come to the *rational* World: And to ſay, that Man can act any Thing without the Concurrence and Co-operation of God, [g] *in whom we live, and move*, as well as *have our Being*, is impious, and inconſiſtent with the Dependence we owe to our Creator: But then the Queſtion is, how far this Concourſe of God is to be extended; whether it implies any *extrinſick*, *determining* Motion from him, or only his *aſſiſting* our *natural* Powers and Faculties of Action. In the Inſtances, we juſt now produced from the *irrational* Part of the Creation, the Co-operation of God ſeems to have a larger Scope and Influence; becauſe the Things, that have no Reaſon in themſelves, muſt be ſuppoſed, where they are found acting *rationally*, to be determined in their *Motions*, and guided to ſuch *Ends*, as are above their Natures to purſue, by ſome immediate, *ſuperior* Power: But the Caſe is not ſo with Man. God has not only endowed him with natural Powers and Principles of *How far.* Action, but given him likewiſe an *Underſtanding* and a *Will*, whereby he reaſons, and judges, and determines for himſelf; and [h] therefore the Divine *Co-operation*, with Reſpect to him, ſeems to extend no farther, than to the *natural* Power of acting, and not to any *ſpecifick* Acts. It does not *improve* his Underſtanding, nor *incline* his Judgment, nor *determine* his Choice: It makes no Alteration in the Powers of Nature, but only enables them to act according to their Natures, and is ſomething like the winding up of a Watch, which ſets it a-going indeed, but gives it no *preternatural* Motion, leaving its Motion to be guided by its own Springs and Wheels. Whatever then the *Co-operation* of God, that is thought neceſſary to actuate our *natural* Faculties, be, it muſt be ſuppoſed, that it gives no new *Byaſs* to us: It leaves

[f] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. and *Boyle*, on final Cauſes. [g] Acts xvii. 28. [h] *Sherlock* on Divine Providence.

leaves us perfectly in a State of Nature, and only enables us to do ſuch Things, as we ſhould have done of ourſelves, without any ſuch *Co-operation*, could we at all *move* or *act* without it.

4. Government *of Cauſes* natural.

ANOTHER Act of Divine Providence is the *Rule* and *Government* of all Cauſes. That all natural Cauſes are under the *immediate* and *abſolute* Government of God, who keeps the Springs of Nature in his Hand, and turns them as he pleaſes [k]; that whenever they *ſtray* from their Courſes, *ſuſpend* or precipitate their Motions, or *move counter* to their natural Tendencies, 'tis by his Appointment and Ordination; that 'tis he, who guides the heavenly Bodies, impreſſes the Degree, and chalks out the Path of their Motions, and, by his own Almighty Hand, turns round thoſe ſtupendous Wheels in a perpetual Revolution, is evident from the Expoſtulation God holds with *Job: Knoweſt thou the Ordinances of Heaven, and canſt thou ſet the Dominion thereof on the Earth? Canſt thou lift up thy Voice to the Clouds, that Abundance of Waters may cover thee? Canſt thou ſend Lightnings, that they may go, and ſay unto thee, Here we are?* This is above human Power, but belongs to the Government and Providence of God.

In what Manner.

GOD indeed has beſtowed different Virtues and Powers on *natural* Cauſes, and, in ordinary Cauſes, makes Uſe of theſe Powers to ſerve the wiſe Ends of his Providence in the Government of Mankind; for while every Thing, in the *material* World, exerts its natural Powers, and acts neceſſarily, he can temper or ſuſpend its Motions, and direct its Influences, without ever reverſing the Laws of Nature. Fire and Water, Wind and Rain, Thunder and Lightning, for Inſtance, have their natural Powers and Qualities, and God produces ſuch Effects with them, as they are apt to produce of themſelves: He *warms* us with Fire, *invigorates* the Earth by the benign Influences of the Sun and Moon, *refreſhes* and moiſtens it with Springs and Fountains, and Rain from Heaven; *fans* the Air with Winds, and *purges* it with Thunder and Lightnings, and the like: But then, *when* and *where* the Rains ſhall fall, and the Winds ſhall blow, and in what Meaſure and Proportions, Times, and Seaſons, and other natural Cauſes ſhall give or with-hold their Influences; this God keeps in his own Power, and hereby can govern the World, and reward or puniſh Men, as they ſhall deſerve, without altering the ſtanding Laws of Nature: For ſo we are told, [l] *that Fire and Hail, Snow and Vapour, and ſtormy Winds fulfil his Word*; [m] *that he calls to the Clouds, that Abundance of Water may cover the Earth*; at one Time, *giveth us the former, and the latter Rain in its Seaſon*: and at another, [n] *ſhuts up the Heavens, that it ſhall not rain*, or cauſes it to rain upon one City, and not another; [o] *ſo that two or three Cities wander to one City to drink Water, and are not ſatisfied.*

Accidental.

THAT there are many *caſual* and accidental *Events*, which happen to us all, and are of great Conſequence to the Happineſs or Miſery of human Life, is an Obſervation, that the wiſe Man has made long ago; [p] *I returned, and ſaw under the Sun, that the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong, neither yet Bread to the Wiſe, nor yet Riches to Men of Underſtanding, nor yet Favour to Men of Skill; but Time and Chance happeneth to them all*, i. e. ſome ſtrange and unaccountable Accidents change the Fortunes of Men, and diſappoint the moſt proper Means of Succeſs. [q] What ſhould conquer, in a Race, one would think, but Swiftneſs? Or win the Battle, but Strength? What ſhould ſupply Mens Wants, and increaſe Riches, but Wiſdom and Underſtanding in human Affairs? What more likely Way to gain a general Favour and Eſteem, than a dextrous and ſkilful Application and Addreſs? And yet the Preacher obſerved, in his Days, what is abundantly verified in ours, that *Time and Chance*, i. e. ſome favourable Conjunctures, and unforeſeen Accidents, were of more Avail to this Purpoſe, than all the Means and Methods that Man can deviſe.

'TWAS from this Obſervation, [r] that the Heathen World made *Fortune* a *Goddeſs*, and attributed the Government of all Things to her. We Chriſtians know no ſuch Things as *Chance* or *Fortune*: [s] We know, that God alone governs the World, and diſpoſes of all Events; and though many Things *happen*, which did not appear in their immediate Cauſes, [t] yet did they as much *depend* upon the Will and Power of the *firſt Cauſe* of all, as the riſing and ſetting of the *Sun*, or the ebbing or flowing of the *Sea*. So that, how fortuitous ſoever theſe Things

[k] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [l] Pſal. cxlviii. 8. [m] Jer. v. 24. [n] 2 Chron. vii. 13. [o] Amos iv. 8. [p] Eccleſ. ix. 11. [q] *Sherlock*, ibid. [r] *Sherlock*, ibid, [s] *Fleetwood*'s Sermons. [t] *Scott*'s, ibid.

may be in Reſpect of the Deſign, and natural Tendency of *ſecond Cauſes*; yet none of them ever happen beſide the Purpoſe and Intention of God, who foreſees them before they come to paſs, and directs them to his wiſe Ends and Purpoſes. What can be more *uncertain*, than an Arrow ſhot [u] *at a Venture*? And yet that wherewith *Ahab* was ſlain, was pointed and directed by the unerring Hand of God. What can be more *caſual*, than a Lot? And yet *Solomon* has told us, [x] *that the Lot is caſt into the Lap, but the whole diſpoſing thereof is of the Lord*; deſigning thereby to intimate, that there is nothing ſo ſmall and inconſiderable, nothing ſo fortuitous and accidental, as to be exempt from the Care, and Cognizance, and Diſpoſal of *Providence*.

The Reaſon why.

AND indeed if we conſider with ourſelves of what vaſt Importance thoſe Events, which we call *fortuitous*, are in the Government of the World; how the Lives and Fortunes of Men, the Fate of Kingdoms and Empires, the Succeſſes of War, and the Changes of Government are, many Times, determined and effected by them; how *Chance* defeats the wiſeſt Counſels, and ſtrongeſt Powers; rewards good Men unexpectedly, and puniſhes the bad remarkably; we cannot but think, that theſe Things are the proper Province of God, and the more immediate Objects of his *providential* Care and Attention, ſince they are ſuch powerful *Inſtruments* in his Hands; and that, when we go about to exclude him from the Diſpoſal of theſe, as Things too *trivial*, and below his Concern, we not only rob him of a great Branch of his Dominion, but ourſelves likewiſe of the comfortable Senſe of our Security under the *Wing* and *Shadow* of the *Almighty*. For what can be a greater Comfort to us, than to conſider, that, amidſt all the Uncertainties of human Affairs, *Chance* itſelf cannot hurt us, without the Divine Commiſſion, and that, how calamitous and deſperate ſoever our external Condition ſeems to be, God never wants Means to help and defend us; that he has a thouſand unſeen Ways, a whole *Army of Accidents* and unexpected Events at Command, to reſcue us, when we ſeem moſt expoſed, and to ſave us, when we have no viſible Power to ſtand by and protect us?

Moral.

THAT all *moral* and *rational* Agents are immediately under the Government of God; that he can, not only over-rule the Actions, but ſway the Wills, and guide the Paſſions, and direct the Deſigns of Mankind, as it beſt ſuits with the Ends of his Providence, is a Truth confirmed unto us by all thoſe Paſſages in Scripture, where we are told, that [y] *Mens Goings are of the Lord, and,* [z] *tho' his Heart deviſeth his Ways, yet the Lord directeth his Paths*; [a] *that the Way of Man is not in himſelf*; [b] that *the Heart of Kings is in the Hand of the Lord, which he turneth* as he will; *and* [c] *that tho' there may be many Devices in Man's Heart, nevertheleſs the Counſel of the Lord, that ſhall ſtand*; but then the Difficulty is, how God can exerciſe ſuch an *abſolute* Government over Mankind, who are *free Agents*, without deſtroying the Liberty of their Choice, and conſequently, the Nature of Virtue and Vice, and the Reaſons of Rewards and Puniſhments. And therefore to remove this, we muſt diſtinguiſh between God's Government of Men, as *reaſonable* Creatures and free Agents, and his Government of them, as the *Inſtruments* of Providence: The firſt conſiders them in their own private and *natural* Capacity; the ſecond, in Relation to the reſt of Mankind, which makes a great Difference both in the Reaſon and Acts of Government.

In what Manner.

MAN, conſidered in his own Nature, is a reaſonable Creature, and free Agent; and therefore the proper Government of him conſiſts in giving him *Laws* for the Regulation of his Actions; in annexing ſuch *Rewards* and *Puniſhments* to the Obſervation or Breach of theſe Laws, as may engage his Obedience; and in affording him ſuch inward *Aſſiſtances* of Grace, as may ballance the Weakneſs and Corruption of human Nature; and when this is done, it becomes God to leave him to his own Choice, and to reward or puniſh him, as he deſerves. But when we conſider Men in *Society*, the Caſe is altered: For when the Good or Evil of their Actions extends beyond themſelves, and is to terminate upon other Men; the Providence of God becomes then concerned either to hinder it, or to permit and order it ſo, as may beſt ſerve the Ends of Government, and, as *thoſe*, it is to affect, have *merited* or *demerited* at his Hands. God makes no Man good or bad, virtuous or vicious by *irreſiſtible* Force; but he may, by a *ſecret* Influence upon Mens Minds, oblige them to do the *Good*, they have no Inclination to; and reſtrain them from

[u] 1 Kings xxii. 34, 38. [x] Prov. xvi. 33. [y] Ibid. xx. 24. [z] Ibid. xvi. 9. [a] Jer. x. 23.
[b] Prov. xxi. 1. [c] Ibid. xix. 21.

from the *Evil*, they otherwiſe would do; and in many Caſes, to act contrary to their pre-conceived Deſigns, merely as the Inſtruments of his Providence. And this ſhews the Difference between the Government of *Grace* and *Providence*: *The Government of Grace* has Relation to Virtue and Vice, tends to make Men good, and to change their Natures and ſinful Diſpoſitions; and therefore admits of no greater Force, than what is conſiſtent with Man's *Freedom* of Choice: But the *Government of Providence* reſpects the external Happineſs or Miſery, Rewards or Puniſhments of Men or Nations; to which Purpoſe God may make uſe of what Inſtruments he pleaſes, and exerciſe ſuch an *Authority*, as is neceſſary to accompliſh his wiſe Counſels of Mercy or Judgment to Mankind.

5. Direction of Events.

ONE *Branch* more of the Providence of God is, his ordering and directing all the Events, that attend human Affairs, ſuch as long Life and ſudden Death, Health and Sickneſs, Honour and Diſgrace, Riches and Poverty, Famine and Plenty, War and Peace, and thoſe many great and ſurprizing Changes and Revolutions, which many Times happen in Kingdoms and States. That all the Bleſſings and Comforts of human Life are of God's immediate ſending upon us, is acknowledged by all that believe a Providence; the only Difficulty is about the Calamities of it: And to form an Idea of God's Proceeding in this Reſpect:

Private, *how effected.*

[d] LET us ſuppoſe this to be the Caſe of an earthly Prince, —— that he perfectly underſtood all the Deſerts, and all the Inclinations of his Subjects, and had ſuch an inviſible and inſenſible Authority over them, that, without giving them any Directions, without letting them know any Thing of his Intentions, or offering any Violence to their own Inclinations, he could determine them to do that *Hurt*, which he had a Mind to do, to thoſe, and to thoſe only, whom he intended to puniſh; and to do that *Good*, they are inclinable to do, to thoſe, and to thoſe only, whom he intended to reward: In Caſe ſuch a Prince took Care, that no Subject of his ſhould ſuffer more from the Wickedneſs of others, than he had deſerved, and the Reaſons of Government required, would any Man charge ſuch a Prince with all the Iniquity that is committed in his Kingdom, only becauſe he ſo wiſely orders it, that ſome bad Men ſhould execute his Vengeance upon other bad Men, and ſerve inſtead of Judge and Jury, and Executioners? Nay, would not every one ſay, that this is the moſt perfect and abſolute *Form* of Government in the World? Earthly Princes indeed cannot do this; they have not a ſufficient Knowledge of the Deſerts, nor are the Wills and Inclinations of their Subjects at their Diſpoſal: But this is exactly the Government of God, who accompliſhes his own wiſe Counſels, and the Puniſhment of ſuch, as have tranſgreſſed his Laws, by the Miniſtry of Men.

BAD Men there are enough in the World, that deſerve *Correction*, and others that are ready enough to fall upon their Brethren, if the *Reſtraint* be taken off them: Suppoſe then, that a Man has *forfeited* his Life, or Eſtate, or Reputation to Providence, or (without any *criminal* Forfeiture of it) that God thinks fit, for other wiſe Reaſons, to remove him out of the World, or to reduce him to Poverty, or Contempt; the Murtherer, the Oppreſſor, the Slanderer are always forward enough to execute ſuch *Decrees*; and 'tis but God's bringing ſuch Perſons, as he appoints for *ſuffering*, into the Reach of ſuch other Men, as he deſigns to be the Executioners of his Will, and their own Malice and Wickedneſs do the reſt. This is the ſtated Method of God, in bringing Calamities upon particular Perſons, and all the Hand, that he has in it, is only withdrawing the Reſtraint, and ſuffering bad Men to follow the *Impulſe* of their own Luſts: If, for the main, however, God chains them up, and never lets them looſe, but only to execute his righteous Judgments, nothing can be more honourable to Providence, or a greater Security to Mankind.

Publick.

OF what Subſerviency both good and bad Angels are to God, in the Government of the World, and how well qualified and appointed, to be the Inſtruments of publick Bleſſings and Calamities, is [e] what we have ſufficiently conſidered before. 'Tis uſually, by the Miniſtry of thoſe Spirits, or by the unruly Paſſions of Princes, that the ſore Judgments of Heaven, the Sword, and Famine, and noiſome Peſtilence fall upon a guilty Land. God gives the Commiſſion only, the Execution is entirely done by them: And accordingly, in *Ezekiel*'s Viſion, the Angels of God are repreſented as buſily employed in the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*: [f] *Cauſe them, that have Charge over the City, to draw near, every Man with his deſtroying Weapon in his Hand. And behold ſix Men came from the Way of the higher Gate, which lieth towards*

[d] *Sherlock*, on Divine Providence. [e] *Vid.* Page 189. [f] Exek. ix. 1, &c.

towards the North, and every Man had a Slaughter-weapon in his Hand; and one Man among them was cloathed with Linnen, with a Writer's Inkhorn by his Side; and the Lord ſaid unto him, Go through the Midſt of the City, through the Midſt of Jeruſalem; *and ſet a Mark upon the Foreheads of the Men, that ſigh, and that cry for all the Abominations that be done in the Midſt thereof: And to the others he ſaid, Go ye after him, through the City, and ſmite; let not your Eye ſpare, neither have ye Pity: Slay utterly Old and Young, both Maids and little Children, and Women, but come not near any Man, upon whom is the Mark.*

Revolutions. IT ſeems moſt ſuitable therefore both to the Majeſty and Purity of God to believe, that the Calamities, which are ſent upon a Nation for the Iniquity thereof, are either fomented by the *Unrulineſs* of Mens Spirits, or inflicted by the Miniſtry of Angels: But there are other Events, wherein the Hand of God is more eminently viſible, *viz.* in ſuch publick *Changes* and *Revolutions*, as many Times happen in Kingdoms and States. [g] For the Providence of God concerns itſelf more eſpecially in producing theſe *amazing* Events, that its Influence on Things below may be obſerved and acknowledged; which would go near to be forgotten, did he not, by ſome remarkable Inſtances of his Interpoſition in human Affairs, raiſe Men up, at fit Times, to a lively and vigorous Senſe of it.

IN the greateſt and moſt publick Tranſactions of the World, when they go on in ſuch a Manner, as to look like the Effects of human Foreſight and Contrivance, we are apt to ſtop ſhort in our Reflections upon them, without carrying our Thoughts up to that *inviſible* Hand, which wields the vaſt *Machine*, and directs all its Springs and Motions. But now, when the great Scene of Government is ſhifted all at once, and the Cauſes, that viſibly contribute to the Production of this Effect, bear no Proportion to it; then we look out for others of a more extended Force, we perceive a Divine Providence intereſting itſelf in human Affairs, and adore the *Footſteps* of it. Since therefore we are ſo apt to forget God's Adminiſtration of the great Affairs below, when they go on *even* and *regularly*, he is pleaſed, by awakening *Notices*, now and then to put us in the Mind of it; to preſent to our View ſome aſtoniſhing Revolution of State, like a glaring *Comet*, hung up in the Air, whoſe extraordinary Appearance and irregular Motion ſhall ſooner lead our Thoughts up to the Author of Nature, and imprint a deeper Awe of him upon our Minds, than the Sight of the *whole Hoſt of Heaven*, in orderly Array, continually moving round us.

THE Truth is, were it not for ſuch ſurprizing Turns and Revolutions of State, as not only rouze and awaken the Attention of the Negligent, but make the Heads of the ableſt and moſt experienced *Lookers-on* giddy at the Sight; God would, in the Opinion of many of his Creatures, be ſhut out from the *Government* of the World, and the Honour of his Conduct devolved upon ſome of the *mean* and *ſubordinate* Inſtruments of it; thoſe *poor Inſects*, (as an ingenious Author [h] expreſſes it) *that ſit upon the Wheels of State, and imagine themſelves to be the Authors of all its Motions, and able to check or to quicken them, at their Pleaſure*; and therefore, in Vindication of his Providence, and in Manifeſtation of his Government over the World, God ſometimes is pleaſed to give ſuch Men a convincing Proof of their Folly, by unravelling all their Meaſures at once, and bringing about a new Scene of Things, which they could not foreſee with all their Skill, nor prevent with all their Prudence: [i] That ſo *the wiſe Man may* learn *not to glory in his Wiſdom, and the mighty Man not to glory in his Might: But he that glorieth may glory in this, that he underſtandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord, which exerciſe Loving-Kindneſs, and Judgment, and Righteouſneſs in the Earth; for in theſe Things I delight, ſaith the Lord.*

THESE are ſome of the *Acts* and *Offices*, wherein the Providence of God conſiſts, and whereby he makes himſelf known [k] *to be the Moſt High, that ruleth in the Kingdoms of Men:* And we come now to produce ſome of the *Arguments*, that prove the Exiſtence of ſuch a Providence *inſpecting*, *preſerving*, *governing*, *directing*, and *co-operating* with all Cauſes, and all Events.

[g] *Atterbury's* Sermons, Vol. I. [h] Ibid. [i] Jer. ix. 23, 24. [k] Dan. iv. 17.

SECT.

SECT. I.

The PROOFS *of* PROVIDENCE.

GOD never acts without a *Design*, and his Designs do always bear the Characters of his *Attributes:* [l] To suppose therefore, that he made the World, only to give a glorious *Essay* of his Power, of his Wisdom and Goodness in making it, without any other View, or the least Intention of taking any farther Care of it, will not sufficiently account for the Reasons, upon which, we ought to believe that he was induced to make it at first. For whatever Effects of his Wisdom and Power appeared in the *first* Production of Things, since it was impossible for them to continue in their original Order, without his presiding over them, the *subsequent* Irregularities, which must necessarily have happened in his Work, would have tended as much to the *Derogation* of his Wisdom, as the Work itself had *antecedently* done to its *Manifestation*. It is hardly to be imagined therefore, for what End God should make the World at first, unless to have it governed; and if the World was to be governed, the only Power and Wisdom capable of doing that, must be the same that created it. [m] It is only creating Wisdom that perfectly understands the *Nature* of all Things; that sees all the *Springs* of Motion, that can correct the *Errors* of Nature, that can suspend, or guide the *Influences* of natural Causes, that can govern *Hearts*, inspire *Wisdom* and Counsel, change Mens *Purposes*, and restrain, or let loose their *Passions*. It is only an infinite Mind that can take Care of all the World; that can allot every Creature its Portion; that can bring Good out of Evil, and Order out of Confusion: In a Word, the Government of the World requires such Wisdom and such Power, as no *Power* has, but he who made it, and therefore, if the World be governed, it must be governed by the Maker of it.

God, who, made the World, governs it.

AND indeed, if we consider the Nature and Attributes of God, we shall soon perceive, that he is not only qualified, but, in some Measure, necessitated to take Care of the World. For what would his Majesty be without a Providence? [n] Placed upon an high *Throne*, and in a *Palace* enriched with Rays of Glory, it would be a *simple* Beholder of all that passes in the World, and would see (without taking any Part in them) all the Disturbances, that Men, the noblest of all *sublunary* Creatures, incessantly raise; and that Part of the World, which they inhabit, abandoned to their *capricious* Humours: And is there a King upon Earth, that would not think his Majesty debased, if he remained, all his Life long, in such a State of shameful Inactivity? The *Sovereignty* of God therefore, unless it is exerted in Rule and Dominion, is only a *majestick Sloth*, that sits sleeping on an awful Throne, with its Hands in its Bosom, without ever doing any Thing deserving Observation; and all the *Attributes*, wherewith he is invested, are only so many *Cyphers*, and empty Names. For of what Use would his Wisdom be, if he had nothing to design or direct? To what Purpose would be his Power, if all Things were done without him? What would become of his Goodness, if he had no Concern in the World? What of his Loving-Kindness, if he left Mankind a Prey to Misfortunes? What of his Justice, if he took no Notice of their Crimes? And what of his Veracity, if he had no Threats or Promises to fulfil? [o] The very End and Perfection of all these Attributes consists in their *Exercise:* The End of Goodness is doing good; and how then can we suppose that an infinite *Power*, whose End in *Action*, should be present, where a World of Things are to be done, and do nothing? That infinite *Wisdom*, whose End is *ordering* and contriving, should be present, where a World of Things are to be ordered, and order nothing? Or that infinite *Goodness*, whose End is doing good, should be present, where a World of Good is to be done, and do none at all? This is reviling our Maker with a Witness, and transforming the Divine Perfections into so many senseless *Idols*, that *have Eyes, but see not*, Hands, but act not, and many *boundless*, but *useless* and insignificant Powers.

Proved from the Nature of God.

[l] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity Vol. I. [m] *Sherlock*, of Divine Providence. [n] *Martin*, of Natural Religion. [o] *Scott*'s Christian Life, Vol. I.

His Love and Tenderneſs.

[p] GOD, we find, has implanted in moſt Creatures a natural Care of their Offſpring, and made it an Argument of Want of Underſtanding, in the [q] *Oſtrich, that ſhe leaveth her Eggs in the Earth, and warmeth them in the Duſt; forgetteth that the Foot may cruſh them, or that the wild Beaſt may break them, and is hardened againſt her young Ones, as though they were not hers*; and can we think that an infinitely wiſe Being ſhould be as unconcerned for the World, as the Oſtrich is for her Eggs? Can we ſuppoſe, that, when every Creature is tender of its Young, every good-natured Parent ſtudies, Day and Night, for the comfortable Maintenance of thoſe, that have deſcended from him; there ſhould be no Bowels of Affection in God, that ſhould prompt him to provide for that large Family of the Univerſe, which depend conſtantly upon him for their daily Suſtenance and Support? The Repreſentation, that the holy Scriptures make of God's tender Love and Kindneſs to his Creatures, ſpeaks Things quite contrary to this: [r] *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have Compaſſion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee: Behold I have graven thee upon the Palms of my Hands*, to have thee in my Sight always, and in everlaſting Remembrance. Is it then a Thing natural for a Mother to be fond and affectionate to her Child? [s] Is it a Pleaſure to a Nurſe to fill it with her Milk, and ſee it thrive under her Care? Does the Sun rejoice to help the World with its conſtant Light? And does a Fountain murmur, till it be delivered of its Streams, which may refreſh the Ground? And is it no Delight to the Divine Nature, to behold the Effects of his Care and Loving-kindneſs extended to the World? *His Mercy is over all his Works*; and it is a Title, wherein he glories, no leſs than in his ſupreme Majeſty, to be a *Father to the Fatherleſs*, a *Deliverer of the Poor and Needy*, and a Refuge *to him, that has no Helper*.

2. From the Nature of Man, in his ſocial,

ANOTHER Evidence of Divine Providence ariſes from the Nature of Man, in what Capacity ſoever we conſider him. If we conſider him in a *ſocial* Capacity, we ſhall find the Corruption of Nature to be ſuch, ſome Spirits ſo *fiery*, and others poſſeſſed with ſuch a ſettled *Malignity* of Temper, as would make thoſe, of a different Diſpoſition, very unhappy in the World, did not God reſerve to himſelf a Power of interpoſing. The cruel or ambitious Views of one great Man would be enough to run whole Kingdoms into Diſtraction; and good Men more eſpecially, the more *innocently* they conducted themſelves, would but be more expoſed to the common *Rapine* and Inſults of the Wicked: [t] For if now, that a wiſe and good Providence governs the World, there is ſo much Confuſion and Injuſtice in it, what a diſmal *Scene* of Miſery muſt it have been, without an over-ruling Power, either to *prevent* the Deſigns of the Wicked, or to *convert* them to an End, different to their Intentions? The Truth is, Mankind is become ſo deſtitute of *Bowels*, and ſo full of *Rancour* to one another, that the *Bonds* of Society would be diſſolved, the World become a Field of Blood, and Fraud and Violence the principal Actors in it, were it once abandoned by Providence. That therefore it is kept in ſuch good Order, and, in the main, is a tolerable Habitation, for the Time that we are to continue here; that the Wicked have not always their Will, nor the Innocent fall a Prey to the Oppreſſor, is entirely owing to that Divine Wiſdom, that *diſappointeth the Devices* of the one, *ſo that that they are not able to perform them*; and to that Divine Goodneſs, which takes the other under Protection, and to *thoſe, that have no Might, increaſeth Strength*: [u] For God preſerveth thoſe that love him, *but ſcattereth abroad all the Ungodly*.

Private,

IF we conſider Man in a more *private* Capacity, the *Reaſons* of a Providence, to guide and direct them, are equally conſpicuous. The many Accidents of Life, eſpecially of Infancy, expoſe him to ſo great and continual Dangers, that, to human Appearance, 'tis ſcarce poſſible, that he ſhould avoid them all with Safety, if a *particular* Providence (how inviſible ſoever the Methods of it may be) ſhould not ſometimes interfere to protect and deliver him. The Pſalmiſt has given us a beautiful Inſtance of one Sort of Men, whoſe whole Life is nothing elſe, but one continued *Round* of *providential* Eſcapes; [x] *They that go down to the Sea in Ships, and occupy their Buſineſs in great Waters, theſe Men ſee the Works of the Lord, and his Wonders in the Deep; for, at his Word, the ſtormy Wind ariſeth, which liſteth up the Waves thereof: They are carried up to the Heaven, and down again to the Deep; they reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken Man, and are at their Wit's End: So, when*

[p] *Sherlock*, of Divine Providence. [q] Job xxxix. 15, &c. [r] Iſa. xlix. 15, 16. [s] *Stillingfleet's* Orig. Sacræ. [t] *Fiddes's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [u] Pſal. cxlv. 20. [x] Ibid. cvii. 23, &c.

when they cry unto the Lord in their Trouble, he delivereth them out of their Diſtreſs; for he maketh the Storm to ceaſe, that the Waves thereof are ſtill, and ſo he bringeth them to the Haven, where they would be. But, without entering into ſuch *dangerous* Occupations, there are very few Perſons, if any perhaps, living, who muſt not, upon their own Experience, aſſent to the Truth of what we are here obſerving, if they will but duly attend to all the Circumſtances of their Deliverance, upon certain, nice, and critical Conjunctures; and therefore 'tis very probable, that holy *David*, who had himſelf many wonderful Eſcapes, founded the following Ejaculations concerning Providence, upon his own Remembrance, as well as the Reaſon of the Thing: *Thou art my Hope, O Lord God, thou art my Truſt from my Youth;* [y] *by thee have I been holden up from the Womb; by thee have I been made to dwell in Safety.* [z] *He holdeth our Soul in Life, and ſuffereth not our Feet to be moved;* [a] *he ſhall defend us under his Wings, and we ſhall be ſafe under his Feathers; his Faithfulneſs and Truth ſhall be our Shield and Buckler.*

ONCE more, if we conſider Man as a *religious* Creature, capable of worſhipping and doing Honour to God, how reaſonable ſoever this Capacity may be of itſelf, yet, without the Belief of a Providence, it would be of little or no Uſe. *And* religious *Capacity.*

"For if the Gods (as [b] the *Roman* Orator excellently expreſſes it) do not extend "their Care and Inſpection to the Affairs of human Life, what Piety, what Holi-"neſs, what Religion will there be in the World? If the Gods cannot, or will "not, concern themſelves with our Neceſſities, to aid and ſuccour us; if they take "no Notice of our Actions, what Advantage is it to honour them, to build Tem-"ples, and to pray unto them? And if, by a juſt Conſequence, we thus take all "Religion out of the World, there will be nothing left among Men, but Trou-"bles, Confuſions, and Diſorders, and all Sincerity, Security, and Society will be "baniſhed from the Earth."

THE Truth is, moſt of the Acts of religious Worſhip conſider God, not merely as an *univerſal Cauſe*, but as our particular *Patron*, *Protector*, and *Preſerver*; and therefore, unleſs we are perſuaded, that God takes an immediate Care of all his Creatures, in the Government of all Events, that can happen to them, there can be no Reaſon given for many particular Duties of Religion. [c] To fear God, and to ſtand in Awe of his Juſtice; to truſt and depend on him in all Conditions; to ſubmit patiently to his Will under all Afflictions; to pray to him for the Supply of our Wants, or the Relief of our Sufferings; and to love and praiſe him for the Bleſſings, both *ſpiritual* and *temporal*, that we enjoy; theſe are not the Acts of *reaſonable* Men, unleſs we believe that God has the ſupreme Diſpoſal of all Things, and takes a particular Care of us. For if any Good or Evil can befal us, without God's Order and Appointment, we have no Reaſon to love and praiſe him for every Bleſſing we receive, becauſe we know not, whether it came from him or not; we have no Reaſon to bear our Sufferings *ſubmiſſively* and patiently at his Hands, becauſe we know not whether our Sufferings be his Will or not; and 'tis to no Purpoſe to pray to him, upon any Want or Emergency, if he confines himſelf to a *ſuperior Region*, and caſts no Regard upon us. Such are the Conſequences, that our very Reaſon muſt dictate, if we acknowledge not a Providence, watching over every Thing that happens in the World, and directing all *Events* to their proper and reſpective Ends.

ANOTHER Evidence of Divine Providence, is the *Continuation* of all Things, in the ſame comely Order, wherein they were at firſt created. [d] It cannot but be a very delightful Entertainment to the Mind, to take a Survey of all the *Curioſities* and ſurpriſing *Wonders* in Nature; to obſerve, with what Art and Contrivance particular Creatures are formed, and how the Parts of the Whole are fitted to each other, and make a *regular* and uniform World; and to perceive how all Creatures are adapted to the Uſe and Purpoſes of their ſeveral Natures, and yet have as mutual a *Connection* and *Dependence*, as the Wheels of a Clock. Now, if the Beauty, and Uſefulneſs, and wiſe Contrivance of the Works of Nature, prove that the World was at firſt made by a wiſe and powerful Being; the Continuance and Preſervation of all Things, the regular Motions of the Heavens, and the uniform Productions of Nature, prove the World to be upheld, directed, and governed by the ſame omnipotent Wiſdom and Counſel. 3. *From the Continuation of all Things,*

To

[y] Pſal. lxxi. 6. [z] Ibid. lxvi. 9. [a] Ibid. xci. 4. [b] Cicero, de Nat. Deor. *Lib.* 1.
[c] *Sherlock*, of Divine Providence. [d] Ibid.

To ſay no more of the great Regularity of celeſtial Bodies; [e] the very *Elements*, whereof this World is compoſed, have all Qualities, we ſee, very different, and vaſtly repugnant to each other; and yet this Repugnancy is ſo ordered, and their natural *Animoſities* ſo happily *tempered* and *reſtrained*, that the *Fire* invades not the *Air*, nor the *Water* the *Earth*, but every one keeps within its proper Bounds: And though, in ſundry Places, the Water is above the Earth, yet, contrary to its own Nature, which is to *expatiate*, it only overlooks, not *overflows* its Banks; being bounded by that Decree, which ſays to its *proud Waves*, *Hitherto ſhall ye go, and no farther*. [f] When therefore we conſider, how this great Machine of the World, whoſe Parts are infinite for Number and Variety, has ſtood, ſix thouſand Years together, always *one* and the *ſame*, unimpaired in its *Beauty*, unworn in its *Parts*, unwearied and undiſturbed in its *Motions*; through what an infinite Series of Generations and Corruptions all its Plants and Animals have paſt, and yet how, after they have been corrupted over and over, their whole Frame broken in Pieces, and all their Parts divided and diſperſed, they have ſtill been generated a-new, and reſtored to the ſame *ſpecifick* Natures; when we conſider theſe ſtrange and wonderous Things, I ſay, we cannot but conclude, that there is a wiſe unerring Providence, [g] *great in Counſel, and mighty in Work*, that guides the Motions of the Heavens, and [h] *bears up the Pillars of the Earth*; recruits the Decays, and preſerves the Face of Nature always the ſame.

4. *From Miracles.*

AND as the conſtant *Preſervation* of the World, ſo the ſtrange and wonderful *Occurrences*, that ſometimes happen in it, are another Evidence of a Divine Providence over-ruling it. The Nature of Matter and Motion is ſuch, that they cannot ſerve the Deſigns of their Creator without his Aſſiſtance, and therefore he conſtantly does aſſiſt, according to a certain Tenour, which he hath preſcribed to himſelf; but this Tenour and Courſe he ſometimes alters, upon great and important Occaſions. [i] In a natural and ordinary Way, he cures Diſeaſes, and ſends Rain or dry Weather, or elſe our Prayers are inſignificant; he feeds the Hungry *that cry unto him*, and he puniſhes the Wicked, when he ſees fit, by Famine or Peſtilence; but ſometimes he alters theſe ordinary Methods, (to ſignalize his Mercy or his Judgments) as Chriſt fed ſo many Thouſands in the Wilderneſs, and God rained down Fire upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, by a particular and miraculous Diſpenſation: For *Miracles* are God's *wonderful* Works, when he interpoſes in an *extraordinary* Manner, and alters the Method, which he has preſcribed to himſelf in the common Courſe of Things. [k] Now, we muſt either flatly deny all human *Teſtimony*, and condemn the Records of every Age for Cheats and Impoſtures, or we muſt allow, that there have been ſundry Miracles done in the World: And if, of all thoſe Miracles that have been ſo well atteſted, there happens but *one* to be true, that one is a ſufficient Argument of an *over-ruling* Providence. For it is not conceivable, how any natural Cauſe, that has no Will of its own to move and determine it, ſhould either *ſtop* its own Motion, and then move again, or deviate from its Courſe, and then return again, (which is the Caſe of Miracles) if it were not under the Command of ſome ſuperior *Being*, that guides and diſpoſes it, according to his own Will.

5. *Prodigies.*

THERE are other ſtrange Occurrences, ſuch as *Signs*, and *Comets*, and *Apparitions* in the Air, (not to mention Famines, and Peſtilences, and Earthquakes here below) which lead us to the Acknowledgment of this great Truth: For how much ſoever we may, in other Caſes, impute a great deal to *ſecond Cauſes*, in theſe, the Lord ſeems to [l] *make bare his holy Arm in the Sight of all the Nations*, and to *hang up an Enſign from* afar, *that all the Ends of the Earth may ſee, and fear, and do no more wickedly*.

[m] BEFORE the ſacking of *Jeruſalem* by *Antiochus*, the Author of the Book of *Maccabees* tells us, *that*, [n] *for the Space of almoſt forty Days, there were ſeen, in the Air, Troops of Horſemen in Array, encountering and running at one another, with ſhaking of Shields, and drawing of Swords, and caſting of Darts, and glittering of golden Ornaments*. Before its laſt and final Overthrow by *Titus*, not only *Joſephus*, but *Tacitus*, who lived in thoſe Days, tells us, (what our bleſſed Saviour had predicted almoſt forty Years before) [o] *that Troops of Men appeared in the Sky, all in bright*

[e] *Scott*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. II. [f] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [g] Jer. xxxii. 19. [h] Pſal. lxxv. 3.
[i] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion, Vol. II. [k] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [l] Iſa. lii. 10.
[m] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [n] 2 Macc. v. 2, 3. [o] *Tacitus* Hiſt. Lib. v. and *Joſephus*. de Bello Jud.

bright Armour, and that a fiery Sword, or a blazing Star in the Shape of a Sword, *hung over the City for a whole Year together, and was gazed on by all its Inhabitants*; and to mention one Inſtance of a later Date; before the firſt coming of the *Turks* to beſiege *Vienna*, we have two [p] ſufficient Authors, who aſſure us, that Armies in the Air, and other ſtrange Sights and Noiſes were, for ſome Time, ſeen and heard, about that Place.

NOW if ſome wiſe Men, (as [q] a great Author of our own Nation expreſſes it) not *ſuperſtitiouſly*, but *diſcreetly* do think, that prodigious Signs from Heaven, or on Earth, are not to be neglected; if all the great *Changes* and Commotions (as [r] one, that had no great Kindneſs for Providence, confeſſes) which have at any Time, happened to Cities or Countries, have been foreſhewn by *Prodigies* and Signs from Heaven; and if Comets (as [s] many wiſe Men imagine) are *Prognoſticks* and Forerunners of remarkable Events, and deſigned by Heaven to forewarn Men of enſuing Judgments and Calamities; then are theſe Prodigies loud Declarations of God's Government of the World; ſince they repreſent him, not only acting above the Power of Nature, but predicting what is to come to paſs.

NOR is it only in theſe *wonderful* Events, but even the moſt *ordinary* Occurrences, that the *Footſteps* of Providence may be ſometimes plainly ſeen; for whatever ſavours of deep Counſel and Deſign, and is of mighty Conſequence to the Government of the World, and yet brought about without any human Foreſight and Contrivance, not only *beſides*, but *contrary* to, the Intentions of the *viſible* Actors, ought, in all Reaſon, to be attributed to an *inviſible* Wiſdom. 6. *And ordinary Events.*

[t] WHEN therefore great and wonderful Things are done by an unſeen Concurrence of many *caſual* and fortuitous Events; when the greateſt *Politicians* are outwitted, their Counſels diſtracted, and Meaſures broken, and Deſigns defeated, without any viſible Wiſdom or Power to oppoſe them; when the Hearts of Princes are turned, *like the Rivers of Waters*, and ſuch an unaccountable Change manifeſtly ſerves ſome great and wiſe Ends of Providence; when Men of contrary Intereſts and Factions, without either reconciling their Quarrels, or adviſing with one another, ſhall, *unexpectedly*, conſpire in the ſame Thing, intending to ſerve their own contrary Ends by it; in theſe, and many more Caſes of the like Nature, the Hand of God is very viſible.

WHEN the Puniſhment of bad Men carries the Marks and Characters of their Sins on them; when thoſe, that, in a drunken Quarrel, have killed their Neighbours or Friends, and eſcaped Juſtice, fall, in the ſame Manner, in a drunken Quarrel; when an unjuſt Oppreſſor is ruined by an unjuſt Oppreſſor; and thoſe that have ſpoiled *Widows* and *Orphans*, leave their own Widows and Orphans a rich Prey to other Spoilers; when *ſecret Sins*, eſpecially barbarous Murthers, are diſcovered by ſome ſtrange Accidents, and ſuch Sinners brought to Puniſhment; when wicked and miſchievous *Conſpiracies* are defeated, juſt as they are become ripe for Execution; when Men venture upon a Wickedneſs, to avoid a Miſchief they foreſee, and, by that very Means, bring the Miſchief upon themſelves, which they intended to prevent: Theſe and ſuch like are remarkable Inſtances of a ſecret and Divine Juſtice, which governs the World. And (not to inſiſt too long upon this) whatever we may think of the preſent Irregularities, the Afflictions of good Men, and the Proſperity of the Wicked; yet, if we conſider Things ſeriouſly, we muſt confeſs, that it is no ſmall Argument of a Providence, that the World is kept in ſuch good Order as it is; that good Men are no greater Sufferers than they are, ſeeing there are ſo many wicked Men to oppreſs them; that Mens Ambition is bounded, and the moſt threatning Torrent kept within its Banks; that Juſtice is ſo equally adminiſtered, and human Society not broken and diſſolved, conſidering the general Corruption of Mankind, and the Fury and Violence of their Luſts and Paſſions.

SINCE therefore the Proofs of a Providence, which Way ſoever we turn ourſelves, come ſo ſtrong upon us; whether we look up to God, and his Attributes, 7. *From univerſal Conſent.*

[p] Scheretzius, & Lavater de Spectris. *Lucan* recounts the Prodigies, which happened before the Civil Eruptions between *Cæſar* and *Pompey*, and acquaints us that the whole Theatre of the World was filled with them:

——— ſuperique minaces
Prodigiis terras implerunt, æthera, pontum. *Pharſ.* Lib. i.

And *Ovid*, upon another Occaſion, takes more eſpecial Notice upon this Kind of Prodigies:

Arma ferunt, inter nigras crepitantia nubes,
Terribileſque Tubas, auditaque Cornua Cœlo
Præmonuiſſe nefas ——— *Metam.* Lib. xv.

[q] Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s Acts of the Empire. [r] Machiav. Diſp. de Repub. Lib. xi. [s] *Edwards*'s Treatiſe of Comets. [t] *Sherlock*, of Judgment.

or on ourſelves and our Capacities; into the Senſe of the Scriptures, or the Suggeſtions of Reaſon; the conſtant Courſe of Nature, or the miraculous Interruptions of it; the common and ordinary Events, or the great and wonderful Occurrences, that happen in the World; we have ſufficient Grounds to conclude, that this is a Principle, wherein all Mankind are agreed, and that [u] no Nation was ever yet ſo barbarous (if their Notions and Practices were ſufficiently enquired into) but what believed, that the World was governed by ſome excellent Being or other: [x] Their Prayers and Invocations, their Oblations and Sacrifices, their Vows and Obteſtations were all direct Acknowledgments of a Providence: And therefore they profeſſed, [y] that with the ſame Eyes, wherewith they ſaw God in his Works, they could not but perceive him *there* directing every Thing, diſpoſing of every Thing, and encompaſſing every Thing with the immenſe Extent of his Power and Wiſdom.

SECT. II.

The ATTRIBUTES *of* PROVIDENCE.

HOW conſpicuous ſoever God's Government of the World may be, yet there have not, in all Ages, been wanting Objections againſt it; and therefore to reduce them under proper Heads, we ſhall firſt explain the ſeveral Characters, or eſſential Attributes of the Divine Providence, which theſe Objections ſeem to affect, and then form our Replies accordingly.

The abſolute Power *of Providence.*

NOW one of the firſt *Properties*, that we conceive in God, as a Being, that is qualified for the Government of the World, is *Power*, and a Power that is *abſolute* and uncontroulable. For if we could ſuppoſe any Power ſuperior to his, he could not [z] *do whatever he pleaſed in Heaven and in Earth, in the Seas, and in all deep Places*; nor could it, with any Juſtice, be affirmed of him, [a] *that none can ſtay his Hand, or ſay unto him, What doſt thou? He is wiſe in Heart, and mighty in Strength: Who hath hardened himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?* Abſolute and uncontroulable Power, among Men, has indeed been brought into great Diſgrace, by Reaſon of the arbitrary and *tyrannical* Government of ſome Monarchs, that have thought themſelves inveſted with it. But, properly ſpeaking, there is no ſuch Thing as *abſolute* Power upon Earth; for a thouſand and ten thouſand Things may be named, that the moſt ſovereign *Potentate* muſt acknowledge himſelf unable to perform. [b] *Abſolute* Government among Men ſignifies only an uncontroulable Liberty to do all, that it will, and can do; a Will, which is under no *human* Reſtraints, which may will whatever it pleaſes, and do whatever it wills, as far as it *can*; but this has not Power to do all that it *would*; and this is the Reaſon, why Men, in the Exerciſe of ſuch a Government, are tempted ſo often to do what is *wrong*. Their Paſſions, which are the *Weakneſſes* of human Nature, when they are not under the Government of Reaſon, put them upon hoping, or deſiring, or fearing what they have not Power to eſcape or accompliſh, without doing Injury to others; and therefore they regard leſs the Means, ſo they may but attain their End; laying Countries *waſte*, and ſhedding a *Deluge* of innocent Blood, to pleaſe their Ambition, or gratify their Malice and Revenge. But now, in God, his Perfections (however we may conceive them) are but one Being, abſolutely perfect; and therefore his *abſolute* Power cannot be ſeparate from his *abſolute* Juſtice. In God there can be no *Want* of any Thing; for he, that is the ſole Lord and Proprietor of the World, and whoſe Power and Wiſdom can accompliſh whatever he has a Mind to do, without doing the leaſt Injuſtice, can never be tempted to injure his Creatures: And in God, none of thoſe injurious Paſſions, which diſturb the Peace and Poſſeſſions of Mankind, can be ſuppoſed to dwell. His Power therefore, which is always actuated by calm and ſteady Wiſdom, joined with unerring Juſtice, cannot be capable of doing Wrong: It ſecures him againſt receiving any Injury, and conſequently, raiſes him above the Temptation of doing any. 'Tis the Power, which is conſcious of its own Weakneſs and Danger, that is

[u] Nulla gens uſquam eſt adeo contra leges moreſque projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat. *Sen.* [x] Nec in hunc Furórem omnes mortales conſenſiſſent alloquendi ſurda numina, & inefficaces Deos. *Sen.* [y] *Martin's* Natural Religion. [z] Pſal. cxxxv. 6. [a] Job ix. 4. [b] *Sherlock* of Divine Providence.

is cruel, inſolent, and miſchievous: The Power, that knows itſelf out of Danger, out of the Reach of Envy and Ill-will, is a generous Adverſary; never inſults its proſtrate Enemies, but looks upon them all as the Objects of its Pity, and not of its Revenge.

AND if that little Power, which Men have upon Earth, gives them ſuch a Greatneſs of Mind, as ſets them above Affronts and Injuries; if a Temper like this is ſo natural to Power, that every one expects a Generoſity proportionate to the Man's high Station and Authority; then what may we not expect from the perfect and abſolute Power of God, that can have no Temptation to do us hurt, and is under the ſtrongeſt Inclinations to do us good; ſince to do good is certainly an *higher Act* of Power, as well as a more beautiful and glorious Thing in its Nature, than to do harm? His Juſtice indeed we have Reaſon to fear, becauſe his Juſtice will puniſh our Tranſgreſſions; but his abſolute Power we have no more Reaſon to fear, than we have his abſolute Goodneſs: Nay, abſolute Power, which will do no Wrong itſelf, and rectify the Wrongs, which are done by others, is our only Security againſt ſuffering Wrong, and gives us great Relief and Satisfaction of Mind, under ſome *providential* Iſſues.

2. *Unſearchable* Wiſdom.

ANOTHER Property conceivable in God, to qualify him for the Government of the World, is *Wiſdom*; for Wiſdom ſeems to bear the ſame Relation to the Acts of the Mind, that the Eye has to the Motions of the Body, *viz.* to diſcern the End, and direct the Means, and foreſee the Impediments, that lie in the [c] Way. The beſt End, and the wiſeſt Means, we may be ſatisfied, are always in the Breaſt of God: But, becauſe the Depth of his Wiſdom and Knowledge is infinite, his Judgments unſearchable, *and his Ways paſt finding out*; it may not be amiſs to ſuggeſt a Reaſon or two for this *Unſearchableneſs*, the better to ſettle our Minds in a *fixed* Acquieſcence upon God.

'TIS very obſervable, that, in God's Conference with *Job*, in order to vindicate the Ways of his Providence, he does not enter into a Diſplay of the ſecret Reaſons of it, but only propoſes ſome abſtruſe Queſtions to him; [d] *Where is the Way, where Light dwelleth? And as for Darkneſs, where is the Place thereof? Haſt thou enter'd into the Treaſures of the Snow? Or haſt thou known the Treaſures of the Hail? Hath the Rain a Father? Or who hath begotten the Drops of the Dew? Out of whoſe Womb came the Ice? And the hoary Froſt of Heaven, who hath gendered it?* By which Words, elegantly enough expreſſed, God endeavours to make *Job* ſenſible, how unqualified he was to underſtand the Ways of Providence, who was not acquainted with the moſt common and familiar Works of Nature. And indeed if we conſider the Extent of our Knowledge, (or rather of our Ignorance) we ſhall ſoon perceive, how unfit we are to enter into the ſecret Adminiſtrations of Providence. We are ignorant of Men, and know nothing of their Hearts and Intentions; we ſee little of their private Converſation, and cannot look into their Cloſets and ſecret Retirements; and can therefore form no rational Conjecture, what they have deſerved from the Hands of God: We are ignorant of the Ends and Purpoſes, that Providence has laid down to itſelf, and can therefore underſtand the Wiſdom of the *intermediate* Events, that are to bring them about, no more, than we can judge of the juſt Contrivance of the *Plot*, by ſeeing only one or two *Scenes* of the *Play*: And, what is more, we are ignorant of the State of the other World, which has a manifeſt Relation to this; and therefore cannot pronounce any Thing concerning Providence, until we ſee what the Reſult of Things is *elſewhere*, and in what Manner every one's Fate is to be ſettled by an eternal Award. That we are to live in another World, is a general Anſwer to all the Difficulties we may imagine, and gives us a ſatisfactory Reaſon, why we muſt not expect to underſtand all the particular Paſſages of Providence, in *this*. Though therefore the Reaſons of Providence be a Matter too difficult for our Enquiry; yet what greater Security can Creatures have, than to know, they are under the Care and Guidance of infinite Wiſdom, that can do nothing amiſs? Infinite Wiſdom indeed is incomprehenſible to a finite Mind, the Methods of it may ſeem intricate and perplexed to us, full of Myſtery and ſurprizing Events; and thus it muſt be, while infinite Wiſdom governs the World, which is ſo much above the Reach of our moſt improv'd and elevated Thoughts. But, would not any wiſe Man rather chuſe to be governed by ſuch a perfect and excellent Wiſdom, as can never miſtake, though it vaſtly exceeds his Underſtanding, than to be governed by a Being, no wiſer, or not much wiſer, than himſelf, whoſe Counſels he

[c] Rom. xi. 33. [d] Job xxxviii. 19, &c.

he can fathom, and find out the Reaſon of all his Proceedings? The more complete and excellent the Wiſdom is, the leſs we underſtand it indeed, but then the more ſafe and ſecure we are under its Care and Conduct. 'Tis Folly to think, that we are the leſs perfect and happy Creatures, becauſe we know not how God made us; how he formed us in the Womb, and breathed into us the Breath of Life: And 'tis as abſurd to imagine, that the World is leſs wiſely governed, becauſe we cannot ſee into the Adminiſtration of it. We find ourſelves wiſely made, though we know not how God made us; and, if we follow God, and adhere to him, we ſhall find and feel ourſelves very happy, though we may not underſtand the Reaſons of all intermediate Events, nor the ſeveral Steps and Advances of Providence, to make us ſo.

3. Juſtice. ANOTHER Character of Divine Providence, required in the Rule and Government of the World, is ſtrict and unerring *Juſtice*, without which, Mens Rights and Properties would be precarious, and Rewards and Puniſhments diſpenſed at Random: And therefore the Scriptures take Care to aſſure us, [e] *that the righteous Lord loveth Righteouſneſs, and his Countenance ſhall behold the Thing that is juſt*; that *Mercy and Truth go before him*, [f] *and Righteouſneſs and Judgment are the Habitation of his Seat*; [g] *ſhall not the Judge of all the World do right?* We muſt obſerve however, that, although the general Notion of Juſtice and Righteouſneſs be the ſame both with Reſpect to God and Man; yet there is a Manifeſt Difference, as to the Acts and Exerciſe of it. [h] No Man can, by Right, take away that, which is another's, and which he has no Authority to take away, whatever wiſe and good Ends he can ſerve by it: But, conſidering God, as the ſole Lord and Proprietor of the World, he may give, or take away a Man's Riches, and Honours, and Powers, when he pleaſes, without being chargeable with any Injuſtice; for what he gives, and what he takes away, are both his own, and *may he not do what he will with his own?*

How exerciſed.

IT would ſeem hard, in human Governments, to puniſh a virtuous and innocent Man; to deprive him of his Eſtate, or Honours; to expoſe him to publick Scorn, confine him to a noiſome Priſon, and, at laſt, take away his Life with exquiſite Pains and Torments: But the ſovereign Authority of God extends to all this, when he can ſerve his own Glory, and the wiſe Ends of his Providence by it, without doing any real Injury to his Creatures. His Wiſdom indeed requires, that there ſhould be very wiſe and excellent Reaſons for doing this; and his Goodneſs requires, that ſuch Men ſhould be both greatly ſupported under their Sufferings, and amply rewarded for them: And having provided for *this*, his ſovereign Dominion gives him Authority to make uſe of the Services of his Creatures, in what Manner he pleaſes; for [i] *ſhall we receive Good at the Hands of God, and ſhall we not receive Evil?*

IT may be thought ſome *Infraction* upon human Laws, if an earthly Judge ſhould delay the *Releaſement* of an innocent Perſon, or defer the Puniſhment of an *enormous* Criminal; but, conſidering God as the *ſupreme* and *abſolute* Judge of the World, he is not tied up to the Rules and Formalities of Law, as inferior *Miniſters* of Juſtice are; but is left to the ſole Rule of his own ſovereign Will and Wiſdom. 'Tis required indeed of him, that good Men ſhould be rewarded, and the Wicked puniſhed; but there is no Limitation as to *Time*; that is left in his own Breaſt; only it is expected from him, that, whenever he does reward or puniſh, the good Man ſhould have no Cauſe to complain, nor the bad Man any Reaſon to glory in the Delay of their Rewards or Puniſhments, becauſe the Greatneſs of each ſhall compenſate for all his Delays.

THE Juſtice of Providence therefore does not conſiſt in rooting all bad Men out of the World, and rewarding the good with temporal Felicity; which, conſidering the preſent State of Things, cannot be done without conſtant Miracles, and the viſible Interpoſition of the Divine Power: But the Buſineſs of Providence is, to govern bad Men, and protect the good; to reſtrain and over-rule the Luſts and Paſſions of the one; to make them the Inſtruments and Executioners of his Will, and ſometimes notorious Examples of his Juſtice; and to chaſtiſe the Miſcarriages, and exerciſe the Graces of the other, that *their Souls may be found acceptable in the Day of the Lord.* If this be but done, the Juſtice of Providence is acquitted,

[e] Pſal. xi. 7. [f] Ibid. xcvii. 2. [g] Gen. xviii. 25. [h] *Sherlock*, of Divine Providence. [i] Job ii. 10.

acquitted, whatever ſeeming *Irregularities* may appear in the World, not ſo conſonant to the Laws of human Juſtice.

4. Holineſs.

ANOTHER Character of Divine *Providence*, required in the Government of the World, is Holineſs, as it is oppoſed to all Sin and Impurity; and therefore the Scripture declares, that the [k] *Lord is*, not only *righteous in all his Ways, but holy in all his Works*; [l] that *he is not a God that has Pleaſure in Wickedneſs, neither ſhall Evil dwell with him*; for *he hateth all the Workers of Iniquity, he will deſtroy them that ſpeak leaſing*; *the Lord will abhor both the bloody and deceitful Man.* But to ſet this Character in a clear Light, we muſt conſider what the Holineſs of God requires of him, as the Governor of the World; and what it does not.

Wherein it conſiſts, 1. *In preſcribing holy Laws.*

AS the Governor of the World, [m] it requires of him to preſcribe ſuch a *Rule* of Life, as is agreeable to Holineſs, and may have a proper Tendency to promote it. That God has preſcribed ſuch a Rule, is evident from the Light of our Minds, as it diſcovers itſelf by Way both of Reaſon and Reflection: For we need only conſult it, in order to know, what is fit and reaſonable to be done; or, if we have done any Thing, whether it is agreeable to the Senſe of our Minds, and the Perfection of our Nature: In which Senſe the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Gentile World, that [n] *they did by Nature the Things contained in the Law, their Conſcience alſo bearing Witneſs, and their Thoughts, the mean while, accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.*

BUT the Law of Nature is not the only *Rule* we have to follow: God has made a *Revelation* of his Will, and preſcribed us therein ſuch Rules of Holineſs, as deſerve the Commendation of the Pſalmiſt: *The Law of the Lord is an undefiled Law, converting the Soul; the Teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, and giveth Wiſdom to the Simple; the Statutes of the Lord are right, and rejoice the Heart; the Commandment of the Lord is pure, and giveth Light to the Eyes; the Fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever; the Judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether*; ſo that the great Complaint is, not that the Laws of God are defective in Point of Purity, but that they are too *holy*, too *righteous* for the corrupt State of the World; lay too much Reſtraint upon our Appetites, and require Things above the Power of human Nature to perform.

2. *In diſcouraging Vice.*

THE Holineſs of God, as the Governor of the World, requires farther, that he ſhould encourage the Practice of Virtue, and diſcourage Wickedneſs, by the viſible Indications of his Approbation or Diſlike. And, that God has abundantly done this, not only the Threats and Promiſes of the *other* Life, but even what he hath ſet before our Eyes in *this*, is a ſufficient Demonſtration. [o] If we believe the Scriptures, we muſt acknowledge, that Mortality and Death, and conſequently, all the Infirmities and Decays of Nature, all thoſe Pains, and Sickneſſes, and Diſeaſes, which are not the Effects of our own Sins, nor the Entail of our Anceſtors, are owing to *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion, and are left upon our Nature, as ſtanding Monuments of God's Diſpleaſure againſt Sin. If we look into human Life, we ſhall find that moſt, if not all the Troubles and Calamities incident to it, are occaſioned by Sin: For what Miſeries could diſturb our Quiet and Repoſe, if all Men were juſt, and honeſt, and charitable, and loved one another, as they do themſelves? Perfect Virtue is not only an harmleſs and innocent, but a very kind and beneficial Thing: And therefore God, in ordering the Circumſtances of our Life ſo, as to make Sin and Miſery, Virtue and Happineſs, *inſeparably* go together, the one the certain Parent of the other, has given us a ſenſible and convincing Proof of his *Abhorrence* of the one, and *Encouragement* of the other. If we look into the World, we ſhall meet with ſtill ſeverer Tokens of God's Indignation againſt Sin, ſuch as War, and Plague, and Peſtilence, and Famine, and Deluges, and Earthquakes, which devour the moſt populous Cities, turn whole Nations into Deſtruction, ſhake the Foundations of the Earth, and make the *Pillars of the round World tremble.* Theſe are the declared Effects of God's Indignation againſt *national* Sins; and muſt therefore be ſuppoſed to proceed from his immediate Infliction: [p] *Son of Man, when the Land ſinneth againſt me, by tranſgreſſing grievouſly, then will I ſtretch out mine Hand upon it, and will break the Staff of the Bread thereof, and will ſend Famine upon it; or if I bring a Sword upon it, and ſay, Go through the Land, ſo that I cut off Man and Beaſt from it; or if I ſend a Peſtilence into it, and pour out my Fury upon it in Blood, to cut off from it Man and Beaſt*; *though* Noah, Daniel, *and* Job *were in it: As I live, ſaith the Lord God, they ſhall deliver neither Son nor Daughter; they ſhall but deliver their own Souls by their Righteouſneſs.*

[k] Pſal. cxlv. 17. [l] Ibid. v. 4, &c. [m] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [n] Rom. ii. 14, 15.
[o] *Sherlock*, of Divine Providence. [p] Ezek. xiv. 13, &c.

So far then, as the *Preſcription* of good and wholeſome Laws, the *Miſeries* incident to human Nature, the *Connection* of Sin and Suffering, of Virtue and Happineſs, and the many ſore *Judgments* and *Calamities*, that are inflicted on a wicked People, together with the diſtinguiſhing *Preſervation* of the Righteous, are Encouragements to *Virtue*, and Diſcouragements to *Vice*, the Providence of God has expreſſed its Concern for the Promotion of Holineſs: And we muſt not therefore infer, that the Permiſſion of Sin in the World is any juſt Imputation upon it.

3. *But not in prohibiting it.*

THE *internal* Act of Sin is nothing elſe, but the bad *Choice* of a Man's Will, upon the Preſentation of any Object: And if God muſt not allow of this, he muſt not allow us to *will* or to *chuſe* any Thing, that is wicked; muſt conſequently chain up our Wills, and over-rule our Minds, to incline us to Good, and Good only; which is far from being the Government of free Agents, and deſtroys their very Capacity to Virtue or Vice.

IF then the Government of Mankind, conſidered as *rational* and *free* Agents, requires that God ſhould leave them to the Liberty of their Choice, which is the only Thing capable of Rewards or Puniſhments; then is it no reaſonable Objection againſt the Holineſs of Providence, that God permits Men to chuſe wickedly; that he does not always, by an *irreſiſtible* and *ſovereign* Power, hinder the *internal* Act of Sin; eſpecially conſidering, that God has given Mankind all thoſe Aſſiſtances of Grace, and Reſtraints upon their Luſts and Paſſions, that are conſiſtent with the Liberty of their Actions; inſomuch that even bad Men muſt acknowledge (if they would confeſs what they feel) the *Strugglings*, they find in their Mind, before they can yield to the Temptations of Sin; that, in ſome Caſes, (eſpecially at their firſt Entrance upon a wicked Courſe) natural *Modeſty*, in others natural *Pity* and *Compaſſion*, and in others, a natural *Greatneſs* and *Generoſity* of Mind, give a frequent Check to their Enormities: That, at firſt, they bluſh at the Thoughts of any Wickedneſs, and feel the Remonſtrances of Conſcience upon Reflection; tremble at the Apprehenſion of a future Judgment, or ſome preſent Vengeance to overtake them; and can never ſin with Eaſe and Security, until they have eraſed the Thoughts of God and another World. Such Care has God taken, to make Sin uneaſy to the Minds of Men, and to reconcile them to the Love of Virtue; and if, after all this, they will be wicked, (as free Agents may be, if they pleaſe) this can be no Blemiſh to the Holineſs of Providence, becauſe it is no Fault of Providence to leave free Agents to the Liberty of their Choice.

THE *external* Act of Sin may be a *natural* or *political* Evil, but the *moral* Evil is in the Will and Choice; and therefore, if it is no Blemiſh to the Holineſs of Providence, that God permits Men to *conceive* Iniquity in their Hearts, it can be no juſt Imputation, that he ſuffers them to proceed to the Commiſſion. [q] To *hinder* them, there is no other Way, but either to deprive them of Life, or of their natural Powers of acting, which would be a perpetual Violation of the Order of Nature. To *ſuffer* them, may be of more Uſe than Damage to the World: It may be a Means to make Sin *infamous* and *hateful*, and to expoſe the Sinners themſelves to Shame and Puniſhment, which may both deter others, and bring them to a Senſe of their Offences; beſides the many wiſe Deſigns, that God can bring about by the Permiſſion of Sin, both for the Good of Mankind, and the Advancement of his own Glory. So that there is no Obligation upon God, in Point of Holineſs, to prevent the Commiſſion of Sin, though, conſidering the ſad Degeneracy of Mankind, and the many timely Diſcoveries of *publick* Treaſons, and of wicked Deſigns againſt the Lives and Fortunes of *private* Men, there is Reaſon to believe, that he hinders *an hundred Times* more, than he permits.

5. *Goodneſs.*

5. I MENTION but one Character more of Divine *Providence*, requiſite in the Government of the World, and that is *Goodneſs*; which is not indeed ſo properly a Subject for our *Enquiries*, as for our conſtant and devout *Meditations*. We ſee, and feel, and taſte it every Day: Our Being, our Preſervation, and the Comforts of our Lives are all owing to it; nor can we once conſider either what we are, or what we enjoy, without being under ſtrong Engagements *to praiſe the Lord for his Goodneſs, and to declare the Wonders, that he doth for the Children of Men.* [r] But to form a right Notion of the Nature and Exerciſe of God's Goodneſs,

How exerciſed.

in

[q] *Sherlock*, of Divine Providence. [r] Ibid.

in the Government of the World, we muſt obſerve, that, at the firſt Production of all Things, the Divine Goodneſs diſplayed itſelf in a moſt beautiful and glorious Scene; for the new-made World and the new-created Man were as perfect, as the *Idea* of their Natures in the Divine Mind, and as happy as their Faculties would bear. But Man did not continue what God had made him: He ſinned; and by his Sin brought Death and Miſery into the World, which changed the *Face* of Things, and made a mighty Alteration in God's Conduct. The World before was all Happineſs and Tranquillity, without any Thing to deface the *Beauty*, or diſturb the *Harmony* of it; but, upon the Admiſſion of Sin, God's Juſtice interpoſed (as it needs muſt do, when Mankind became Sinners) to limit and confine the Divine Benignity from exerting itſelf ſo graciouſly, as it had done before.

'JUSTICE requires the Puniſhment of Sinners, but Goodneſs is inclined to ſpare; and Wiſdom judges when, and in what Manner, it is fit to puniſh, or to ſpare. An *incurable* Sinner is the Object of ſtrict and rigorous *Juſtice*; a *corrigible* Sinner is the Object both of *Juſtice* and *Goodneſs*; his Sin deſerves Correction and Puniſhment; but that he is *corrigible*, makes him the Object both of *Patience* and *Diſcipline*. Hence it is, that the preſent State of Mankind, in this World, is a State of *Trial* and *Probation*, in order to reclaim and reform Sinners, by the various Methods of Grace and Providence; and that we are forbid to expect any other Tokens of the Divine Goodneſs, than what ſuch a State will admit of.

IT will not indeed admit of compleat and perfect Happineſs, which is inconſiſtent with the Diſcipline of this Life, where Miſeries and Afflictions become neceſſary, to wean *good* Men from the Love of the World, and to lay a Reſtraint upon the *bad*; but the Goodneſs of God requires that our preſent Habitation ſhould be tolerable, and attended with its Pleaſures, as well as its Pains; for there would be no Room for the Exerciſe of many *Moral* and *Chriſtian* Virtues, no Encouragement for Faith, and Hope, and Truſt in God, nor any Occaſion for Self-denial and Contempt of the World, if it were nothing elſe, but a Scene of Woe and Miſery: It requires, that there ſhould be more Good than Evil, more Happineſs than Miſery in the World; that the Bad ſhould not be puniſhed beyond the Proportion of their Faults, nor [t] *the Rod of the Wicked come* too often *into the Lot of the Righteous, leſt the Righteous alſo put forth his Hand to Wickedneſs*: It requires, that God ſhould be patient and long-ſuffering with Sinners, and not only give them Time to repent, but invite and encourage them to do it, by all the Arts and Methods of Endearment; for *Hope* is as powerful a Principle as *Fear*; and *Love* and *Kindneſs* may melt ſome Tempers into Compliance, whom *Severity* and *Judgments* cannot bow: And laſtly it requires, that he ſhould make ſome remarkable Difference between the Bad and the Good; for ſince the Deſign of Providence, in a State of Trial, is to encourage Virtue, and deter Men from Sin, there muſt be ſome viſible *Diſcrimination*, that thoſe, who ſee it, may ſay, [u] *Verily there is a Reward for the Righteous, and doubtleſs there is a God that judgeth the Earth.*

THIS is all, that can, in Reaſon, be expected from the Divine Goodneſs, as it relates to a State of Diſcipline, which muſt be conſidered in the Government of the World: And that God has effectually taken Care of this, we ſhall have Occaſion to make appear, when we come to the Objections, wherein this Attribute is concerned.

SECT. III.

OBJECTIONS *againſt* PROVIDENCE.

ONE Objection, that ſeems to affect the *Providence* of God, as a Matter above his *Power* to do, is the vaſt Multitude of Beings, that are in the World; the Variety of our Thoughts and Motions, and the many minute Occurrences, that happen here below; which he can ſcarce be ſuppoſed to attend to, all at one Time, without the utmoſt Difficulty and Diſtraction: For thus we find the *Roman Orator* repreſenting

1. *'Tis above God's* Power *to govern all Things.*

[s] *Sherlock*, of Divine Providence. [t] Pſal. cxxv. 3. [u] Ibid. lviii. 11.

repreſenting [x] the Senſe of the *Epicureans* upon this Subject. "If there be ſuch a "God in the World, as rules and governs it; if he takes Care about the *Conſerva-* "*tion* of the Courſe of the *Luminaries* of Heaven, the *Succeſſion* of the Times and "Seaſons of the Year, and the ſeveral *Viciſſitudes* and Orders of Things here below; "if he contemplates the vaſt Tracts of Land, and the wide Sea, and provides for "the Life and Welfare of Mankind; then truly has he a great deal of troubleſome "and laborious Work to do." But this is meaſuring God by ourſelves, and judging of the Divine Operations by the Model of our own narrow Capacities. *We cannot conceive how God can govern all Things in the World:* But neither do the Beaſts conceive, how we Men make *Ships*, and tame the unruly *Ocean*; how we frame and govern Kingdoms and Common-wealths; how we meaſure the Courſes of the Stars; how we take Obſervations of heavenly Bodies; how we diſcourſe of Religion and Divine Matters: And yet it is certain, that we do all theſe Things, and equally certain, that the wiſeſt and greateſt Men are infinitely inferior to the *ſupreme* God, much more than the meaneſt Beaſts are to them.

This confuted.

WE *cannot conceive how God ſhould inſpect all Things at once here below:* But if we look up to that glorious *Luminary* of Heaven, the Sun, we may perceive how, in the ſame Moment, it diffuſes its Light and Heat into all the ſeveral Parts and Corners of the wide Earth, and peeps thro' every *Crevice* of every, the moſt *ſecret* Place thereof: How then can we ſee this wonderfully diffuſive Influence of a *created Light*, and not allow of a far more extenſive Efficacy in the great Creator and *Father of Light?* The Diſtance from Heaven to Earth may perhaps be thought too wide for God's Inſpection to reach: But if we open our Eyes, we ſtraight perceive, that we, in a Moment, can dart our Sight to Heaven; and how then can we think, but that he, who made us ſee from Earth to Heaven, ſhould himſelf [y] *look down from Heaven*, with ten thouſand Times more Facility, *to behold all the Children of Men*, and *from the Habitation of his Dwelling, to conſider all them, that dwell on the Face of the Earth,*

WE *cannot conceive how God is able to guide and direct all Things at once*, becauſe a Multitude of Buſineſs, we find, is uneaſy to us, by Reaſon of the Weakneſs of our Faculties; But *the Lord,* [z] *the everlaſting God, the Creator of the Earth, fainteth not, neither is he weary.* [a] He acts with the ſame Eaſe, wherewith he exiſts, knows all Things by one *omniſcient* Thought, and does all Things by one *omnipotent* Act; and therefore he can provide for all the World, as well as for one ſingle Man, and govern *all* the *Beings* in it, with the ſame *Facility*, as if he had only *one* Being to take Care of: [b] For if we ourſelves can manage *one* Buſineſs, that we thoroughly underſtand, why may not God, for the ſame Reaſon, manage *all?* He certainly underſtands *all*, much better than we do *one*; and therefore, ſuppoſing the Things in the World to be infinite, yet ſince his Knowledge and Power are likewiſe infinite, there is the very ſame Proportion of *infinite* to infinite, as of *one* to one.

2. *'Tis beneath his Majeſty.*

THERE is another Objection againſt *Providence*, that runs in a contrary Strain, making it *beneath* the Majeſty of God, to concern himſelf with the little Affairs of this World: For [c] thus we find the *Epicurean* brought in again by [d] *Cicero:* "God "deſpiſes ſuch Things as theſe, *ſays he*, he does not trouble himſelf about every "Countryman's Grounds and Vineyards, nor takes he any Notice of the Damage "they receive by Blaſting, or Hail, or the like: Theſe are poor *inconſiderable* "Things, and not worth the Care of the ſupreme Being:" [e] But this is a very irrational Thought, proceeding from the Want of a right Knowledge of the Deity, and due Apprehenſions of his tranſcendent Nature, which is not like *ours*, finite and ſtinted, but infinite and immenſe; ſpreading itſelf as wide as the Univerſe, and having, conſequently, the *leaſt* and *loweſt* Matters under its Inſpection and Government.

This confuted.

How far God is concerned in the Government of all *Events*, even ſuch as depend upon *natural* Cauſes, is what we have ſufficiently conſidered before; and have only Need to obſerve farther, that, ſince the World is a Dominion of ſuch vaſt *Extent*, the

[x] Si in ipſo mundo Deus ineſt aliquis, qui regat, qui gubernet, qui curſus aſtrorum, mutationes temporum, rerum viciſſitudines ordineſque conſervet, terras & maria contemplans, hominum commoda vitaſque tueatur; næ ille eſt implicatus moleſtis negotiis & operoſis. Cicer. de Nat. Deor. Lib. i. [y] *Bull's* Sermons, Vol. II. [z] Pſal. xxxiii. 13. [a] Iſa. xl. 28. [b] *Jenkins's* Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion. [c] *Scott's* Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [d] Minora Dii negligunt, nec Agellos ſingulorum nec viticulas proſequuntur, nec ſi Uredo aut Grando quidpiam nocet, id Jovi animadvertendum fuit. De Nat. Deorum. [e] *Edwards's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

the moſt *glorious* Employment, that the largeſt Mind can undertake, muſt certainly be to *rule* and *govern* it; for what can we conceive ſo great and *Godlike*, as to ſit at the *Helm* of this *floating* Univerſe, and ſteer all its Motions to their reſpective Ends, with a ſteady and unerring Hand?

'TIS far therefore from being *derogatory* to the *Majeſty* of God, to undertake the Adminiſtration of the Affairs of this World; and, if we conſider farther, that he himſelf is the *Father* of all this great Family of Beings, it cannot but be conſiſtent with his *Goodneſs*, to have Concern for his own Off-ſpring: For why ſhould it be below him to take Care of any Thing, that it was not below him to create? The *leaſt* and moſt inconſiderable Creatures that we ſee, are always of the *niceſt* and moſt elegant Compoſition: The *Gnat* (which is [f] *Pliny*'s beloved Inſtance) has Taſte, and Sight, and Smell, and Muſcles, and Joints, and Sinews, of a much *finer* Texture, than thoſe of a larger Animal; and, if God has been pleaſed to expend ſo much Pains (if any Thing were painful to him) in the Formation of an *Inſect*, it would ſavour of *Capriciouſneſs* in him, not to think it, afterwards, a fit Object of his Care. And therefore, to avoid the Danger of ſuch a Miſconſtruction, our bleſſed Saviour has aſſured us, *that* [g] *the Fowls of the Air*, and the *Lilies of the Field*, [h] the *Sparrows* in the Hedge, and the *Hairs* on our Head, *i. e.* the moſt trivial and inſignificant Things, we can imagine, are under God's *providential* Care and Obſervation.

3. *Delay of Rewards and Puniſhments.*

"BUT if God concerns himſelf about ſuch *minute* Things, his Care, one would "think, ſhould certainly extend to *greater*; and yet we ſee, that he takes no Cog- "nizance of human Affairs; for if he did, why ſhould *Rewards* and *Puniſhments* "be delayed ſo long, and placed ſo incongruouſly? This is inconſiſtent with the "Wiſdom of Government, as it gives Countenance to Vice, and Diſcouragement "to Virtue; for [i] *when Sentence againſt an evil Work is not executed ſpeedily*, when "the Righteous are brought low, and the Wicked allowed to flouriſh, *the Heart of* "*the Sons of Men is fully ſet in them to do Evil.*" A ſpeedy Execution of Rewards and Puniſhments is indeed a great *Security* to any *civil* Government, and a mighty Encouragement to all Manner of Virtue; but in God's Adminiſtration of the World, there is not that Neceſſity for it, becauſe he has ſo contrived human Nature, that Wickedneſs is its own *Puniſhment*, and Virtue, in ſome Meaſure, its own *Reward*; that the bad Man muſt be miſerable, the good Man cannot entirely be *ſo*, come what will.

This confuted.

THE bad Man, I ſay, muſt be miſerable; becauſe there is nothing that can make a Man miſerable in this World, but what is the natural and neceſſary Effect of ſome Sin or other. [k] If Pain and Torment of the Mind be Miſery; furious and irregular Paſſions, a confounding Shame, diſtracting and terrifying Fears, raging Anger, Malice, and Revenge, and great Perplexity and Anxiety of Thoughts will make a Man miſerable; and yet theſe are the neceſſary Product of Sin. *Shame* ariſes from a Conſciouſneſs of Guilt; for nothing is truly *infamous*, but what is wicked: The Virtuous may be afraid of ſome Events, as well as other Men; but 'tis Sin, which *diſtracts* Men with thoſe guilty Fears, that are ſo intolerable to human Nature: An *uneaſy* Concern and Anxiety of Thought ariſe from a *Diffidence* of God's providential Care: And as for the Paſſions of Anger, Malice, and Revenge, and the like, they owe their Original chiefly to Pride, Covetouſneſs, Injuſtice, and other ſuch *ſelfiſh* Vices, as make Men *eager* to heap Injuries upon one another, and *impatient* to bear them. If the Man is to be affected by outward *Circumſtances*, then is Pain and Sickneſs, Poverty and Diſgrace, an untimely or an infamous Death, a very ſore Miſery; and yet theſe are the natural Effects of Sin: For Luſt, Gluttony, and Drunkenneſs, will deſtroy our Health, and afflict us with tormenting Diſeaſes; they will ſhorten our Lives, and waſte our Eſtates, and make us infamous: And for the Proof of this, go viſit the Hoſpitals and Gaols; ſee there the miſerable Spectacles of Rottenneſs and Poverty; and enquire into the Cauſes of them, and how many *Martyrs* there are to Intemperance, or Luſt, or ſome other deſtructive Vice: Enquire into the *Decays* of noble and

[f] *Pliny*, in conſidering the Body of a *Gnat*, which, as himſelf owns, is none of the leaſt Inſects, has made many Queries full of Aſtoniſhment and Admiration, where Nature has diſpoſed ſo many Senſes in ſo ſmall a Creature. *Ubi viſum prætendit? Ubi Guſtatum applicavit? Ubi Odoratum inſeruit? Ubi vero truculentam illam & portione maximam vocem ingeneravit? Quâ ſubtilitate pennas adnexuit? Prælongavit pedum Crura? Diſpoſuit jejunam Caveam, uti Alvum? Avidam ſanguinis, & potiſſimum humani, ſitim accendit?* &c. Hiſt. Nat. Lib. xi.

[g] Matt. vi. 26, 28.

[h] Ibid. x. 29.

[i] Eccleſ. viii. 11.

[k] *Sherlock*, of Judgment.

flouriſhing Families; how goodly Lordſhips and Manors came ſo often to change their Maſters; and what makes Riches ſuch uncertain and mutable Things: Look into the Streets, and ſee what Crowds of miſerable and diſtreſſed People Sloth, and Idleneſs, and Diſhoneſty have ſent thither; and then conſider, what loud Clamours we ſhould have againſt the Juſtice of Providence, if Men ſuffered *half as much* for the Sake of Piety and Virtue, as they do in the Service of their *Luſts*.

BUT now, on the other Hand, Virtue has its natural Rewards: It gives Peace and Satisfaction to the Mind, and ſo governs our Paſſions and Appetites, that they cauſe no Pain or Diſturbance in us. It is the beſt Means to preſerve our Health, to increaſe our Fortune, to procure Friends, to reconcile Enemies, to give us Credit and Reputation, to eſcape the Injuries of bad Men, and to paſs thro' the World with as little Juſtling and Oppoſition as poſſible, *i. e.* tho' it be not of itſelf ſufficient to make a good Man *compleatly* happy in this World, (for there is no ſuch Thing to be expected) yet it is the only Thing that can make him as happy, as he can be *here*, both by preventing many Miſchiefs, which other Men incur, and by enabling him to bear thoſe patiently, which it cannot prevent. If then the Wiſdom of God has ſo contrived the Matter, that Virtue, in a great Meaſure, is its own Reward, and Vice its own Puniſhment; there is not that Neceſſity for any *viſible* Interpoſition in the Government of the World: 'Tis but letting Things go on in their *regular* Courſe, and the neceſſary Effects, which Virtue and Vice produce, will bring upon Men their certain Puniſhments and Rewards.

BUT admitting theſe Rewards and Puniſhments, which God has interwoven in the Nature of Things, be not ſo certain, as is pretended; yet the Conſideration of the State wherein we live, a State of *Trial* and *Probation*, not of *Reward* and *Puniſhment*, is a ſufficient Argument for God's Delay and Long-ſuffering, in this Particular: For [l] if God were always crowning the Righteous, and dragging Offenders to Execution, ſuch a Procedure would determine our *Liberty*, and leave us no Room for the Exerciſe of our Faith and Ingenuity: For then Rewards and Puniſhments would be ſo *ſenſibly* and continually preſent with us, and ſo *urgently* preſs upon our Hopes and *Fears*, that it would be impoſſible for us not to believe in God, and next to impoſſible not to obey; and being thus forced to believe in and obey, there would be no more Excellency in our Virtue and Piety, than there is *Charity* in a *Miſer*, who lends his Money upon Aſſurance of twenty *per Cent.* or *Loyalty* in a *Traitor*, that diſcovers his Conſpirators within Sight of the Rack. 'Tis for our Sakes therefore, and we ought to account it our *Privilege*, as well as our Happineſs, that [m] *God is ſlack, as ſome Men account Slackneſs*, in the Diſpenſation of our Rewards and Puniſhments, ſince thereby he gives us an Opportunity of ſerving him, not out of *Neceſſity*, but of *Choice*; and of making our Faith and Obedience become our Virtue and our Excellency, becauſe we believe and obey without *Force*, nay, againſt ſome ſlight Temptations to the contrary.

INSTANCES there are, all along, of God's Love of Virtue, and Hatred of Sin; and, upon proper Occaſions, Examples have never been wanting of his rewarding the Good, and puniſhing the Bad, ſufficient to acquit his *providential* Juſtice; but, ſince in this State, the Good and Bad are ſo intermixed in the ſame Country, in the ſame Neighbourhood, and ſometimes in the ſame Family; [n] 'tis impoſſible for him to puniſh all the Wicked, without involving ſome of the Good in their Calamities, or to reward all the Good, without making ſome of the Wicked partake in their Felicities. The *Good*, unleſs their Tempers were altered, could not ſee the perpetual Executions, and amazing Miſeries of Sinners, without having their Compaſſion moved, and their Eaſe and Felicity diſturbed at the Sight. Many of them may have very wicked Relations, Parents, or Brethren, or Children, or thoſe that are nearer to them, whoſe Miſeries, unleſs they were diveſted of natural Affection, they could not behold, without a *grieved* Heart, and a *weeping* Eye; and therefore God, in pure Pity to Mankind, defers the Time of *ſtrict* Retribution, until he has an Opportunity of making an exact *Separation* between the Righteous and the Wicked, which the *promiſcuous* Condition of this World will not permit: [o] *Let both grow together until the Harveſt; and, in the Time of Harveſt, I will ſay unto the Reapers, Gather ye together firſt the Tares, and bind them into Bundles to burn them; but gather the Wheat into my Barn.*

" BUT,

[l] *Scott's* Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [m] 2 Pet. iii. 9. [n] *Sherlock*, of Judgment. [o] Matt. xiii. 30.

" BUT, if Providence be not engaged to make ſuch ſpeedy Manifeſtations of its " Juſtice, in rewarding the Righteous, and puniſhing the Wicked; yet certainly " there ought, in the mean Time, to be ſome *viſible* Diſtinction or other; whereas " the Goods and Evils of this Life are diſtributed with ſo careleſs an Hand, that " the Obſervation of the wiſe Preacher ſeems every Day to be verified, [p] *all Things* " *come alike to all: There is one Event to the Righteous and the Wicked, to the Clean* " *and to the Unclean, to him that ſacrificeth, and him that ſacrificeth not.* Nay, " well it were, if their Portions were *equal*; but we very often ſee ſome Men " flowing in Wealth and Plenty, ſurrounded with all the *Pomp*, and having all the " *Pleaſures* of Life at their Command; while others (without any *viſible* Cauſe " for ſuch Diſcrimination) are expoſed to all the Miſeries and Hardſhips of a poor " and deſpicable Condition." Now this Objection, if thoroughly looked into, has no other Foundation than this, —— that God has been pleaſed to appoint different Ranks and Conditions of Men, ſome high, ſome low, ſome rich, and ſome poor; which is ſo far from being an Argument againſt the Goodneſs of Providence, that it is a glorious Demonſtration of it. [q] For how many of the Conveniencies and Beauties of *civil* Life are owing to the Invention and Improvement of *Arts* and *Sciences*, or other continued Effects of human Induſtry? How much Evil is prevented in the World, by the Obligation Men are under, for their neceſſary or more commodious Subſiſtence, of *minding their own Buſineſs, and working with their Hands the Things that are good?* The Inequality of our Conditions [r] makes ſome *induſtrious* to provide for themſelves and Families; inſpires others with *Emulation* to raiſe their Fortunes, gives *Life* and Spirit to the World, and makes it a buſy *Scene* of Action, wherein we are labouring to keep what we have, and make new *Acquiſitions*, to excel our *Equals*, and rival thoſe that are above us: And though, in this Purſuit, much Iniquity may be committed; yet that is owing to the Depravity of our Tempers, and not the Inequality of our Fortunes. Our Fortunes indeed lay us under no Conſtraint to uſe any *indirect* Means for their Advancement; and, ſo long as they are removed from *extreme* Want and Poverty, are not exceeded, by the moſt *Opulent*, in the true Enjoyments of Life. There is very little Difference in Eating and Drinking, while we have wherewithal to ſatisfy Nature; for Appetite makes every Thing delicious. [s] *The Sleep of a labouring Man is ſweet, whether he eat little or much, but the Abundance of the Rich will not ſuffer him to ſleep:* And though the *hard Labour* of the Poor be not a Matter of ſo eaſy a Contemplation; yet it is much more tolerable, than *Gout* and *Stone*, and thoſe many ſharp or languiſhing Diſeaſes, which ſo commonly attend the Softneſs and Luxury of the Rich.

4. *Unequal Diſtributions.*

This confuted.

SINCE therefore an unequal Diſtribution of the good and evil Things of this Life has ſo many Benefits, and few, or no Inconveniencies in it; [t] God, who ſees them with far better Eyes than we, knows very well that they are *Trifles*, in Compariſon of thoſe endleſs Goods or Evils, we muſt enjoy or ſuffer in another World; and therefore he looks on it (as juſtly he may) a Diſparagement to his infinite *Wiſdom*, to be exact and curious in proportioning theſe *momentary* Allotments to the Merit or Demerit of *immortal* Creatures. We indeed entertain other Notions of them, but 'tis becauſe we look upon them through the *magnifying Glaſs* of our own Imaginations; but why ſhould he partake of the Errors of a *vulgar* Opinion? He knows very well, that the *beſt* of them are too mean to be our *Crown*, the *worſt* of them too light to be our *Puniſhment*, and therefore it is no Wonder, if he, who *ſendeth down his Rain upon the Juſt and Unjuſt*, in other trivial Diſpenſations, makes no viſible Diſcrimination.

" BUT, though no Regard be due to the *Things* themſelves, yet ſome Reſpect " ſhould be had to the *Perſons* of Men; and if a ſtrict Equality cannot be expected " in this Life; yet ſuch a palpable Incongruity in the Divine Diſpenſations, ſuch a " manifeſt Oppreſſion of the Righteous, and Exaltation of the Wicked, is hardly " conſiſtent with the Notions we have of God. And yet, if we look into the Ad- " miniſtration of Things, we may find Reaſon enough to take up the Complaint, " that *Job* uttered, and ſay, [u] *Wherefore do the Wicked live, and become old, and are* " *mighty in Power? Their Seed is eſtabliſhed in their Sight; their Houſes are ſafe* " *from Fear, neither is the Rod of God upon them: They ſpend their Days in* " *Mirth and Wealth, and in a Moment*, with a quick and eaſy Paſſage, *go down* " *to the Grave:* Whereas I, he might have ſaid, (and doubtleſs he alluded to it) " I, who

5. *The Miſeries of the* Good, *and Proſperities of the* Bad.

[p] Eccleſ. ix. 2. [q] *Fiddes's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [r] *Sherlock*, of Providence. [s] Eccleſ. v. 12.
[t] *Scott's* Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [u] Job xxi. 7, &c.

" I, who have the Teſtimony of God himſelf, [x] *that there is none like me in the*
" *Earth, a perfect and upright Man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth Evil,* am,
" on a ſudden, ſtripped of all my Glory, and [y] *become a Burthen to myſelf*; [z] *my*
" *Sighing comes before I eat, and my Roarings are poured out like the Waters, and I*
" *long for Death, but it comes not.*"

This confuted. THIS triumphant State of the Wicked, and extreme Wretchedneſs of the Righteous, has, in all Times and Ages, been a *popular* Argument againſt Providence; and therefore, to give it a full Anſwer, we ſhould do well to conſider, [a] that, as Men always *pity* the Miſerable, and *envy* the Proſperous, theſe Paſſions naturally bribe their Judgments to think *worſe* of the one, and *better* of the other, than they deſerve: For thoſe, whom we *pity*, we are inclined to *love*, and thoſe, whom we love, we are inclined to think well of; as, on the contrary, thoſe, whom we *envy*, we are inclined to *hate*, and thoſe, whom we hate, we are inclined to think ill of; by which Means it comes to paſs, that the *Miſerable* run away with our Eſteem of being very good, and the *Proſperous* too often fall under our Cenſure of being very bad Men; whereas, could we look into the Cloſet of their Hearts, we might perceive Reaſon to alter our Opinion. For, as there are many cloſe *Hypocrites* that, under a mighty Shew and Oſtentation of Piety, ſecretly indulge themſelves in ſuch Abominations, as deſerve a ſevere Chaſtiſement from God; ſo, there are Abundance of good Men, that, in the Courſe of a *modeſt* and unaffected Godlineſs, make little Shew in the Eyes of the World, and yet engage the Favour of him, that *ſeeth it in ſecret, and will reward it openly*. 'Till therefore we can both penetrate into other Mens Hearts, and diveſt our own of their *Partiality*, we are under a manifeſt Incapacity of judging, who are the *good*, and who are the bad Men; and conſequently, whether God's Dealings with them be, or be not, according to Right.

THIS however we know, without any laborious Enquiry, [b] that a good Man, in any Condition on this Side ſtarving, is, *ordinarily*, in this Life, far more happy, than the moſt gay and proſperous Sinner; whoſe outward Glory and Greatneſs is uſually nothing, but the *gaudy* Cover of a *tragical* Inſide; of a Mind that is tortured with Pride and Envy, with boundleſs Hopes, inſatiable Deſires, and horrible Reflections, which ſpoil and embitter all his Enjoyments; while the good Man, under his mean and ſimple Appearance, carries a great and happy Soul, a contented Mind, a chearful Heart, and a ſmiling Conſcience, that improves every Enjoyment, and makes his *homely* Morſel out-reliſh the moſt *elaborated* Luxuries.

WE miſtake the true Notion of Happineſs then, when we place it in the *Outſide* only: Nor can we tell, what properly to pronounce concerning the State of any Man, until we ſee the *Effects* and Conſequences that attend it. We ſee, for Inſtance, a good Man *oppreſſed* with Sorrows and Afflictions, and a bad Man *crowned* with Pleaſures and Proſperities; and conſidering theſe Things a-part, we are apt to conclude, that the one is in an happy, and the other in a very wretched Condition: But did we, at the ſame Time, ſee the Conſequents of the one's Adverſity, and the other's Proſperity, 'tis probable that our Sentiments would be quite contrary, *viz.* that the good Man's Adverſity was a *Bleſſing*, and the bad Man's Proſperity a *Curſe*. For I dare venture to ſay, that good Men reap more ſubſtantial Benefit from their Afflictions, than bad Men do from their Proſperities. The one ſmarts indeed at preſent, but what follows? Perhaps his Mind is cured by it, of ſome Diſeaſe, that is ten Times worſe to him, than his outward Affliction; of Avarice or Impatience, of Envy or Diſcontent, of Pride or Vanity of Spirit: His Riches are *leſſened*, but his Virtues are *improved* by it; and what he has loſt in Health or Wealth, in Pleaſure or Honour, he hath gained, with vaſt Advantage, in Wiſdom and Goodneſs, in Tranquillity and Self-Enjoyment. On the other Hand, the bad Man triumphs and rejoiceth at preſent, but what follows? His Proſperity only bloats and ſwells him; makes him proud and inſolent, griping and oppreſſive; increaſes his Deſires, inrages his Luſts, fills his Mind with Cares, and his Conſcience with Guilt, and by theſe woeful Effects inflames his Reckoning with God, and *treaſures up Wrath for him againſt the Day of Wrath.* [c] *Well was it for me* therefore, ſays holy *David, that I was afflicted; for, before I was afflicted, I went aſtray, but now I have kept thy Commandments:* But, on the contrary, [d] *when the Wicked ſpring as the Graſs,* (as

[x] Job i. 8. [y] Ibid. vii. 20. [z] Ibid. iii. 21, 24. [a] *Scott's* Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [b] Ibid.
[c] Pſal. cxix. 67. [d] Ibid. xciii. 7.

(as the ſame Author obſerves) *and all the Workers of Iniquity do flouriſh,* [e] *they ſhall be rooted out at the laſt.*

[f] *SENECA* has compoſed an excellent Treatiſe upon this Subject, in order to remove the Difficulties, that are raiſed againſt Providence, in afflicting the Good, and proſpering the Bad; and, among other wiſe Solutions, there is this Paſſage, that muſt not eſcape our Obſervation. "When you ſee the righteous Men, ſays he, "Men deſerving the Love and Favour of the Gods, groan in Pain, ſweat under "their Travel, and obliged to ſtruggle with Adverſity; and, on the contrary, wicked "and flagitious Wretches paſs their Days in Eaſe, and live in Plenty; call to mind, "that we ourſelves are willing, our Children ſhould be modeſt and ſober, whereas "we give Licence to our Slaves, whom we do not value: We are ſevere to our "Children, and indulgent to our Slaves: Paſs then the ſame Judgment upon God; "the Regard he has for the righteous Man ſuffers him not to live in Pleaſure; he "brings him to Trial, and inures him to Hardſhips, and ſo prepares him for him-"ſelf." Where the Philoſopher has happily hit upon the ſame Sentiment with the Apoſtle, [g] *Whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. If ye endure Chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with Sons: For what Son is he, whom the Father chaſteneth not? But if ye be without Chaſtiſement, whereof all are Partakers, then are ye Baſtards, and not Sons.*

THERE is therefore no knowing the Love or Hatred of God by the preſent Diſpenſations of Providence: The Good are often afflicted for the Chaſtiſement of their Sins, or the Exerciſe of their Virtues, which looks like *Hatred*; and the bad Men are often pampered with Eaſe and Plenty, and promoted to Honour and Renown, which looks like *Love*, when the Intentions of God are the very reverſe. Theſe *Inconſiſtencies* continue for ſome Time; nor can we conceive what Conſtruction to put upon them, until we carry our Eye a little farther, and obſerve the different *Cataſtrophes* that attend them. [h] *Job*'s Sufferings were a *Puzzle* to his Friends, that came to viſit him, and might, to this Day, have been a *Riddle* to us, had his Story broke off in the Middle; but now, that we are acquainted with the Reaſons of God's ſending them, and with the great Proſperity, wherewith he afterwards requited them, we not only acquit, but applaud the Goodneſs of Providence, in providing us with ſuch a conſpicuous *Pattern* for our Imitation. Some few *Scenes* in the Life of a proſperous *Villain* may ſeem very ſtrange and unnaccountable; but, waiting with Patience, until the whole *Drama* be concluded, the Spectator goes out with an [i] *Oh! How ſuddenly do they conſume, periſh, and come to a fearful End!* God ſeldom fails to manifeſt the Reaſons of his Diſpenſations in this Life; but if he ſhould, 'tis only to give us a more perfect Aſſurance of (what ſilences all Objections) [k] *the Revelation of his righteous Judgment, when he will render to every Man according to his Deeds; to them, who by patient Continuance in Well-doing ſeek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, eternal Life; but to them, who obey not the Truth, but obey Unrighteouſneſs, Indignation, and Wrath, Tribulation, and Anguiſh upon every Soul of Man that doeth Evil.*

6. *The many Miſeries that are in Life.*

"BUT, if there be a juſt and gracious Providence over-ruling the World, how "comes it to permit ſuch ſad Calamities to befal its Subjects? Its Care ſhould be, "*one would think*, to make their Habitations as commodious as poſſible: And "yet, if we look into the World, the Miſeries incident to human Life, whether "from *natural* or *moral* Cauſes, are ſo many, ſo great, ſo univerſal, that they "quite out-ballance the Pleaſures and Comforts of it; inſomuch, that he, who "gives himſelf Liberty to think, muſt neceſſarily come into the wiſe Man's Con-"cluſion: [l] *Wherefore I praiſed the Dead, which are already dead, more than the "Living, which are yet alive: Yea, better is he than both they, who hath not yet "been, who hath not yet ſeen the evil Work, that is done under the Sun.*" This looks like a ſharp *Satire* upon human Life, and, were it univerſally true, would be a ſad Reproach to the Goodneſs of Providence in the Government of the World; but to come firſt to a fair State of the Caſe, and then to the Senſe of the *Preacher*'s Words.

As to natural Evils.

ONE Part of this Objection againſt Providence is taken from ſome *Irregularities*, that uſually occur in the Courſe of *natural Things*. [m] Thus, the Hopes and Expectations of a fruitful *Spring* are many Times fruſtrated by ſome unſeaſonable

[e] Pſal. xxxvii. 38.
[f] *Martin*, on Natural and Revealed Religion.
[g] Heb. xii. 6, &c.
[h] *Sherlock*, of Providence.
[i] Pſal. lxxi 19.
[k] Rom. ii. 5, &c.
[l] Eccleſ. iv. 2, 3.
[m] Eſſays, on Natural and Revealed Religion.

Blaſts or *Winds*, or by the ſudden *Inundation* of a River. We obſerve frequently whole Countries overwhelmed by the *Irruption* of the Sea, and fair Cities buried in their Ruins, by the Violence of an *Earthquake*. What *Wrecks* and Miſeries do ariſe at Sea from outrageous Tempeſts and *Hurricanes*? What *Havock* is frequently made at Land by the Fury of *Winds*? Thunder and Lightning have done vaſt Injuries; the ſudden Eruptions of Fire have ruined many Places; and the Devaſtations of a Peſtilence have reduced many Kingdoms to the utmoſt Extremity, *&c.* But, in Anſwer to theſe, we are to conſider, [n] that as there are different Sorts of Bodies in the World, ſubject to different Laws; and endowed with different Powers and Qualities; unleſs the *uniform* Laws of the Creation were to be altered or ſuſpended every Moment, it cannot otherwiſe be, but that they muſt ſometimes interfere with one another, and produce many *Irregularities*, which are the natural Effects of ſuch different Compoſitions. But then, [o] theſe Irregularities are ſo few and inconſiderable, when we reflect upon the *whole Courſe* and *Syſtem* of Nature, that they derogate no more from the providential Care of God, than the little *Flaws* and Blemiſhes, which happen in the Stones of the nobleſt Fabricks, detract from the Art and Ingenuity of the *Architect*.

IT is to be conſidered farther, that the ſeveral Irregularities, here mentioned, are not of ſo great Damage to the World, but that the Benefits, which attend them, are many Times greater. If the Labour and Expectation of the Huſbandman be ſubject to Caſualties, the Reſidue will bear the better *Price*, and beget a greater Diligence in him, which, in the End, makes a full Return: If fruitful Meadows be, for a Time, waſted by the Diſorders of a Flood, the Injury is recompenſed by the rich Mud and Fatneſs, it leaves behind it: If ſome Countries are expoſed to the Irruptions of the Sea, they are induced, by ſuch Misfortunes, to truſt to their Ships, and, by that Means, become the wealthieſt Traders in the World: If Earthquakes and Tempeſts ſubvert Houſes, by looſening the Roots of Trees, they contribute to their Fruitfulneſs, and, by opening the Bowels of the Earth, diſcover many Times new Treaſures. Strong Winds are often injurious, but they are always of Uſe to agitate the Air, and give it a due Mixture: [p] Thunder and Lightning may do here and there ſome Miſchief, but nothing in Compariſon to the Benefit of their conſuming thoſe noxious Steams and Exhalations, without which there would be no living. Sulphureous Eruptions may look terrible, but their Aſhes enrich the Places, where they happen: Nay, even Peſtilence itſelf (ſo great a Slaughter as it ſeems to make of Mankind) is generally ſucceeded with healthful Seaſons; for, by ripening the Diſeaſes and Corruptions of Nature, and by drawing them into one common Sore or Iſſue, it leaves no *tabifick* Matter or tainted Humours for future Diſeaſes to feed upon. Thus graciouſly has God provided, that thoſe very Judgments, which the Wickedneſs of Mankind obliges him to inflict, ſhould not be deſtitute of ſome beneficial Effects: And therefore we find the devout Pſalmiſt, exciting us to the Worſhip and Praiſe of God, even upon the Conſideration of theſe Topicks: [q] *It is the Lord that commandeth the Waters: It is the glorious God that maketh the Thunder: It is the Lord that ruleth the Sea: The Voice of the Lord is mighty in Operation; the Voice of the Lord is a glorious Voice; therefore bring unto the Lord, O ye mighty, bring young Rams unto the Lord; aſcribe unto the Lord Worſhip and Strength.*

As to common Evils.

THE other Part of the Objection againſt Providence, is taken from the more common Calamities, that attend human Life; [r] and yet, if we look into the World, we ſhall find the much greater Part of Men the apparent Authors of thoſe very Evils, which they complain of. Thus, how many are there, that complain of Want, and yet owe that *Want* to their own Sloth or *Prodigality*? How many, that complain of *Diſgrace*, and yet owe that Diſgrace to their own unworthy *Behaviour*? How many, that complain of *Enemies*, and yet owe thoſe Enemies to their own *Pride* and *Contention*? How many, that complain of *Deſertion* of Friends, and yet owe that Deſertion to their own *Ingratitude*? And, to name no more, how many, that complain of *Pains* and *Diſeaſes*, and yet owe theſe Maladies to their own *Luxury* or *Laſciviouſneſs*? But [s] *wherefore doth a living Man complain, a Man for the Puniſhment of his Sins*; eſpecially for ſuch Puniſhments, as are the neceſſary Effects and Conſequences of his Sins? And how-unreaſonable

[n] *Clarke*'s Enquiry into the Origin of Evil. [o] Eſſays, on Natural and Revealed Religion. [p] *Clarke*, ibid.
[q] Pſal. lxviii. 33, *&c.* [r] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [s] Lam. iii. 39.

unreaſonable a Thing is it, to reproach the Divine Providence with thoſe very Miſeries, which Mankind bring upon themſelves? [t] Whether God govern the World or no, Intemperance, Luxury, and Luſts will deſtroy Men's Health; Sloth and Prodigality, and expenſive Vices will make them poor; Pride, Ambition, and Revenge will breed Quarrels, and occaſion Wars, and bring upon the World all the Calamities of them. Theſe Evils are not owing to Providence, becauſe Providence does not bring them: Men make themſelves wicked, and Wickedneſs makes them miſerable; and we may as well charge the Providence of God with all the Wickedneſs of Men, as with all the Miſeries, which their own Wickedneſs brings upon them. We ought to bleſs God indeed, that he has made the Ways of Wickedneſs ſo unpleaſant, and ordered Sin to be attended with ſuch puniſhing Conſequences; but 'tis *Fooliſhneſs*, and a ſad Impiety in Man, firſt [u] *to pervert his own Ways*, and then, when the natural Puniſhment overtakes him, to *let his Heart fret againſt the Lord.*

SOME Calamities may not indeed be of our own procuring, but ſuch as the Direction of Providence lays upon us; but then it is to be conſidered, that, whenever this happens, God has made abundant Proviſion for the Support of good Men under them. [x] Natural Courage and Strength of Mind, the Power of Reaſon, and a wiſe Conſideration of the Nature of Things, the Belief of a good Providence, which takes Care of us, and orders all Things for the beſt, and the certain Hopes of immortal Life, will make all the Afflictions, that God ſends upon us, light and eaſy. And, if by theſe Helps God enables us to bear our Sufferings, and to enjoy ourſelves under them, [y] *as ſorrowful, yet always rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all Things*, we may ſuffer, but we cannot be miſerable; and Sufferings, without Miſery, are no formidable Objection againſt Providence.

'TIS not ſo much therefore the external Sufferings, (which is all that can be charged upon Providence) as the Diſorders of a Man's Mind, that make him miſerable: An immoderate Love of this World, a furious Guſt of Pride or Hatred, Ambition or Revenge, makes every Condition *uneaſy*, and any great Affliction *intolerable*. Poverty and Diſgrace, the Loſs of Eſtate and Honour, the Frowns of Princes, and the Clamours of the People, (which a wiſe and good Man can both bear and deſpiſe) fall *heavy* upon a proud ambitious Spirit, eſpecially when *Guilt* adds a Sting to his Suffering, that makes him look upon every croſs Accident as a *Token* of Divine Vengeance, and a terrible *Preſage* of thoſe endleſs Miſeries, that are provided for him.

THIS then is the State of the Caſe, in Relation to the Miſeries and Calamities of Life:—They are either the natural Effects of the Courſe of this World, which, without a miraculous Interpoſition, cannot be prevented; and when they happen, are always attended with ſome Advantages; or they are the neceſſary Conſequences of our own Sins, and would have befallen us, whether God concerned himſelf in the Government of the World or no; or they are the kind Severities of Providence for our Good, and what we are ſufficiently enabled to bear, if we betray not the Succours that are given us. The Comforts of Life, on the other Hand, are innumerable: We want no Senſe, that is pleaſant and uſeful; we want no Objects to gratify thoſe Senſes; (what is very conſiderable) the moſt uſeful, the moſt neceſſary, and moſt delightful Objects are the moſt common, and ſuch as we all pretty *equally* ſhare in. Nay, we want not Pleaſures of an higher Nature, but thoſe are not felt by every one; and therefore we muſt aſk the Learned and Contemplative what the Delights of Knowledge and Wiſdom are? Aſk the good-natured Man, what the Pleaſure of doing kind Offices is? Aſk the juſt Man, what the Feaſt of a good Conſcience means? Aſk the religious and devout Man, what the Senſe of loving and being beloved by God brings in? What Joy, what Exaltation of Heart he feels, when he is upon his Knees; when, with St *Paul*, he is wrapt up *into the third Heaven*, and by an Anticipation of Bliſs is *already juſtified, already glorified, and ſitting in celeſtial Places, among the Church of the Firſt-born?* Aſk of theſe Men, I ſay, and they will inform us, that there are real Pleaſures and Satisfactions to be enjoyed in *this* Life, ſuch as out-ballance the few Fatigues of it, and grow every Day more delightful, and *freſh* upon the *Palate*, as they are *heightened* and improved by the certain Expectations of a *better*.

IT

[t] *Sherlock*, of Providence. [u] Prov. xix. 3. [x] *Sherlock*, ibid. [y] 2 Cor. vi. 10.

IT muſt be confeſſed, indeed, that the World may ſometimes come to that Paſs, as to make a wiſe Man deſire to leave it; and the Preacher ſeems to put a Caſe, which induced him to make the above-mentioned Concluſion: *So I returned, and conſidered all the Oppreſſions that are done under the Sun; and beheld the Tears of ſuch as were oppreſſed, and they had no Comforter; wherefore I praiſed the Dead that are already dead, more than the Living who are yet alive.* [z] When a Kingdom or Nation is ſo far degenerated, as to have loſt all Senſe of Goodneſs and Juſtice, or common Honeſty; when thoſe, that are in Authority, have no Compaſſion for ſuch as are beneath them, nor any Regard to the Adminiſtration of Juſtice; when Oaths and Promiſes paſs for nought, and Faith and Friendſhip are poſtponed for Gain; when there is no Truſt, no Confidence to be put in Man, but Traps and Snares are every where laid, to betray the Innocence, or make Advantage of the Weakneſs of others; when every Man's Sword, or (or what is as fatal) every Man's Tongue is *ſet againſt his Brother*, ſo that no one's Fame, no one's Life is ſecure, but a ſlandering *Tongue* may blaſt the one, and a perjured Tongue may deſtroy the other: When, in ſhort, we cannot live in the World, without ſeeing, and hearing, and feeling ten thouſand *Villainies*, that are committed; 'tis high Time then to take up old *Simeon*'s Requeſt, *Lord, now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in Peace*; ſuch a tumultuous melancholy State of Things muſt needs make all conſidering Men be as glad to get out of this World, as a *Mariner* is to recover his *Haven*, after a violent Storm at Sea.

BUT this is not the ordinary State of Things. The World, bleſſed be God, is not yet become ſo bad, but that a Man, with ſome Caution, and much Innocence, a ſmall Subſtance, and a large Share of Health, may paſs through it with Pleaſure. [a] Nor is the Preacher's Deſign to make us deſpiſe Life upon Account of its Troubles and Calamities, but only to wean our Affections from it, in order to place Happineſs in the Practice of Virtue, and in the Hopes and Expectations of ſomething better; for, [b] *let us hear the Concluſion of the whole Matter: Fear God, and keep his Commandments; for this is the whole Duty of Man*; nor is it only his Duty, but his Happineſs too; *for God ſhall bring every Work into Judgment, with every ſecret Thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

7. The miſerable Condition of the Heathen *World.*

I MENTION but one Objection more, that ſeems to affect the Goodneſs of Providence; and that is, the wretched State and Condition, to which we behold the greateſt Part of Men abandoned. "[c] For, if there were a good and gracious Pro- "vidence, that over-rules the Affairs of this World, how is it imaginable, that ſo "great a Part of Mankind, as the *Infidel World* contains, ſhould be left ſo perfectly "deſtitute of the Knowledge of God, and the Means of attaining everlaſting Sal- "vation?" [d] This Objection is chiefly occaſioned by ſome Men, who, without any Authority from Scripture, confidently affirm, that ignorant *Heathens* ſhall ſuffer the ſame Condemnation, which Chriſt has threatened againſt wilful *Infidels*, and wicked *Chriſtians*.

This anſwered.

NOW, to ſet the Caſe of the *Infidel* World in a true Light, we muſt lay it down for a Foundation, that the *efficient* or meritorious Cauſe of procuring Salvation to Mankind can be no other, than Jeſus Chriſt, who, by his Obedience, and Oblation of himſelf, has redeemed good Men, and made them capable of eternal Happineſs. [e] Put the Caſe then, that the King of *England* ſends a conſiderable Sum of Money to redeem all *Engliſh* Slaves throughout the *Turkiſh* Dominions; and that thoſe, who hear the joyful News, embrace it with all Thankfulneſs, while others, that hear nothing of it, ſit ſilent: Now, would it not ſeem very hard, that theſe Latter ſhould be excluded from all the Benefit of this Act of Grace and Bounty, and left in perpetual Bondage, becauſe they did not lay hold on what they never heard of; and what, doubtleſs, they would have embraced with the ſame Gratitude, had they had the ſame Notice of it, with others? The Caſe is the ſame between the Governor of the Univerſe, and thoſe Nations that *ſit in Darkneſs*; and the Compariſon indeed is too plain to need any Application. *Cornelius*, we read, tho' he was an *Heathen*, by his Alms and Prayers, and devout Regulation of his Family, procured the Grace and Favour of God to ſuch a Degree, as to have St *Peter* ſent to him for his farther Inſtruction: And of ſuch Force and Conviction was the Truth, we are now upon, that even St *Peter* himſelf, tho' he was the Apoſtle of the *Circumciſion*, could not forbear making an open Profeſſion of it; [f] *Of a Truth I find, that*

[z] *Sherlock*, of Providence. [a] Ibid. [b] Eccleſ. xii. 13, 14. [c] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [d] *Sherlock*, ibid. [e] Eſſays, on Natural and Revealed Religion. [f] Acts x. 34, 35.

that God is no Reſpecter of Perſons, but, in every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteouſneſs, is accepted of him: Where the Apoſtle's Words plainly imply, that, in every Nation, there might be ſome, who feared God, and wrought Righteouſneſs, and if ſo, *of a Truth they were accepted of him.*

St *PAUL* had an *hiſtorical* Knowledge of the Life, Doctrines, and Sufferings of *Jeſus*, and was a violent Perſecutor of thoſe, that believed on him; and yet, as he himſelf teſtifies, he *obtained Mercy*, becauſe [g] he *did it in Ignorance and Unbelief*: [h] How then ſhall we exclude from all Mercy thoſe, that never heard of *Jeſus*, and yet would have embraced him, and ſuffered for him, as readily as others, had he been revealed unto them? They are not by *Baptiſm* indeed admitted into the *Pale* of the Church: But then it ought to be conſidered, that as the *Jewiſh* Church was a *Type* of the *Chriſtian*, tho' much narrower, both in its Dimenſions, and Terms of Communion; ſo *Baptiſm* under the Goſpel is of the ſame Import and Neceſſity, that *Circumciſion* was under the Law; and as in the Time of the Law, we read of many, who were not circumciſed, ſuch as *Job*, *Melchiſedech*, *Lot*, and others, of whoſe Salvation we can in no ways doubt; ſo there is no Reaſon why we ſhould limit the boundleſs Mercy of God, nor any Authority from Scripture to confine it to ſtated and ordinary Means; eſpecially ſince St *Paul* has aſſured us, (and therein determined the whole Matter) that [i] *God will give Glory, and Honour, and Peace, to every Man that worketh good; to the* Jew *firſt, and alſo to the* Gentile; *for there is no Reſpect of Perſons with him.*

THE Infidel World, however, is not ſo deſtitute, as we may imagine: [k] They have the Law of Nature to direct them, which, as to the main Points of their Duty, is ſo plain and intelligible, that no ſincere Enquirer can be ignorant of it; and if, when they may underſtand it, they will not, or if, when they do underſtand it, they will wilfully tranſgreſs it, the Guilt and Puniſhment muſt be theirs. They have not indeed our Advantages of becoming good, and growing to a State of Perfection; but then they have this Mitigation and Allowance, that a leſs Degree of Good will be accepted of thoſe, that do well; and a leſs Degree of Puniſhment exacted of all thoſe, that do ill; which brings Matters much to an *Equality*: And tho' their Condition, at preſent, afford but a melancholy Conſideration; yet God can abundantly compenſate *that* in the World to come. Between *this* and the Day of Judgment he has Ways enough, and Time enough, to ſupply their Souls with all *ſpiritual* Advantages, which, for Reaſons beſt known to himſelf, he has hitherto with-held. We indeed, who have had our utmoſt *Trial* already, have no Reaſon to expect a Repetition of it: But 'tis no unſeaſonable Conjecture, that God may extend their Probation beyond this Life, and, in the World to come, diſcover the *Light* of the Goſpel to ſo many of them at leaſt, as have *here* made any tolerable Improvement under the Light of Nature. And therefore, ſince Providence can as yet, and (as we have Reaſon to believe) will at laſt, be infinitely kind to them, notwithſtanding their preſent unhappy Condition, we ſhould be far from objecting any Thing againſt it, until we ſee the final Iſſue, when Matters no doubt will be ordered ſo, that *every Mouth ſhall be ſtopped*, and *all the Nations of the World ſhall ſee the Salvation of our God.*

A general Reflection.

THESE are ſome of the chief Objections againſt Providence, and in this Manner they may be reſolved. But if, after what has been ſaid, any *Doubts* remain in our Minds, or any freſh *Scruples* do, at any Time, ariſe, it may be of general Uſe to allay, if not to ſatisfy our Enquiries, to bear always in Mind the immenſe Diſtance between God and us: To think with ourſelves, "That he, whoſe Proceedings I am going to examine, is that *infinite* and *eternal* Being, which made "me and all the World, in whoſe Eſteem [l] *the Nations are as a Drop of a Bucket, and are counted as the ſmall Duſt of a Balance*; and how then ſhould I comprehend his Ways, (his Ways, that are as far above me, *as the Heavens are higher than the Earth*) or diſcern the Reaſon of his Actings? [m] Many Ends his Wiſdom may have in View, that I cannot diſcern; and his Deſigns may be conducted in the niceſt Manner, when to me they may ſeem to be running to Confuſion:

[g] 1 Tim. i. 13. [h] This Doctrine of the Poſſibility of Salvation for the *Gentiles* has all along had its Abettors: Among the primitive Fathers, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Epiphanius*, St *Chryſoſtom*, &c. have affirmed it of the Heathens, that lived before Chriſt: *Franciſcus à Victoria* lays it down as a Doctrine of *Thomas Aquinas*, that the *Indians*, who never heard of Chriſt, were not guilty of the Sin of Infidelity; and, among the *Reformed*, *Zuinglius*, in his Expoſition of the Chriſtian Faith, places *Ariſtides*, *Socrates*, the *Scipios*, and the *Catos*, among the Number of the Bleſſed. Eſſays on Natural and Revealed Religion. [i] Rom. ii. 10, 11. [k] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [l] Iſa. xl. 15. [m] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

" My Mind is too ſhort-ſighted to ſearch into the Divine Secrets; *ſuch Knowledge*
" *is too great, and too excellent for me*; and therefore it becomes me rather to cry
" out, with the great Apoſtle, *O the Depth!* And, ſince I have no *Plummet* to ſa-
" thom the profound *Abyſs*, to admire and ſtand amazed at it; being perfectly ſa-
" tisfied in this, that, let Things appear never ſo *perplexed* and intricate, *the Judge*
" *of all the Earth cannot but do Right*; and he, who puniſhes others for doing
" Wrong, will never do Wrong himſelf."

AND thus we proceed to the Inferences, that more immediately reſult from the foregoing Doctrine, and to inſtance in ſome of the principal Duties, that ariſe from the Conſideration of a Divine Providence.

SECT. IV.

The DUTIES *we owe to* PROVIDENCE.

1. A due Senſe of it.

THE Prophet *Iſaiah* has given us a lively Deſcription enough of ſome gay unthinking People, that, in one continued *Round* of Pleaſures, filled up the Vacancies of Time; [n] *the Harp and the Viol, the Tabret and Pipe, and Wine is in their Feaſts, but they regard not the Work of the Lord, neither conſider the Operation of his Hands.* The Generality of Mankind, 'tis to be hoped, are not ſo giddy and inconſiderate: Moſt Men retain the Notion and Belief of a Providence; but then, the Misfortune is, they are apt to impute moſt Events to the *immediate* and *viſible* Cauſes; by that Means, overlook the Divine Hand, in what befals them, and conſequently, rob God of the Glory of his Diſpenſations, and themſelves of the Benefit, that might have accrued from ſuch a ſober Recollection. [o] If then we will own Providence, to the true Ends and Purpoſes of Religion, we muſt not content ourſelves with a general Belief of God's governing the World, but, whatever our State and Condition be, or whatever extraordinary Good or Evil happens to us, receive it all, as coming by the Divine Appointment. If we are poor, we muſt remember it to be the Will and Ordination of God, that we ſhould be poor; if we are rich, we muſt conſider, that it is God's Bleſſing which maketh us rich; if we loſe our Eſtates by Injuſtice or Oppreſſion, we muſt acknowledge, with *Job, that the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away*; and whatever Miſeries or Misfortunes befal us, betake ourſelves to *David*'s Practice and Behaviour: [p] *I was dumb, and opened not my Mouth, becauſe it was thy Doings.*

2. An humble Submiſſion to it.

WHEN we have thus affected our Minds with a due Senſe of the Divine Providence, in every Thing that befals us, we muſt take Care, in the next Place, to compoſe our Souls into a quiet and humble Submiſſion to the Almighty's Will, in order to bear the Sufferings, which he lays upon us, with Decency, and to continue in the State, wherein he hath placed us, with Content: But then the Queſtion is,

In our Sufferings.

in what Manner we are to do this? 'Twas an idle Notion that of the Stoicks, that Pain was but an *imaginary* Thing, and an empty Boaſt, that their *Wiſemen* could be happy in *Phalaris*'s Bull. The Folly of this Oſtentation is proved by Senſe; *Pain* will make an uneaſy Impreſſion upon the moſt *abſtracted* Mind; ſo that our Submiſſion to the Divine Will, in this Reſpect, cannot require, that we ſhould not feel our Sufferings, that we ſhould not be afflicted with them, that we ſhould not complain or deſire a Removal of them; but only, that we ſhould not reproach or cenſure Providence, ſhould not think it ſevere or mercileſs in ſuch Diſpenſations, but give them a kind Conſtruction, and, with humble Thoughts, and Eyes lift up to Heaven, wait patiently upon God, *until he have Mercy upon us.* [q] Afflictions will be Afflictions, do what we will; and though we are to bear them in Obedience to our great Creator's Will, yet we muſt bear them as Afflictions can be borne, and as human Nature will permit; with Pain, and Grief, and Reluctancy; with Sighs, and Groans, and Complaints; with vehement and importunate Deſires and Prayers to God and Man, to help and deliver us. God, who has implanted in our Nature a ſtrong Averſion to *Suffering*, indulges us in this: Our Saviour, who is the beſt Pattern of our Behaviour, expreſſed himſelf to the ſame Purpoſe: [r] *Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me*; but when he conſidered the Hand that held it

[n] Iſa. v. 12.
[o] *Sherlock*, of Providence.
[p] Pſal. xxxix. 9.
[q] *Sherlock*, ibid.
[r] Matth. xxvi. 39.

it out, *nevertheleſs not as I will, but as thou wilt.* To bring ourſelves to the like Behaviour, we muſt poſſeſs our Souls with a firm Perſuaſion of the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God in every Thing he ſends upon us, not conſidering him, as a ſovereign and arbitrary *Lord*, but as an univerſal *Parent*, who has a tender and compaſſionate Regard to all his Creatures, *who does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men, but corrects us for our Profit, that we may be Partakers of his Holineſs*, and proportions the Severity of his Diſcipline to the Wants and Exigencies of our Souls.

In our State of Life.

ANOTHER Inſtance of our Obedience to Providence, is to abide in that State, wherein it has thought fit to place us. [t] We can no more chuſe our own Condition of Life, than we can chuſe when and where to be born, what our Parents ſhall be, how they ſhall educate, and diſpoſe of us in the World; what Succeſs we ſhall have, what Friends, what Enemies we ſhall meet with, what Changes or Revolutions we ſhall ſee, either in our *private* Fortunes, or in *public* Affairs: And therefore, be our Circumſtances what they will, ſo far as we are not *acceſſory* to them, they are no Shame or Diſgrace to us, ſince they are the Ordination and Appointment of God. We may endeavour indeed to advance our Fortunes by all honeſt Means; and the *Exaltation* of ſome, from very low Beginnings, ſeems to be deſigned by Providence to excite our Endeavours this Way, and to ſhew us what Virtue and Induſtry can do: But if our Attempts want Succeſs, and our Deſigns prove abortive, we muſt take it patiently, and wait God's Time, and be contented to tarry where we are, (without *envying* the Promotion of others, or uſing any *indirect* Arts to raiſe ourſelves) until the Hand, wherein our Fortune is repoſited, ſhall think fit to lift us up. Tho therefore our Submiſſion to Providence does not debar us from uſing all honeſt Endeavours to better our Fortune; yet it makes us eaſy and contented in a low Eſtate, patient of Diſappointments, not envious of the better Succeſſes and greater Proſperity of others; but every where, and in all Things, teaches and [u] *inſtructs us, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound, and to ſuffer Need.*

3. Truſt and Reliance on it.

WHEN we have thus compoſed our Souls into a reſolved *Acquieſcence* in God's good Pleaſure, come what will; the next Duty we owe to Providence will be, to put our whole Truſt and Confidence in it, as our beſt and only Security in all our Concerns, and againſt the Contingencies both of Want and Danger. [x] Put the Caſe, we had the entire Management of our Affairs in our own Hands, and yet, upon Experiment, found, that we are not ſufficient to diſcharge it, but knew of a Perſon much wiſer, and more powerful than ourſelves, and who had given us innumerable Proofs of his Love and Affection for us; out of Kindneſs to ourſelves, one would think, we ſhould not fail to aſk his Counſel and Aſſiſtance; and, if we could prevail with him to undertake the Conduct of what we are incompetent for, account ourſelves vaſtly happy. Now God is exactly ſuch a Friend as this: He loves us as well as we do ourſelves; he deſires our Happineſs as much, and knows infinitely better, than we do, what Means are conducive to it, and will moſt effectually ſecure it: And every Man, that believes thus of God, would, the firſt Thing he did, apply himſelf to him, and beſeech him, with all Earneſtneſs and Importunity, to take him and his Concerns under his Care and Government. Now, if God has prevented us herein, and, without our Deſire, taken this Charge upon himſelf, we ought to rejoice in it, as the greateſt Happineſs, that could poſſibly have befallen us: For what Reaſon has he to fear, who has a God of infinite Power for his *Protector?* Or what Reaſon has he to be anxious, that has a God of infinite Goodneſs for his *Purveyor?* *Againſt Want.*

In all our Concerns.

'Tis from the Conſideration of his great Care in providing for us, that our bleſſed Lord gives the Advice, which ſome *worldly* Men may think a Paradox: [y] *Take no Thought for your Life, what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink, nor yet for your Body, what ye ſhall put on: Is not the Life more than Meat?* Is it not an harder Matter to make a living Creature, than to find out Means to feed it? *Is not the Body more than Raiment?* Is it not a Work of more Difficulty to make a Man's Body, than to provide him with a Suit of Cloaths? *Behold the Fowls of the Air, conſider the Lilies of the Field*, and if God *feed* and *cloath* them, *ſhall he not much more you, O ye of little Faith?* 'Tis from the Conſideration of God's providential Care in protecting us, that the Royal *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks with ſo much Boldneſs; [z] *The Lord is my Light and my Salvation, whom ſhall I fear? The Lord is the Strength of my Life, of whom ſhall I be afraid?* And in another Place, carries his Intrepidity to an higher

Againſt Fear.

[s] Heb. xii. 10.
[t] *Sherlock*, of Providence
[u] Phil. iv. 12.
[x] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II.
[y] Matth. vi. 25, &c.
[z] Pſal. xxvii. 1.

higher Pitch, [a] *We will not fear, though the Earth be moved, and though the Hills be carried into the Midſt of the Sea; though the Waters thereof rage and ſwell, and tho' the Mountains ſhake at the Tempeſt of the ſame; the Lord of Hoſts is with us, the God of* Jacob *is our Refuge.* Not that any of theſe Scriptures countenance a ſupine *throwing* ourſelves upon Providence, without any farther Concern for our Maintenance and Preſervation; for this is not *truſting* but *tempting* God: And therefore, the Meaning of the Paſſages muſt be, that after we have done the beſt we can, and acquitted ourſelves both as *diligent* and *provident* Men, we may depend upon God, and live ſecurely under his Care and Protection, without *diſturbing* our Peace with what is to come; without *perplexing* our Minds with fruitleſs Anxieties, or *ſcaring* or terrifying ourſelves with empty Fears; for all Fears are empty, when we know ourſelves *under the Defence of the moſt High*, and that the Perſon, who is our Enemy, can do nothing againſt us, without the Permiſſion of our *Protector*.

OUR Enemy may be great and powerful indeed, have ſtrong Alliances, and vaſt Advantages againſt us; but the Words of *Hezekiah* are applicable to ſuch a Caſe as this: [b] *Be ſtrong and courageous; be not afraid nor diſmayed for the King of* Aſſyria, *nor for the Multitude that is with him; for there be more with us, than with him; with him is an Arm of Fleſh, but with us is the Lord our God, to help us, and to fight our Battles.*

4. *Prayer and Thankſgiving.*

WHEN we have thus fixed our Truſt and Dependence on Providence, there are two Duties more, that will call upon us, almoſt every Moment, and theſe are, Prayer and Thankſgiving; *Prayer*, whereby we requeſt of God the Mercies and Bleſſings that we want; and *Thankſgiving*, whereby we return our moſt grateful and devout Acknowledgments for whatever we receive. And indeed, if we are once firmly convinced of this, that all we are, and all we have, all we fear, and all we hope for, comes *originally* from the Hands of God, and that he, who has ſuch a Controul over our Fate, is of himſelf *good and gracious, full of Long-ſuffering and Truth*; concerned to love us, as his *Offſpring*; and to protect us, as his *Creatures*; and to provide for us, as his *Penſioners*; to whom we may impart our Wants and Secrets, and in whoſe Boſom unburthen our heavy and diſconſolate Hearts, in full Aſſurance of finding Comfort and Relief; if we conſider this, I ſay, we cannot but think it our *ineſtimable Privilege*, as well as our Duty, to diſcloſe our Griefs and Neceſſities to him, and to implore his Favour and Bleſſing upon our Undertakings; his Grace and Aſſiſtance in both our *ſpiritual* and *temporal* Concerns; his Protection againſt what we would avoid, and his Help and Concurrence to what we deſire to attain. Nor can we once reflect upon the Number and Extent of his Benefits to us; [c] how our Life and Motion, our Health and Vigour, our Senſe and Perception, our Reaſon and Underſtanding, are his Gifts; how we *move* upon his Earth, and *breathe* upon his Air, *drink* of his Springs, and are *fed* from his Granaries, and are *cloathed* from his Wardrobe, beſides many ineſtimable Benefits, extended to our better Part, from the ſame inexhauſtible Bounty; without finding our Hearts ſwell with a grateful Senſe of theſe Things, and our Tongues ready to break out into that devout Rhapſody of the Prophet *David*, [d] *How precious are thy Thoughts*, thy kind and merciful Thoughts, *unto me, O God! How great is the Sum of them! If I ſhould count them, they are more in Number than the Sand.*

WHAT we thus learn by Self-Reflection, the univerſal Practice of all Nations, that ever believed the Exiſtence of a God, abundantly confirms: And yet, ſome of the ancient Philoſophers were much puzzled how to reconcile Prayer and Thankſgiving with their Notions of *Neceſſity* and *Fate*. And indeed, were Providence nothing elſe, but a *neceſſary Chain* of Cauſes, or fixed and immutable *Decrees*, there would be no great Encouragement to preſent our Prayers or Praiſes to God, who, upon this Suppoſition, can help us no more, than he can alter *Deſtiny*, and conſequently, for whatever befals us, deſerves no Thanks. [e] But if God governs the World with as great Liberty and Freedom, as a wiſe and good Man governs his Family, or a Prince his Kingdoms; there is as much Reaſon to pray to him, and to praiſe him for the Benefits we daily receive, as there is to offer up our *Petitions*, or return our *Thanks*, to our Parents or our Prince; nay, infinitely more; foraſmuch as he is the true *Source* and Original of *all*; they only the *Conduits*, that convey *ſome* few of his Bleſſings to us.

GOD

[a] Pſal. xlvi. 2, &c. [b] 2 Chron. xxxii. 7, 8. [c] *Scott*'s Sermons. [d] Pſal. cxxxix. 17, 18.
[e] *Sherlock*, of Providence.

GOD, indeed, needs not to be reminded of our Wants, nor is he to be charmed or captivated with our Praiſes: A good Man overlooks popular Applauſes, and much more ſhould a *ſelf-ſufficient* Deity, were not our Oblations of this Kind *beneficial* to ourſelves, as well as reſpectful to him; but therefore he expects the *Homage* of our Prayers, that his Power and Providence might be univerſally owned and acknowledged by Mankind; that we might live in a conſtant Dependence on him, and be ſenſible, that all, we receive, is his Gift; that we might have a ſtanding Remedy againſt Misfortunes, and a never-failing Friend to fly, and unboſom ourſelves to, in every Exigence and Diſtreſs; and that we might be conſtrained to break off our League with Sin, from the Dread of approaching a God of Purity with our Pollutions about us, and to keep our Appetites in Subjection, that as we can never expect Succeſs without Prayer, ſo we may never dare to attempt any Thing, for which we dare not pray: And, in like Manner, he expects the Tribute of our *Praiſe*, [f] not only as a ſmall *Quit-Rent* for the many valuable Bleſſings we hold under him; but as an Exerciſe likewiſe, wherein our own Pleaſure and Advantage are concerned; as it is a mighty Aid and Furtherance to all our other Duties; as it gives a true *Reliſh* to all God's Favours and Benefits; as it teaches the right Uſe and Improvement of whatever we poſſeſs; as it lays an Obligation on God to continue his Kindneſs unto us; and as it is the beſt Expedient to confirm our *Faith*, and eſtabliſh our *Truſt* and *Dependence* on him, for the Time to come. *For what Reaſons.*

THESE are ſome of the Reaſons, for which God has inſtituted *Prayer* and *Thankſgiving*, not only as a proper Acknowledgment of the Divine Goodneſs, ſuperintending the World, but as a Thing neceſſary both to our own Happineſs, and the wiſe Improvement of his Bleſſings: Only there is one Qualification requiſite to make all Services of this Kind acceptable, and that is, *a Conſcience void of Offence, towards God, and towards Man*, which is a conſtant lively Senſe of the Divine Providence, always preſent with us, always overlooking us, obſerving our Ways, and directing our Concerns, purſuing us with Puniſhments, when we do amiſs, and crowning us with Bleſſings, when we do our Duty, is the moſt effectual Means to attain.

[f] *Scott's* Sermons.

A

COMPLEAT BODY

OF

Speculative and *Practical* DIVINITY.

PART III.

Of the most memorable Transactions from the Beginning of the World, to the Coming of Christ; with proper Dissertations upon each.

CHAP. I.

The most memorable Transactions, from the CREATION *to the* FLOOD.

WE left our first Parents, not long ago, just come out of the Hands of their Maker, adorned with his *Image*, and accommodated with every Thing, that might contribute to their Happiness; and we come now to make some Enquiry for the Place of their first *Habitation*, and in what *Manner* they behaved themselves in it.

Paradise, what.

THE Word *Paradise*, [a] which the *Septuagint* make Use of, (whether it be of *Hebrew*, *Chaldee*, or *Persian* Original) signifies a *Place inclosed for Pleasure* and *Delight*; either a *Park*, where Beasts do range; or a Spot of Ground, stocked with choice Plants, which is properly a *Garden*; or curiously set with Trees, yielding all Manner of Fruit, which is an *Orchard*: In all which Senses the Word may fitly enough be applied to the Place, where our first Parents were to live; since it was not only a pleasant *Garden*, and a fruitful *Orchard*, but a spacious *Park* and *Forest* likewise, [b] where all the *Beasts of the Field* met together, we are told, in order to be named: The great Question is, in what Region of the World it was *situate*; and 'tis a Question that has, in all Ages, much perplexed and divided the Opinions of learned Men.

Different Opinions concerning its Situation.

[c] SOME have placed it in the *third Heaven*, [d] some in the Orb of the *Moon*, [e] some in the *middle Region* of the Air, and others *beyond* the Earth, in a Place hidden, and

[a] *Edwards*'s Survey of Religion, Vol. I. [b] Gen. ii. 20, 21. [c] St *Ambrose*. [d] Bede & Rabanus Maurus. [e] Moses Bar Cepha, Lib. de Paradiso.

and remote from the Knowledge of Men. Of thoſe, that maintain it to be a Part of the ſublunary World, [f] ſome tell us, that it is ſeated in an unknown Country, far diſtant from the Company of the Wicked; [g] ſome ſay in *Africa*, under the *Equinoctial*; others in *America*, in the warmeſt Country there; ſome few have pleaded for our *Europe*, but the moſt general Opinion has carried it for *Aſia*; only in what Part of *Aſia*, whether in *Armenia*, *Syria*, *Perſia*, or *Meſopotamia*, it is to be fixed, great and laſting Controverſies have aroſe.

'TIS very probable, that, in Prejudice taken to theſe Diſputes, [h] ſome have imagined this whole Narration of *Moſes* to be *allegorical*, and that the *Virtues* or *Faculties* of our Minds are to be underſtood by *Paradiſe*, and the *four Rivers* that watered it: But *Moſes* is too plain and *familiar* an Author, to be ſuppoſed capable of writing in ſuch a *myſtical* Manner: He had a rude and illiterate People to inſtruct: His Hiſtory he ordered to be read in the Ears of all the People, and commanded the Parents to teach it to their Children; ſo that to accommodate his Senſe to their Capacities, muſt be his Deſign, and not to conceal it from them in *figurative Adumbrations*.

[i] OTHERS have ſuppoſed, that there was never any Place of peculiar and ſuperlative Beauty, but that the whole Earth, in its *primitive* State, was equally *Paradiſaical*. [k] But, if all Places were equally pleaſant and delightful, where would have been the Puniſhment in *expelling* our firſt Parents out of the *Garden of Eden*, or what Neceſſity would there have been, for placing a *flaming Sword about the Tree of Life*, or appointing an *Hoſt of Cherubims* to guard the Entrance, againſt their Return? *Moſes*, as we ſaid, is far from being pompous in his Manner of Writing; but nevertheleſs it cannot be denied, but that he gives a manifeſt Preference to this *Spot* of Ground above all others, and is very happy in this Particular, that he has the concurrent Teſtimony of all antient Authors, both *Poets* and *Philoſophers*, to confirm what he ſays: For their *fortunate* Iſlands, their *Elyſian* Fields, their Garden of the *Heſperides*, their *Ortygia* and *Toprabane*, as deſcribed by *Diodorus Siculus*, are but borrowed *Sketches* of what our inſpired Penman tells us, concerning the firſt *Terreſtrial Paradiſe*.

[l] OTHERS again affirm, that, if there ever was ſuch a beautiful Place upon the Earth; yet the violent *Concuſſions*, that happened at the *Deluge*, have ſo intirely changed the Face of Nature, that it is almoſt impoſſible to find it out. How far the *Flood* prevailed, and what Alterations were brought upon the Earth by its Force and Overflow, we ſhall have Occaſion to obſerve, when we come to conſider that Subject expreſsly. In the mean Time, I cannot but take Notice, that how great ſoever we may ſuppoſe the Changes affected by the Deluge to have been; [m] yet unleſs there are ſome *Marks* and Characteriſticks of this earthly Paradiſe ſtill remaining, it would not have been ſo *congruous* for *Moſes*, who wrote eight hundred and fifty Years after the Flood, to give us ſo particular a Deſcription of it; nor for the *Prophets*, who lived ſo long after *Moſes*, to make ſuch expreſs Mention of it. Tho' therefore there have been vaſt Alterations in the Face of Nature, and almoſt every Place, as it changed its Owner, changed its Name likewiſe; yet it is not to be doubted, but that, with ſome Care and Attention to what the holy Scriptures make the *Boundaries* of Paradiſe, we may, in ſome Meaſure, find out its Situation.

The Situation of Paradiſe.

NOW the Deſcription, that *Moſes* gives us of it, is delivered in theſe Words: [n] *And the Lord God planted a Garden eaſtward, in* Eden, *and a River went out of* Eden, *to water the Garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four Heads. The Name of the firſt is* Piſon: *That is it, which compaſſes the whole Land of* Havilah, *where there is Gold, and the Gold of that Land is good: There is the Bdellium and the Onyx-Stone. And the Name of the ſecond River is* Gihon: *The ſame is it that compaſſes the whole Land of* Cuſh. *And the Name of the third River is* Hiddekel: *That is it, which goes before* Aſſyria; *and the fourth is* Euphrates. So that to diſcover the Place of Paradiſe, we muſt firſt find out the true Situation of the *four Rivers* here ſpecified by *Moſes*.

THE *firſt River is* Piſon, *or* Phiſon, *that which compaſſeth the whole Land of* Havilah. Now, for the better Underſtanding of this, we muſt obſerve, [o] that, when

Moſes

[f] Bellarmine, de Grat. primi hominis, Cap. 14. He derived this Opinion from ſome of the Antients, who had it from *Papias*. [g] *Maimonides*, *Aben-Ezra*, and other *Jewiſh* Doctors. [h] *Noviomagus*, on *Bede*. *Burnet*'s Theory of the Earth. [i] *Philo*, *Origen*, &c. [k] *Burnet*, ibid. [l] *Whiſton*'s and *Burnet*'s Theories. [m] Sir *Walter Raleigh*. [n] Gen. ii, 8, &c. [o] *Wells*'s Geography, and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

Moſes wrote his Hiſtory, he was, in all Probability, in *Arabia Petræa*; on the Eaſt of which lies *Arabia Deſerta*, but the *Sterility* of the Country will not admit of the Situation of the Garden of *Eden* in that Place; and therefore we muſt go on *Eaſtward*, as our Author directs us, until we come to ſome Place, thro' which *Euphrates* and *Tigris*, which are our only ſure *Marks* to diſcover where *Eden* lay, are known to ſhape their Courſe. Now, *Euphrates* and *Tigris*, tho' they both riſe out of the Mountains of *Armenia*, yet take almoſt contrary Courſes: *Euphrates* runs to the *Weſt*, and paſſing thro' *Meſopotamia*, waters the Country, where *Babylon* once ſtood; whereas *Tigris* takes towards the *Eaſt*, and paſſing along *Aſſyria*, waters the Country, where the once famed City of *Nineveh* ſtood. After a long Progreſs, they meet a little below *Babylon*, and, running a conſiderable Way together in one Stream, ſeparate again not far from *Baſſora*, and ſo fall in two Channels into the *Perſian Gulph*.

Now, taking this along with us, we may obſerve farther, that there are two Places in Scripture that make mention of the Land of *Havilah*: In the one, we are told, [p] *That the* Iſhmaelites *dwelt from* Havilah *unto* Shur, *that is before* Egypt; and in the other, that [q] Saul *ſmote the* Amalekites *from* Havilah, *until thou comeſt to* Shur, *that is before* Egypt: Where, by the Expreſſion *from* Havilah *unto* Shur, is probably meant the whole Extent of that Part of *Arabia*, which lies between *Egypt* to the *Weſt*, and a certain *Channel* or River, which empties itſelf into the *Perſian Gulph* on the *Eaſt*. That *Havilah* is the ſame, with this Part of *Arabia*, is further evinced from its abounding with very good Gold; for all Authors, both *ſacred* and *prophane*, highly commend the Gold of *Arabia*, that it is of ſo *lively* a Colour, as to come near to the Brightneſs of *Fire*, and of ſo *pure* a Kind, as to need no Refinement. *Bdellium*, which by ſome Interpreters is taken for *Pearl*, and by others, for an *Aromatick Gum*, is in both theſe Senſes applicable to theſe Parts. For the *Bdellium* of *Arabia* [r] was always held in great Eſteem; [s] nor is there any Place in the World, which produces finer Pearls, or in greater Quantities, than the Sea about *Baharen*, an Iſland ſituate in the *Perſian Gulph*. [t] And as for the *Onyx-ſtone* in particular, if we will believe what *Pliny* tells us, the Ancients were of Opinion, that it was no where to be found, but in the Mountains of *Arabia*. It ſeems reaſonable therefore to conclude, (according to all the Characters which *Moſes* has given us of it) that that Tract of *Arabia*, which lies upon the *Perſian Gulph*, was, in his Days, called the *Land of Havilah*, and that the *Channel*, which, after *Euphrates* and *Tigris* are parted, runs *Weſtward* into the ſaid *Gulph*, was originally called *Piſon*, and [u] this the rather, becauſe ſome Remains of its ancient Name continued a long while after this Account of it.

THE *ſecond River is* Gihon, *that which encompaſſes the whole Land* [x] *of* Cuſh; where we may obſerve, that *Moſes* has not affixed ſo many Marks on the *Gihon*, as on the *Piſon*, and that probably for this Reaſon, [y] becauſe, the *Piſon* being once found out, the Situation of the *Gihon* would eaſier be diſcovered: For *Piſon* being known to be the *firſt* River, in Reſpect to the Place where *Moſes* was writing, it is but natural to ſuppoſe, that *Gihon*, as being the *ſecond*, was the River next to it, and conſequently, that other Channel, which, after *Euphrates* and *Tigris* are parted, runs

[p] Gen. xxv. 18. [q] 1 Sam. xv. 7. [r] *Nearchus*, one of *Alexander*'s Captains, who conducted his Fleet from the *Indies*, as far as the *Perſian Gulph*, ſpeaks of an Iſland there, abounding in Pearls of great Value. *Strabo*, Lib. xvi. And *Pliny*, having commended the Pearls of the *Indian* Seas, adds, that ſuch as are fiſhed towards *Arabia*, in the *Perſian Gulph*, deſerve the greateſt Praiſe. *Pliny*, Lib. vi. Cap. 28. [s] *Galen*, comparing the *Bdellium* of *Arabia* with that of *Scythia*, gives ſome Advantage to the *firſt*, which he denies to the other. De Simpl. Medic. Lib. vi. And *Pliny* prefers the *Bdellium* of *Arabia* before that of any other Nation, except *Bactriana*. *Pliny*, Lib. xii. Cap. 9. [t] *Strabo* tells us, that the Riches of *Arabia*, which conſiſted in *precious Stones*, and excellent Perfumes, (the Trade whereof brought them a great deal of Gold and Silver, beſides the Gold of the Country itſelf) made *Auguſtus* ſend *Ælius Gallus* thither, either to make theſe Nations his Friends, and ſo draw to himſelf their Riches, or elſe to ſubdue them. Lib. xvi. *Diodorus Siculus* deſcribes the Advantages of *Arabia*, and eſpecially its precious Stones, which are very valuable both for the great *Variety* and *Brightneſs* of Colour. Lib. ii. And, to name no more, *Pliny*, who is very curious in remarking the Countries of precious Stones, aſſures us, that thoſe of the greateſt Value come out of *Arabia*, Lib. ult. [u] It is a great while ſince both this River and the River *Gihon* have loſt their Names: The *Greek* and *Roman* Writers call them ſtill, after their parting, by the Names, they had before they met, *Euphrates* and *Tigris*: But there was ſome Remainder of the Name of *Piſon* preſerved in the *Eaſtern* River *Piſitigris*, which is *Piſon* mixed with *Tigris*; (as Mr. *Carver* takes Notice) it is by *Xenophon* called ſimply *Phyſeus*, in which the Name of *Phiſon* is plainly enough retained, and it went under that Name, until the Time of *Alexander* the Great: for *Quintus Curtius* commonly calls *Tigris* itſelf by the Name of *Phiſis*, and ſays it was ſo called by the Inhabitants thereabout; which, in all Probability, was, at firſt, the Name of this other River *Phiſon*, but, in Proceſs of Time, loſt by the many Alterations, that were made in its Courſe, as *Pliny* tells us. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [x] Our Tranſlators follow the LXX, in rendering the *Hebrew* Name *Cuſh*, by *Ethiopia*, not meaning that in *Africa*, but this in *Aſia*. *Patrick*'s Commentary. And Sir *Walter Raleigh* ſhews, in many Inſtances, the bad Tranſlation of it, page 51, *&c.* [y] *Well*'s Geography.

runs *Eaſtward* into the *Perſian* Gulph: For all Travellers agree, that the Country, (which other People call *Suſiana*) lying upon the *Eaſtern* Stream, is, by the Inhabitants, to this Day, called [a] *Chuzeſtan*, which carries in it plain Footſteps of the original Word, *Cuſh*, or, as ſome write it, *Chuz*.

[a] THOUGH therefore no *Remains* of the Name of this River *Gihon* are to be met with in the Country itſelf; yet, ſince it lies exactly the *ſecond* in Order, according to the Method, that *Moſes* has taken in mentioning the four Rivers; and ſince the Province, it runs along and waſhes, was formerly called the Land of *Cuſh*, there is no Doubt to be made, but that the ſaid *Eaſterly Channel*, or *Mouth* of the *Euphrates*, or *Tigris*, (call we it as we pleaſe) is the very *Gihon* deſcribed by *Moſes*.

THE *third River is* Hiddekel, *that which goeth towards the Eaſt of*, [b] or, as it is better tranſlated, *that which goeth along the Side of* Aſſyria. 'Tis allowed by all Interpreters, as well as the *Septuagint*, that this River is the ſame with *Tigris*; and [c] though it may be difficult to ſhew any juſt *Analogy* between their Names, yet if we either obſerve *Moſes*'s Method of reckoning up the *four* Rivers, or conſider the true *Geography* of the Country, we ſhall eaſily perceive, that the River *Hiddekel* could properly be no other. For as, in Reſpect to the Place, where *Moſes* wrote, *Piſon* lay neareſt to him, and ſo, in a *natural Order*, was named *firſt*; and the *Gihon*, lying near to that, was accordingly reckoned *ſecond*; ſo having paſſed over that Stream, and turning to the Left, in order to come back again to *Arabia Petræa*, where *Moſes* was, we meet, in our Paſſage, with *Tigris* in the *third* Place, and, ſo proceeding *Weſtward* through the lower Part of *Meſopotamia*, come to *Pherath*, or [d] *Euphrates* at laſt: For *Tigris*, we muſt remember, parts *Aſſyria* from *Meſpotamia*, and, meeting with *Euphrates*, a little below *Babylon*, runs along with it, in one common Channel, until they ſeparate again, and make the two Streams of *Piſon* and *Gihon*, which, as we ſaid before, empty themſelves into the *Perſian* Gulph.

THE Land of *Eden* therefore, according to theſe four Rivers, which *Moſes* has made the *Boundaries* of it, muſt lie upon the grand *Channel*, which the *Tigris* and *Euphrates* make, while they run together; and where they *part* again, muſt there *terminate*: For ſo the ſacred Text informs us, *that a River went out of* Eden *to water the Garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four Heads*; which Words manifeſtly imply, that, in *Eden*, the River was but *one*, i. e. one ſingle Channel, but from thence, *i. e.* when it was gone out of *Eden*, it was parted, and became four Streams, (for ſo the *Hebrew* Word may be tranſlated) two *above* and two *below*. For ſuppoſing this Channel our common *Center*, we may, if we look one Way, ſee the *Tigris* and *Euphrates* coming *into it*, and, if we look another, ſee the *Piſon* and *Gihon* running *out of it*.

IT ſeems reaſonable to ſuppoſe therefore, that this Country of *Eden* lay on each Side this great *Channel*, partly in *Chaldea*, and partly in *Suſiana*; and [e] what may confirm us in this Opinion, is, the extraordinary Goodneſs and Fertility of the Soil. For as it is incongruous to think, that God would make Choice of a barren Land, wherein to plant the Garden of *Paradiſe*; and, accordingly, all ancient Hiſtorians and Geographers inform us, that not only *Meſopotamia*, *Chaldea*, a good Part of *Syria*, and other neighbouring Countries, were the moſt pleaſant and fruitful Places in the World; but modern Travellers likewiſe particularly aſſure us, that, in all

[a] *Benjamin* of *Navarre* tells us, that the great Province of *Elam*, whereof *Suſa* is the *Metropolis*, and which extends itſelf as far as the *Perſian Gulph*, at the *Eaſt* of the Mouth of the River *Euphrates* or *Tigris*, (as we pleaſe to term it) is called by that Name. *Wells*'s Geography. [a] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [b] This Senſe is more agreeable to the *plain* and *primary* Intent of the *Hebrew* Word, and accordingly is followed by the great *Hebrician Arias Montanus*: And not only ſo, but the LXX Interpreters likewiſe, and the Authors of the vulgar *Latin* and *Syriac* Tranſlation, render the *Hebrew* Word *over-againſt*, or *along the Side of* Aſſyria, not reſtraining it to the *Eaſtern* Side. *Wells*'s Geography. [c] The People of the *Levant* call the River *Tigris Diglath* which, by taking away the Aſpiration from *Hiddekel*, has ſome ſmall *Affinity* to it. *Ibid.* [d] *Euphrates* is of the ſame Signification with the *Hebrew* Word *Perah*, and is probably ſo called, by Reaſon of the Pleaſantneſs, at leaſt the great Fruitfulneſs of the adjacent Country; for ſo the *Greek* Word Ευφραίνειν (from whence it is derived) ſignifies to *rejoice* or *make fruitful*, according to that of *Virgil*, *Quid lætas faciat ſegetes*. [e] There is this farther Conſideration to prove that the Country of *Eden*, referred to by *Moſes*, was ſeated in the Parts we aſſign it:——That when *Sennacherib*, King of *Aſſyria*, thought to terrify *Hezekiah*, who had rebelled againſt him, we find him boaſting, that he had deſtroyed the Countries of *Gozan*, of *Haran*, of *Rezeph*, and of the Children of *Eden*, which were in *Telaſſar*, 2 Kings xix. 12. Now the Learned generally agree, that *Gozan* is the *Gauzanitis*, a Province in *Meſopotamia*; that *Haran* and *Rezeph* are *Charræ* and *Reſcipha*, two Cities in the ſaid Province; that *Telaſſar* is *Talatha*, a City in *Babylonia*, placed by *Ptolomy* at the Bottom of the common Channel above-mentioned; and conſequently, that *Eden* muſt be the ſame Country where *Moſes* placed Paradiſe; extending itſelf from *Meſopotamia*, or the joining of *Euphrates* and *Tigris*, as far as *Telaſſar*, or the parting of theſe Rivers again into two other Streams, called the Rivers *Piſon* and *Gihon*. *Wells*, ibid.

the Dominions, which the *Grand Seignior* has, there is not a finer Country, (though, for want of Hands, in ſome Places, it is *uncultivated*) than what lies between *Bagdat* and *Baſſora*, the very Tract of Ground, which, according to our Computation, was formerly called the *Land of Eden*.

IN what Part of the *Land of Eden* the Garden of *Paradiſe* was planted, the ſacred *Hiſtorian* ſeems to intimate, by informing us, that it *lay* [f] *Eaſtward in Eden*: For he does not mean, that it lay *Eaſtward*, from the Place where he was then writing, (for that every Body might eaſily know) but his Deſign was, to point out, as near as poſſible, the very Spot of Ground, where it was anciently ſeated. If then the Garden of Paradiſe lay in the *Eaſterly* Part of the Country of *Eden*, and [g] the River, that watered it, ran through that Province (as the Scripture tells us) before it entered into the Garden; [h] then muſt it neceſſarily follow, that Paradiſe was ſituated on one of the *Turnings* of the River, which goes from *Weſt* to *Eaſt*, and, very probably, at the loweſt great *Turning*, which *Ptolomy* takes Notice of, and not far from the Place, where *Arecca* at preſent is known to ſtand.

The State of Paradiſe.

HERE it was, that [i] *God made to grow every Tree, that was pleaſant to the Sight, or good for Food*; and not thinking it ſo proper for Man, even in a State of Innocence, to be idle and unemployed, here he placed him [k] *to dreſs and keep* this happy *Plantation*, which he knew would want their Care, becauſe it was ſo *luxuriant*. [l] Here he was to employ his Mind, as well as exerciſe his Body; to *contemplate* and ſtudy the Works of God; to *ſubmit* himſelf wholly to the Divine Conduct; to conform all his Actions to the Divine Will; and to live in a conſtant Dependence upon the Divine Goodneſs: Here he was to ſpend his Days in the continual Exerciſes of *Prayer* and *Thankſgiving*; and it may be, the natural Dictates of *Gratitude* would prompt him to offer ſome of the Fruits of the Ground, and ſome living Creatures, in Way of Sacrifice unto God. Here were thouſands of Objects, to exerciſe his *intellective* Faculties, to call forth his Reaſon, and employ it: But that, wherein the *ultimate* Perfection of his Life was doubtleſs to conſiſt, was the Union of his Soul with the *ſupreme Good*, that infinite and eternal *Being*, which alone can conſtitute the Happineſs of Man. This was the deſigned Felicity of our firſt Parents: Neither they, nor their Poſterity, were to be liable to Sorrow or Miſery of any Kind, but to be poſſeſſed of a conſtant and *never-failing* Happineſs: And, after innumerable Ages and Succeſſions, were, in their Courſes, to be taken up into a *heavenly Paradiſe*. For, [m] that the Terreſtrial Paradiſe was to *Adam* a *Type* of Heaven, and that the never-ending Life of Happineſs promiſed to our firſt Parents (if they had continued obedient, and grown up to *Perfection*, under that *Oeconomy*, wherein they were placed) ſhould not have been continued in this *earthly*, but only have *commenced* here, and been perpetuated in a *higher* State; that is to ſay, after ſuch a Trial of their Obedience, as the Divine Wiſdom ſhould think convenient, they ſhould have been tranſlated from Earth to Heaven, is the joint Opinion of the beſt [n] *ancient*, both *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* Writers.

I AM not inſenſible, that ſome Men of late, who have taken an uncommon Liberty of interpreting Scripture, contrary to the Senſe of the *primitive* Church, have had Courage enough to deny all this; affirming poſitively, "That the Law "given to *Adam* was a *mere* Law, eſtabliſhed only with a Threatning, and without "any

[f] Gen. ii. 8. [g] Ibid. ii. 10. [h] *Wells*'s Geography. [i] Gen. ii. 9. [k] Ver. 15. [l] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [m] *Bull*'s State of Man before the Fall. [n] This ſame learned Writer has compiled a great many Authorities from the Fathers of the firſt Centuries, all full and ſignificant to the Purpoſe: and to which I refer the Reader, only mentioning one or two, of more remarkable *Force* and *Antiquity*, for his preſent Satisfaction. *Juſtin Martyr*, ſpeaking of the Creation of the World, delivers not his own private Opinion only, but the common Senſe of Chriſtians in his Days: *We have been taught, that God, being good, did, in the Beginning, make all Things, out of uninformed Matter, for the Sake of Men, who, if by their Works they had rendered themſelves worthy of his Acceptance, we preſume ſhould have been favoured with his Friendſhip, and reigned together with him, being made incorruptible and incompaſſible*, Apol. 2. p. 58. *Theophilus*, the Sixth Biſhop of *Antioch*, after the Apoſtles, is more expreſs to this Purpoſe: *God tranſlated* Adam, ſays he, *from the Earth, out of which he was taken, to Paradiſe, adminiſtering to him Matter, or Occaſion of Proficiency; that increaſing, and being made perfect, he might at length be canoniz'd, and conſecrated, and ſo aſcend into Heaven itſelf.* Lib. 2. ad Autolyc. p. 101. *Athanaſius*, among other Things worthy our Obſervation concerning the primordial State of our firſt Parents, has theſe remarkable Words: *He brought them therefore into Paradiſe, and gave them a Law, that if they ſhould preſerve the Grace then given, and continue obedient, they might enjoy, in Paradiſe, a Life without Grief, Sorrow, or Care; beſides that,* THEY HAD A PROMISE ALSO OF AN IMMORTALITY IN THE HEAVENS. *De Incarnatione Verbi:* And therefore we need leſs wonder, that we find it an Article inſerted in the common Offices of the primitive Church, and in the moſt ancient Liturgy now extant, [that of *Clemens*] read theſe Words concerning *Adam: When thou broughteſt him into the Paradiſe of Pleaſure, thou gaveſt him free Leave to eat of all the other Trees, and forbadeſt him to taſte of one only,* FOR THE HOPE OF BETTER THINGS; that, if *he kept the Commandment,* HE MIGHT RECEIVE IMMORTALITY AS THE REWARD OF HIS OBEDIENCE. *Apoſt. Conſtit.* Lib. 8. Cap. 12.

"any Promiſe to recommend it; that *Adam* was naturally made *mortal*, and, do "what he would, muſt have undergone the Laws of his Creation; that his Obe- "dience could have procured him no *Exemption*, becauſe God had made no ſuch " Contract, nor had he any Title to *Immortality*, becauſe no ſuch Grant or Do- "nation is ever heard of; and therefore *the Covenant of eternal Life before the Fall*, "which the Scriptures call the *Covenant of Works*, and which the *Apoſtle* to the "*Gentiles* explains ſo fully, and makes the *Baſis* of the ſecond Covenant, or the "*Covenant of Grace*, is, with them, all *Cant* and *Mummery*, and deſtitute of any "rational Evidence." How much the very Foundations of Chriſtianity are ſtruck at by this *Hypotheſis*, needs no great Sagacity to perceive; and therefore we cannot do a better Service to our holy Profeſſion, than to *ſtate* the true Nature of this *Covenant* of God with our firſt Parents, and thence evince the Reaſon and *Equity*, as well as *Graciouſneſs* of it.

SECT. I.

GOD's *Covenant with* ADAM: *Or, The Firſt Covenant.*

A Covenant, what.

A COVENANT is a mutual Conſent and Agreement, entered into by Perſons, and whereby they ſtand bound each to other, to perform the *Conditions* contracted and indented for; ſo that, in this Senſe, a Covenant is the ſame Thing with a *Contract* or *Bargain*; and, in a ſtrict and proper Bargain, there are two Things preſuppoſed: ° 1*ſt*, That the Perſons contracting be naturally *free* and *independent* on each other, *i. e.* That the one be not bound to the other, as to the Things covenanted for, *antecedent* to that Compact and Agreement made between them. And, 2*dly*, That each Party *voluntarily*, and in Conſideration of his own Benefit, engage himſelf to the other; for, where both are free and independent, 'tis generally the Apprehenſion of ſome Good that will thence mutually accrue, which makes them enter into a *federal* Engagement.

How God's Dealings with Man differ from a Covenant.

FROM this Senſe of the Word, 'tis eaſy to obſerve, that there never was, nor ever will be, a *ſtrict* and *proper Covenant* between God and Man. The Reaſon is, becauſe though God be originally *free*, and has no Obligation to Man, antecedent to his own gracious Will and Promiſe; yet Man is naturally *bound* to God, as he is his *Creator*; and, upon that very *Relation*, has a ſufficient Obligation upon him, though he never entered into *Covenant*. The beſt of his Services too can do God no Benefit, and are ſo vaſtly diſproportionate to the *Reward*, that the Reward, in Strictneſs, cannot be his *Due*, and is rather to be accounted a free Beneficence, upon an *arbitrary* Promiſe. The Terms of the Contract therefore being ſo infinitely to his Advantage, as there can be no Reaſon imagined, why he ſhould *diſſent*; ſo neither is there any room to expect, that there ſhould always, on his Side, be an *explicit* Conſent for the Ratification of it.

And from a Law.

AND as, upon theſe Accounts, God's Tranſactions with us are not ſo ſtrictly and properly a *Covenant*; ſo neither are they ſtrictly and properly a *Law*, though they are frequently called the *Law of Works, and the Law of Faith*. For God does not deal with us out of abſolute *Sovereignty*, but is graciouſly pleaſed to oblige himſelf to us by *Promiſe*, which belongs not to a *Sovereign* as ſuch, but has ſome Reſemblance of a Covenant: So that the Agreement, which God has made with Man, is not *merely* a *Law*, not merely a *Covenant*, but in ſome Meaſure partakes of both; inſomuch that if God had only ſaid, *Do this*, without adding, *Thou ſhalt live*, this had not been a *Covenant*, but a *Law*; and if he had only ſaid, *Thou ſhalt live*, without adding, *Do this*, this had not been a Covenant, but a Promiſe: So that, removing the Condition, we make it a *ſimple* Promiſe; and removing the Promiſe, we make it an *abſolute* Law: But ſince both theſe are found in the *Contract*, it is both a Covenant and a Law, though both in a larger Acceptation; and accordingly, in Scripture, is indifferently uſed under either Denomination.

The Reality of a Covenant between God and Man.

NOW, that there was a Covenant (or whatever other Appellation we pleaſe to give it) between God and our firſt Parents, tending to this Purpoſe, "That, "if they and their Race continued in Obedience, they ſhould never die, but be "always

° *Hopkins*'s Doctrine of the two Covenants.

" always bleſſed and happy, but in Caſe of Diſobedience, be ſubject to Death, " and all other Calamities," [p] is plain from the Preface, which uſhers in the Prohibition given to *Adam*, concerning his not eating of the Tree of Knowledge, with this expreſs Donation or Grant; that *of every Tree of the Garden* (not excepting the *Tree of Life*) *he might freely eat*: For, whether the Tree of Life was a *Sacramental Sign*, or a *Natural Means* of Immortality, 'tis evident, [q] from the Words of God himſelf, that whoever made uſe of it, was put in a *Capacity* of living *for ever*. Nay, the very Commination itſelf imports all this: For, how inſignificant would have been the *Threatening* of Death to a Man's eating of the forbidden Fruit, if he ſhould certainly and neceſſarily have died, whether he had eaten of it or not? There was, doubtleſs, therefore the *Tender* of a Covenant from God, and the *Sanction* of the eternal Life or Death annexed to it: And that our firſt Parents fully conſented to it, in the Name of themſelves and their Poſterity; that they approved of the Condition on their Part, *viz. Obedience*; accepted of the *Reward* promiſed on God's Part, *viz. endleſs Felicity*, or engaged to undergo the Penalty, *viz. everlaſting Death*, is demonſtrable from one plain Paſſage in the Old Teſtament, (to ſay nothing of the New at preſent) where God complains of the ſad Prevarication of the *Jews*, in theſe Words: [r] *O* Ephraim, *what ſhall I do unto thee? O* Judah, *what ſhall I do unto thee? For your Goodneſs is as the Morning Cloud, and, as the early Dew, it goeth away. I deſired Mercy, and not Sacrifice, and the Knowledge of God, more than Burnt-Offerings; but they,* LIKE ADAM, *have tranſgreſſed the Covenant, and have dealt treacherouſly with me*; [s] which plainly refers to God's Covenant with Mankind, in the Beginning of the World, when *Adam* was their *Repreſentative*; which Covenant he could not have properly tranſgreſſed, unleſs he had firſt *conſented to it*.

The Nature of it.

NOR did he only conſent to it himſelf, in his private and perſonal Capacity, but, as our *Repreſentative* and *Federal Head*, he brought all his Poſterity under the like Engagement. What the Apoſtle ſays of *Levi*, [t] *that he paid Tithes in* Abraham, *becauſe he was yet in the Loins of his Father, when* Melchiſedec *met him*, is very applicable to the Caſe now before us. We all entered into Covenant, at the very Beginning of the World; for we were then *in the Loins of* our Father *Adam*, when the Covenant was made: So that when we conſider either *Adam* or ourſelves, with Relation to this Covenant, we muſt ſo form our Apprehenſions, as if all *we* were *Adam*, and *Adam* all of us. For though we then lay hid in our Cauſes and firſt *Principles*, yet the Covenant took hold of us, and bound us, either to the Obedience, which *Adam* promiſed both for himſelf and us, or to the *Penalty*, unto which he expoſed both himſelf and us.

" OUR covenanting *Adam*, however, muſt be underſtood in *Senſu Forenſi*, as the *Divines* term it, (for it is utterly impoſſible that we ſhould actually enter into Covenant before we were) in the ſame Manner as *Parents* may contract for their Children, or any *Teſtator* bind his Executors or Aſſigns; and therefore the Meaning only is,——" That the Covenant, which God made with *Adam*, does as lawfully " and ſtrongly bind us to *Obedience*, and, in Caſe of Failure, to *Puniſhment*, as it " did *him*, becauſe God made this Covenant with him, not in his *perſonal* only, but " in his *repreſentative* Capacity likewiſe, and as he had a Power to *indent* for his " Poſterity, from the natural Right he had over them, as their common Parent." [u] Whether *Adam* knew himſelf to be this *publick* Perſon, and to ſtand as the *Repreſentative* of all Mankind, has been long enough diſputed, without any Hopes of a certain Reſolution: It ſeems very probable, however, that (this Affair being of ſo vaſt and general Concernment) ſome ſuch Apprehenſions, either by *Natural Inſtinct*, or *Divine Revelation*, might be impreſſed upon him; and if ſo, the more inexcuſable was his Fault, who, knowing himſelf intruſted with no leſs a Stock, than the Happineſs of all his Race, ſhould ſo wilfully *break*, and thereby ruin and deſtroy both himſelf and them. This being the *Form* of the Covenant, we come next to conſider the Nature of its Sanctions; *Life*, as we ſaid, upon the Performance, and *Death*, upon the Violation of God's Commands.

Its Sanctions, 1. Life.

SOME have imagined, that by *Life* here is meant the Continuance and Perpetuity, here on Earth, of that *Condition*, wherein *Adam* was created; a State of perfect Happineſs and Bliſs, free from *Sin*, and therefore free from *Miſery*; in a perfect *Concord* and *Agreement* with God; in a continual *Calm* and *Serenity* within; poſſeſſed

[p] *Bull's* State of Man before the Fall. [q] Gen. iii. 22, &c. [r] Hoſea vi. 4. [s] *Edwards's* Survey, Vol. I. [t] Heb. vii. 9, 10. [u] *Hopkins*, of the two Covenants.

poſſeſſed of *Empire* and *Dominion* without; and enjoying all the *innocent Delights*, that Nature could afford; and all this to eternal Ages. But others, [x] who think, that ſuch everlaſting Continuance *here* would have occaſioned a *Populouſneſs* above what the World is able to contain, are rather inclinable to believe, that when the Multitude of Mankind had ſo far *increaſed*, as to ſtreighten the *Bounds* of their *Abode*, God would have *tranſlated* them into Heaven, without their ſeeing or taſting of Death; as a wiſe *State*, when a Land is ſurcharged with Inhabitants, *tranſplants* whole *Colonies* of them into other Countries. Whether of theſe Opinions is more conformable to Truth, is not ſo eaſy to determine, tho' the great Inconvenience, conſequent upon the *Former*, may incline a conſidering Mind rather to adhere to the *Latter*: However that be, 'tis certain, that this *Life*, promiſed in the *Covenant of Works*, was a State made happy and bleſſed by the Confluence of all good Things, outward and inward, ſpiritual and temporal, whatever Man's Condition could need, or his Will deſire; though it came not up to the Proportion of that *immenſe* Glory and Felicity, which is now promiſed to Believers, under the *Covenant of Grace*.

2. *Death, what.*

BY the *Death*, that is threatened, in the Covenant of Works, is meant *Temporal Death*, which conſiſts in the *Separation* of the Soul and Body, together with all its *Forerunners* and *Concomitants*, Pain, Grief, Weakneſs, Sickneſs, and whatever either cauſes or attends it: 2. *Spiritual Death*, which conſiſts in the Loſs of the *Image* and Favour of God, and deſpoiling the Soul of the Ornaments of Knowledge, Grace, and Righteouſneſs, wherein it was *originally* framed: 3. And laſtly, *Eternal Death*, which conſiſts in a State of Wretchedneſs and ſore Miſery, not to be ended, as long as God endures. In this *Latitude* of Senſe is the Word taken by Divines; but then we muſt remember, that whatever Puniſhment had been *eternally* inflicted, either upon the *ſeparated* Soul alone, (as ſome hold) or upon the *whole Man*, both Soul and Body, (as others affirm) it had been more *mild* and *mitigated*, under the *Covenant of Works*, than now the Torment of the *Damned* will be, who have rejected the *Covenant of Grace*. For, as the Life promiſed then was inferior to the Life promiſed now; ſo the Death threatened then is not ſo rigorous and tormenting, as the Death threatened now: For a deſpiſed Saviour, an abuſed Grace, a neglected Salvation, are ſuch Things, as will add *Rage* to the *unquenchable Fire*, and make it eat deeper into the Soul, than if there had been no Saviour provided, no Grace offered, no Salvation purchaſed.

Its Condition.

THESE are the *Terms* of the Covenant on God's Part: And the *Condition*, upon which it was accepted by Man, was *Obedience*, both in its *Perfection* and *Perſeverance*. For the Covenant of Works required of *Adam* all thoſe Things, which are now required of us, under the Covenant of Grace, except it be ſuch as pre-ſuppoſe the Sin and Imperfection of our Nature. To love God, to reverence and worſhip him, to depend upon him, and believe in him, and commit all our Affairs to his Guidance and Government; to reſtrain our Appetites, and improve our Reaſon; to live ſoberly and wiſely; and to be good, and beneficial in our Generation, *&c.* which right Reaſon dictates to be our Duty, were then as much incumbent on *Adam*, as they are now upon us, and what he was much more enabled to perform. [y] For, in the State of Innocence, God ſuited the Power of his Creature to the Law, he intended to give him, and made his Obligation to Duty commenſurate with his Ability to perform it.

Its poſitive Precept, what, and the Nature and Difficulty of it.

THAT *Adam*, [z] in Caſe he had tranſgreſſed againſt any of theſe Duties, and done Things contrary to the Dictates of right Reaſon, had ſinned, and been liable to Puniſhment from God, no Man, who conſiders what he ſays, can deny: But the Difficulty of the Queſtion is about his *Obedience*, and whether, in Caſe no poſitive Law had been ſuper-added, his Obſervance of theſe Laws of Nature had entitled him to the Reward of *Immortality*: And the Anſwer to this, I think, muſt be in the *Negative*; for, if Immortality had been due to the Obſervance of the Law, implanted in Man from his Creation; then certainly the *Legiſlation* ſuper-added, wherein that Immortality was promiſed to Man, no otherwiſe, than upon the Obſervance of the *poſitive* Precept, would have been ſuperfluous, if not abſurd. [a] In a Word, the *Protoplaſt* could have no Right to Immortality, but what was founded in the *gratuitous Stipulation*, and Covenant of God; and therefore ſince we read of no other Stipulation, or Promiſe of *Life eternal* made to him, but what was annex'd to

[x] *Hopkins*, of the two Covenants. [y] *Hopkins*, ibid. [z] *Bull*, of the State of Man before the Fall. [a] *Bull*, ibid.

this *positive* Law, we must conclude, that this positive Law was to be, not only the Grand *Criterion* of his Submission and Obedience, but that his everlasting Weal or Woe depended upon the Observance or Violation of it.

The forbidden Tree, what.

THE *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*, to which this *positive* Law related, was so called, [b] either because it had a Virtue to open the Man's Understanding, and to make him more wise and knowing, than he was before, as the Tempter pretended; or (what is more probable) [c] because the eating of it would *eventually* teach him the *Difference* between the *Good* of Obedience, and the *Evil* of Transgression: [d] For, as People in Health have not a thorough Sense of the Pain and Uneasiness of Sickness, until they come to feel it; so *Adam*, by his Transgression, learned the Difference between *Good and Evil*, which he knew not so perfectly before; [e] but he learned the Difference to be this, that *Good* is that, which gives the Mind Pleasure and Assurance; whereas *Evil* is that, which is necessarily attended, sooner or later, with Shame and Regret.

BUT how fatal soever the Tree was in its Consequences, yet the Scripture informs us, that it was [f] *pleasant* and desirable *to the Eyes*; more alluring than the rest of the Trees in the Garden, having indeed no *Rival*, [g] but the *Tree of Life*, and therefore much exceeding any *tempting* Delight, which the Earth, impoverished by *Adam*'s Transgression, now affords. [h] This Tree *Adam* was to approach, and behold, as oft as, for his Necessity, he had Recourse to the *Tree of Life*; but touch it, taste it, he must not, upon Pain of Death; which was no small Trial: Besides, that the Restraint, laid upon our first Parents, in this one Instance, was, no doubt, a general *Hint* and Intimation given them, to call them from the *Animal* to the *Divine* Life.

WHAT particular Tree this *Tree of Knowledge was*, has been a Matter of much Conjecture among the Learned: [i] The Vine, the Apple, the common and *Indian Fig-Tree* have all put in their Claims; and tho' the general Voice has gone for the common Fig-Tree, yet what the Scriptures have industriously concealed, is above the Power of Man exactly to discover. This however we know of Certainty, because the Word of God has revealed it to us, that the Fruit of this Tree was *desirable to make one wise*; and the Desire of Knowledge, we are sensible, is so *connatural* to the Soul of Man, that, even in this lapsed Estate, some have been observed to quit all the Pleasures of Sense, to forget their very Meat and Drink, and *macerate* their Flesh with Study, in the Pursuit of some new Discovery, which, when they have attained, they seem better pleased, than if they were Masters of both the *Indies*. And if this Thirst after Knowledge was so great and natural in Man, here again was no small Trial of *Adam*, in that he was commanded to repress and keep it within due Bounds, *i. e.* to *acquiesce*, for the Present, in what Understanding he had, and to content himself with that blessed *Simplicity*, which, as the Child of God, he enjoyed, not [k] *hunting after new Inventions*, but waiting upon him, in the Way of Prayer and Obedience, for the Increase of all useful Knowledge, to be dispensed, as it should seem good to his Divine Wisdom. [l] This Injunction therefore of abstaining from the *Tree of Knowledge*, is not such a slight and easy Precept, as some (to inhance the Guilt of *Adam*'s Transgression) have been pleased to imagine, either *mistaking* the first natural Constitution of Man, or not rightly *weighing* the Nature of the Precept itself; since it was a general *Call* to a *Divine* Life, a *Bridle* to the *Deliciousness* of his Sense, a *Check* to the Curiosity of his *Reason*, and a great *Experiment* of his *Self-denial* in both: And they, in my Opinion, cast a *Slur* upon the Divine Wisdom, who seem to disparage that very *Precept*, upon which the main Stress of the whole Covenant, and the great *Reward* promised to the Performance, and *Penalty* threatened to the Disobedience of it, are certainly suspended.

The Reasonableness of the positive Precept.

IT may be thought perhaps, that some great Precept of *moral* Virtue, or some of those consummate Rules, which Christ had brought to Light by his Gospel, had been a more competent *Trial* of Man's Obedience, in his State of *Integrity*: But, if we consider the Thing seriously, we shall find, that in such Circumstances, there was no Possibility of transgressing against these; and these consequently could be no Test

[b] *Josephus*'s Antiquities, Lib. i. Cap. 2. [c] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [d] Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s History. [e] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [f] Gen. iii. 6. [g] Tho' that seems not to have been of so inviting an Appearance, since the Benefit and Necessity of it would sufficiently recommend it to Man's Use. [h] *Bull*, of the State of Man before the Fall. [i] *Edwards*, ibid. [k] Eccles. vii. 29. [l] *Bull*, ibid.

Teſt of his Obedience. The *Decalogue* is reckoned on all Hands a good *Syſtem* of Morality; let us then, for Inſtance, run over ſome of its chief [m] *Precepts*, to ſee how they would have ſuited with the State of Man's *Integrity*. Had God prohibited the *Worſhip of falſe Gods*, or the *Worſhip of carved Images*, can we ſuppoſe, that *Adam* and *Eve*, but juſt created by God, and viſited every Day, either with the Light of his *Preſence*, or with ſome bright *Courtier*, ſent from Heaven to attend them, could have ever been guilty of theſe? The Worſhip of *Images* and falſe *Gods* came not into Practice, till Men grew ſo ſtupid, as to take the *Sun* and *Moon* for Deities, and ſo ſervile and abject, as to flatter their *Princes* into Divine Honours. Had he prohibited *Perjury, or vain Swearing*, what poſſible Place could theſe have found in the *infant* and *innocent* State of Mankind? *Perjury* was never heard of till the World was better peopled, and Men began to cheat one another, and then deny it, and ſo forſwear it: And *Oaths* and *Imprecations* could never have any Being in a State of Innocence; they borrow their Original manifeſtly from the Depravity and Sinfulneſs of our Nature: And ſo of all the reſt. How could *Adam* and *Eve* have *honoured their Father and their Mother*, when they never had any? What poſſible Temptation could they have, to be guilty of *Murder*, when they muſt have acted it on their own Fleſh? How could they commit *Adultery*, when they were the only two upon the Face of the Earth? How be guilty of *Theft*, when they were the ſole Proprietors of all? How bear *falſe Witneſs againſt their Neighbour*, or *covet* his Goods, when there was never a Neighbour in the World, for them to be ſo unjuſt to? And ſo, if we proceed to *Chriſtian* Precepts, how could they *love Enemies*, how could they forgive *Injuries*, when they had no one in the World to offend againſt them? And the Duties of *Abſtinence*, and *Mortification*, and the like, how could they poſſibly exerciſe theſe, when they had no *Luſt* to conquer, no *Paſſion* that was irregular, to ſubdue, but were all *ſerene* and *calm* within?

SINCE therefore, all the *moral* Precepts, that we are acquainted with, were improper for the Trial of Man's Obedience, in the State of his Integrity, it remains, that his *Probation* was moſt properly to be effected, by a Command of doing or forbearing ſome *indifferent* Action, neither good or evil in itſelf, but only ſo far good or evil, as it was commanded or forbidden. And if ſuch a Command was to be choſen, what ſo natural and agreeable to the State of our firſt Parents, (conſidering they were to live all their Lives in a *Garden*) as the forbidding them to eat of the Fruit of a certain Tree in that Garden; a Tree hard at Hand, and might every Moment be eat of, and would therefore, every Moment, give them an Opportunity of teſtifying their Obſervance of the Divine Command, by their forbearing it. To ſpeak all in one Word. [n] Had the Prohibition been grounded on any *internal moral* Evil, in the Nature of the Thing itſelf, there had not been ſo clear a Teſtimony of God's Dominion, nor of *Adam*'s Subjection to it: But when that, which in itſelf was *indifferent*, became unlawful merely by the Will of God; when the Command had no other Excellency, but merely to make his Authority more *ſacred*; to *command* in this Manner was *perfect* Sovereignty, and to *abſtain*, in ſuch a Caſe, was *pure* Obedience.

AND now, from what has been ſaid on this Subject, we may form ſome tolerable Notion to ourſelves of the Nature of that Covenant, which God, in the Beginning of the World, made with the firſt Man, *viz.* That God, on his Part, promiſed to ſupply him with all the Means of Happineſs, both *Spiritual* and *Temporal*, while he continued on Earth; and, in due Time, to *tranſlate* him, without paſſing through the dark Entry of Death, into a State of greater Glory and Perfection, if he adher'd to his Duty, which he had Power and Capacity to do; but, on the other Hand, threatened to inflict on him all thoſe Pains and Miſeries, that *Death*, in its utmoſt Latitude of Signification, *temporal*, *ſpiritual*, and *eternal*, means, in caſe he revolted: That Man, on his Part, accepted the *Condition*, and both for himſelf and his Poſterity, as their *Repreſentative*, and *federal Head*, promiſed a perfect and unſinning Obedience, from whence this is called *the Covenant of Works*: That the main of Man's Duty lay in following the Dictates of his Nature and right Reaſon; but to try his Obedience, God was pleaſed to put one *ſpecial Clauſe* in the Covenant, which laid great Reſtraint both upon his *rational* and *ſenſitive* Appetite, and which he notwithſtanding undertook to perform. In this Situation ſtood the Contract between

[m] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. and *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II.

[n] *Bates*'s Harmony of the Divine Attributes.

tween them; but how long it continued in this Situation, has been a Matter of ſome Diſpute.

How long this Covenant *laſted.*

° MOST of the *Jews*, and ſome of the *Chriſtian Fathers*, are of Opinion, that *Adam* preſerved his Integrity but a very ſhort while indeed; that in the Cloſe of the ſame Day, wherein he was made, he tranſgreſſed the Covenant, and the very ſame Day was caſt out of *Paradiſe:* But this ſeems to be too *haſty* a Conjecture. In the Hiſtory of the Acts of that Day, wherein *Adam* was made, (and every Thing ſeems to be ſet down very *minutely*) we find no Mention of his *Apoſtacy*, nor can we conceive with what Propriety it could be ſaid, that ᵖ *God ſaw every Thing that he had made, and behold it was good*, (which happened in the Cloſe of the Day, becauſe it immediately follows, *that the Evening and the Morning*, which make the Day compleat, *were the ſixth Day)* if Man had not continued *good* till then, and if Sin, the greateſt Evil of all, was entered into the World at that Time.

'TIS more worthy of God, and more conſonant to Reaſon therefore to believe, that our firſt Parents were not baffled ſo ſoon after their *Creation*, nor ſo excellent a Frame ſuffered to be *ſpoiled immediately*. God's *Propoſal* of the Covenant to them, (on which depended the whole Reſult of this Affair) their mutual *Conſenting* to it, and *Ratification* of it, in ſome ſolemn Manner or other, muſt have taken up ſome Space of Time; ſo that the *Parley* between the *Serpent* and *Eve* might have been of a long *Continuance*, tho' it is briefly ſet down by *Moſes*. 'Tis probable, that ſhe, at firſt, gave a *Repulſe* to the *Aſſault*, and that ſeveral Onſets were made, before ſhe yielded. In that *Perfection* of Knowledge and Holineſs, wherein our Parents were created, 'tis not likely, that they ſhould, on a Sudden, be drawn from their *Obedience* to God. ᵍ Thoſe high Endowments could not eaſily be loſt; thoſe Divine Gifts could not decay but by little and little; and therefore it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that theſe Perſons ſhrunk from their Integrity by *Degrees*, and that the Compaſs of Time, between their Temptation, and actual Tranſgreſſion in eating the forbidden Fruit, was of ſome *Length*, much more than can reaſonably be *crowded* into one ſingle Day; and therefore, if we may be allowed to follow others in their Conjectures, it was either ʳ on the *tenth* Day of the World's Age, that *Adam* fell, and was expelled *Paradiſe*; in Memory of which Calamity, *the great Day of Expiation*, ˢ which was the *tenth* Day of the Year, in which *all were required to afflict their Souls*, was, in After-times, inſtituted; or, (as ᵗ others would rather have it) on the *eighth* Day, that, as the firſt Week in the World ended with the *Creation* of Man and Woman, the ſecond was probably concluded with their *fatal Seduction* and *Fall*.

SECT. II.

Of the FALL *of* MAN.

The Hiſtory of the Fall, literal.

BEFORE we proceed to enquire into the *Occaſion* and *Inſtrument*, the *Nature* and *Quality*, and the *Effects* and *Conſequences* of our firſt Parents *Fall*, there is one Thing that muſt be *obviated*; and that is, the Suggeſtion ᵘ of ſuch, as pretend, that this whole Account of *Moſes* is to be underſtood in a *figurative* and *allegorical* Senſe: ˣ That the Hiſtory of the Fall exhibits the *Defection* of the Soul; the *Serpent* repreſents *Concupiſcence*; the Man, to whom he durſt not apply himſelf, is the Picture of *Reaſon:* and the Woman, whom he ſo eaſily ſeduced and overcame, is the Emblem of *Senſe*, and ſo on. * Now, tho' it cannot be denied, but that ſome of the *Heathen* Philoſophers had a ſtrange Affectation for ſuch an *allegorical* Way of writing, in order to conceal their true Notions from the *Vulgar*, and to keep their Learning within the Bounds of their own *School*; yet, ſince it is apparent, that *Moſes* had no ſuch Deſign; that he, in his Writings, induſtriouſly avoids all hard *Metaphors*, and no where affects to gain a Popularity by the Invention of *new* Notions: Since he ſets up for nothing but a *plain Hiſtorian*, and pretends to relate Matters, juſt as they happened, without any Diſguiſe or Embelliſhment of Art; it cannot be ſuppoſed, but that the Hiſtory of the *Fall*, as well as the reſt of the Book of *Geneſis*, is to be taken in a *literal* Senſe. All the reſt of the Book is allowed to be *literal*, and

° *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. ᵖ Gen. i. 31. ᵍ *Edwards*, ibid. ʳ *Uſher*'s Annals, and *Patrick*'s Commentary. ˢ Lev. xvi. 29. ᵗ *Edwards*, ibid. ᵘ Philo de Opif. page 36. Maimonides More Nevoch. Part II. Chap. 30. *Burnet*'s Archæol. ˣ *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. * *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I.

and why ſhould this Part of it only be a Piece of *Egyptian Hieroglyphick? Fable* and *Allegory*, we know, are directly oppoſite to *Hiſtory:* The one pretends to deliver Truth undiſguiſed, the other to deliver Truth indeed, but under the *Veil* and *Cover* of *Fiction*; ſo that, if this Book of *Moſes* be allowed to be *hiſtorical*, we may as well ſay, that what *Thucydides* relates of the Plague of *Athens*, or *Livy* of the Battle of *Cannæ*, is to be underſtood *allegorically*, as what *Moſes* tells us of the Prohibition of the Fruit of the *Tree of Knowledge*, and of *Adam* and *Eve*'s Expulſion from the Garden of *Paradiſe* for breaking it, is to be interpreted in a *myſtical* Senſe, and quite foreign to what the Words import.

Occaſioned by Man's Conſtitution.

THIS being premiſed, we come now to conſider what might poſſibly be the Occaſion of Man's tranſgreſſing in this Kind; [y] which we may, in ſome Meaſure, impute to his *original Conſtitution*. For it muſt be conſidered, that [z] no created Being can, in its own Nature, be incapable of Sin and Default: Its Perfections, be they what they will, are *finite*; and whatever has Bounds ſet to its Perfections, is, in ſome Reſpect, imperfect, *i. e.* it wants thoſe Perfections, which a Being of infinite Perfections only can have, and whatever wants any Perfection is certainly capable of *miſcarrying*. And as every *finite* Creature is capable of Default, ſo every *rational* Being muſt naturally have a Liberty of Choice, *i. e.* it muſt have a *Will* to chuſe, as well as an *Underſtanding* to reaſon; becauſe a Faculty of Underſtanding, without a Will to determine it, (if left to itſelf) muſt always think of the ſame Object, or proceed in a continued *Series* and *Connection* of Thoughts, without any End or Deſign; which will be a perpetual *Labour in vain*, and tedious Thoughtfulneſs to no Purpoſe. And as every *rational* Being has a Liberty of Choice; ſo, to direct that Choice, it muſt, of Neceſſity, have a *preſcribed Rule* of its Actions. God, indeed, who is infinite Perfection, is a Rule to himſelf, and acts according to his own *Eſſence*, from whence it is impoſſible for him to vary: But the moſt perfect Creatures muſt act by a Rule, which is not eſſential to them, but preſcribed them by God, and is not ſo *intrinſick* in their Natures, but that they may decline from it; for a free Agent may follow, or not follow, the Rule appointed him, or elſe he would not be *free*.

NOW, in order to know, how it comes to paſs, that we ſo frequently abuſe our *natural* Freedom, and tranſgreſs the *Rules*, that God has ſet us, we muſt remember,—— [a] that the Soul of Man is ſeated in the *Middle*, as it were, between thoſe *more excellent Beings*, which live perpetually above, with which it partakes in the *Sublimity* of its Nature and Underſtanding; and thoſe *inferior terreſtrial* Beings, with which it communicates through the vital Union, which it has with the Body; and that, by Reaſon of its natural Freedom, it is ſometimes *aſſimilated* to the one, and ſometimes to the other of theſe Extremes. We muſt obſerve farther, [b] that, in this *compound* Nature of ours, there are ſeveral *Powers* and *Faculties*, ſeveral *Inclinations* and *Diſpoſitions*, ſeveral *Paſſions* and *Affections*, differing in their Nature and Tendency, according as they reſult from the Soul or Body; that each of theſe has its proper Object, in a due Application to which it is eaſy and ſatisfied; that they are none of them ſinful in themſelves, but may be Inſtruments of much Good, when rightly applied, as well as occaſion great Miſchief by a Miſapplication: Whereupon a conſiderable Part of Virtue will conſiſt in regulating them, and in keeping our *ſenſitive* Part ſubject to the *rational*.

THIS is the *original* Conſtitution of our Nature: And ſince the firſt Man was endowed with the ſame Powers and Faculties of Mind, and had the ſame Diſpoſitions and Inclinations of Body, it cannot be, but that he muſt have been liable to the ſame Sort of Temptations, and, conſequently, capable of complying with the Dictates of Senſe and Appetite, contrary to the Direction of Reaſon, and the Conviction of his own Mind: And to this Cauſe the Scripture ſeems to aſcribe the Commiſſion of the firſt Sin, when it tells us, that [c] *the Woman ſaw the Tree, that it was good for Food, and pleaſant to the Eye, and deſirable to make one wiſe*, i. e. it had ſeveral Qualities, that were adapted to her *natural Appetites*; was beautiful to the *Sight*, and delightful to the *Taſte*, and improving to the *Underſtanding*, which both anſwered the Deſire of Knowledge implanted in her *ſpiritual*, and the Love of *ſenſual* Pleaſure reſulting from her *animal* Part; and theſe heightened by the Suggeſtions of

[y] *Clarke*'s Enquiry into the Original of moral Evil. [z] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion, Vol. II. [a] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [b] *Clarke*, of the Original of moral Evil. [c] Gen. iii. 6.

the *Tempter*, abated the Horror of God's Prohibition, and induced her to act contrary to his expreſs Command.

And the Temptation of Satan.

WHO this great Tempter and Seducer was, and by what Method of Inſinuation he drew our firſt Parents into their Defection, [d] *Moſes*, who contents himſelf with relating Facts, as they happened *outwardly*, without any Comment or Expoſition of them; [e] or who, by a *Metonymy* common in the *Hebrew* Tongue, uſes the *inſtrumental* for the *efficient* Cauſe, tells us expreſſly, that it was the *Serpent*; and, for this Reaſon, ſome of the [f] ancient *Jews* are of Opinion, that this whole Paſſage is to be underſtood of a *real* Serpent, which Creature they ſuppoſe to have had *originally* the Gift of Reaſon and Speech, ſo that *Eve* might have very well underſtood him. Others, thinking Reaſon and Speech too groſs a *Fiction* in a *Brute*, have imagined that it was not a Serpent, properly ſo called, which appeared, but that only the *Devil*, under that Name, is ſignified and denoted; but this Opinion is no leſs liable to Exception: For, though it cannot be denied, but that the Devil is frequently ſtiled, in Scripture, *the Serpent*, the *old Serpent*, and the like; yet why he ſhould be called the *ſubtleſt Beaſt of the Field*, we cannot conceive, neither will the *Puniſhment*, inflicted on the Serpent, ſuffer us to doubt, but that a Serpent's Body, at leaſt, was employ'd in the Tranſaction.

Different Opinions concerning the Serpent.

THE moſt common therefore, and indeed the only probable Opinion is, that it was the *Devil*, ſome wicked and malicious Spirit, (probably the *Chief* of that Order) who envied the Good of Mankind, the Favours God had beſtowed on them, and the future Happineſs he had ordained for them, and was thereupon reſolved to tempt them to *Diſobedience*, thereby to bring them to the ſame forlorn Condition with himſelf, and his other *apoſtate* Brethren; [g] and that, to effect his Purpoſe, he made uſe of a Serpent's Body, as the propereſt *Organ*, whereby to tranſact his Fraud and Impoſture.

That it was the Devil.

THAT it was the Devil, who all along managed the Deceit, we may ſatisfy ourſelves, not only from the *Incongruouſneſs* of a brute Beaſt's over-reaching Mankind, in their higheſt Pitch of *Underſtanding*, but from the Atteſtation of the Holy Scriptures likewiſe: For the Author of the Book of *Wiſdom*, who well underſtood the Doctrines and Traditions of the *Jewiſh* Church, tells us, that [h] *by the Envy of the Devil, Death came into the World*; and our bleſſed Saviour, who was a better Explainer of theſe Matters, informs us likewiſe, that *the Devil was a Murderer from the Beginning*, or from the firſt *Creation*, alluding to his miſchievous Deſtruction of Mankind then: For this Reaſon, we find him expreſsly, in Scripture, called the Serpent: [i] *And the Dragon was caſt out, that old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan*; which is again repeated in the ſame Book, [k] *and he laid hold on that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan*; all which Places are undoubted *References* to his firſt Deception of Mankind, under the *Form* of a Serpent.

In a Serpent's Body.

NOW, why the Devil choſe rather to aſſume [l] the Form of a Serpent, than that of any other Creature, we may, in ſome Meaſure, learn from the Character which the Scripture gives of that Animal, *viz.* That [m] *it was more ſubtle than any Beaſt of the Field, that the Lord God had made*; where the Word *ſubtle* may not ſo much denote the *Craft* and *Inſidiouſneſs*, as the *gentle*, *familiar*, and *inſinuating* Nature of this Creature. That the Serpent, before the Fall, was mild, and

[d] *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [e] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [f] *Joſephus*, in the firſt Book of his *Antiquities*, Chap. 2. pretends, that *all Creatures uſing the ſame Language*, and conſequently, being endowed with Reaſon and Underſtanding, the *Serpent*, excited by Envy, tempted *Eve* to Sin, and, among other Things, received this ſignal Puniſhment, *viz.* That he ſhould be deprived of his Feet, and ever after crawl upon the Ground; which *Aben-Ezra* and ſeveral *Rabbins* confirm. M. *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertation. [g] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [h] Wiſdom ii. 24. [i] Rev. xii. 9. [k] Ibid. xx. 2. [l] What is an Argument *ex Poſteriori*, of the Devil's having aſſumed the Form of a Serpent, in his Temptation of our firſt Parents, is, the Pride, he has ever ſince taken, of being worſhipped under that *Form*, to inſult, as it were, and trample upon fallen Man. To this Purpoſe we may obſerve, that the Serpent has, all along, been the common *Symbol* and *Repreſentation* of the *Heathen* Deities. *Jul. Firmic. de Errore Profan. Relig.* p 15. That the *Babylonians* worſhipped a *Dragon*, we may learn from the *Apocrypha*, and that they had Images of Serpents in the Temple of *Belus*, *Diodorus Siculus* [Lib. II. Cap. 4.] informs us. *Grotius*, out of ſeveral ancient Authors, has made it appear, that, in the old *Greek Myſteries*, they uſed to carry about a *Serpent*, and cry Εὔα, the Devil thereby expreſſing his Triumph, in the unhappy Deception of our firſt Mother. The Story of *Ophioneus*, among the Heathens, was taken from the Devil's aſſuming the Body of a Serpent, in his tempting of *Eve*. *Orig. contra Celſ.* Lib. 6. And, to name no more, what *Philip Melanchon* tells us, of ſome Prieſts in *Aſia*, is very wonderful, *viz.* That they carry about a *Serpent*, in a Brazen Veſſel, which they attend with a great deal of *Muſick*, and many *Charms* in Verſe, while the Serpent, every now and then, lifts up itſelf, opens its Mouth, and thruſts out the Head of a beautiful Virgin, to ſhew the Devil's Triumph in this Miſcarriage, among theſe poor deluded Idolaters. *Nicholls*'s Conference with the Theiſt, Vol. I. [m] Gen. iii. 1.

and gentle, and [n] more familiar with Man, than any other Creature; that he did not then creep on the Ground, but went with his Head and Breaſt reared up and advanced; that, by frequently approaching our firſt Parents, and playing and ſporting before them, he had gained their Good-liking and Eſteem, is not only the Sentiment both of [o] *Jews* and [p] Chriſtians, but what ſeems likewiſe to have ſome Foundation in Scripture: For when God ſays, that [q] *he will put Enmity between the Serpent and the Woman, and between his Seed and her Seed*, the Implication muſt be, that there was ſome Sort of *Kindneſs* and *Friendſhip* between them before.

'TIS no Way unreaſonable therefore to ſuppoſe, that this Creature was beloved both by *Adam* and *Eve:* She eſpecially was delighted with it, and uſed to play and ſport with it: She laid it perhaps in her Boſom, adorned her Neck with its Windings, or made it a Bracelet for her Arms. So that its being ſo intimate with the Woman, made it the properer Inſtrument for the Devil's Purpoſe, who, *ſliding* himſelf into it, might wantonly play before her, until he *inſenſibly* brought her to the *forbidden Tree*, and then, twiſting round its Branches, might take of the Fruit and eat, to ſhew her, by Experience, that there was nothing of Death contained in it, before he began to beſpeak her; and his Speech might be the leſs *ſurprizing* to her, becauſe ſhe might probably think, (as [r] he might poſitively affirm) that this *new-acquired Faculty* proceeded from the Virtue of the Fruit.

What Kind of Serpent.

BUT there is another Conjecture ſtill more probable, if we will but allow, that the Serpent, whoſe Body the Devil poſſeſſed, was not of a common ordinary *Species*, [s] but one very probably ſomething like that *flying fiery* Sort, which, we are told, are bred in *Arabia* and *Egypt*. They are of a ſhining yellowiſh Colour, like *Braſs*, and by the Motion of their *Wings*, and Vibration of their *Tails*, reverberating the Sun-beams, make a glorious Appearance. Now if the Serpent, whoſe Body the Devil abuſed, was of this Kind, (though perhaps a *Species* far more glorious) it was a very proper Creature for him to make uſe of for his Deſign: For theſe Serpents we find called in Scripture *Seraphs*, or *Seraphim*, which gave the Name to thoſe bright lofty *Angels*, that were frequently employed by God, to deliver his Will to Mankind, and, coming upon that Errand, were wont to put on certain ſplendid Forms; ſome of them the Form of *Cherubim*, i. e. *beautiful flying Oxen*, and others the Shape of *Seraphim*, *winged and ſhining Serpents*. The Devil therefore, who is accuſtomed to imitate the Divine Actions by an artificial *Mimickry*, obſerving that good Angels attended the *Divine* Majeſty, and ſometimes miniſtered to *Adam*

[n] *Mede*'s Diſcourſes, and *Milton*'s Paradiſe, where we meet with this lofty Deſcription of it:

In Serpent, Inmate bad, and toward *Eve*
Addreſs'd his Way; not with indented Wave,
Prone on the Ground, as ſince, but on his Rear,
Circular *Baſe* of riſing Folds that tower'd,
Fold above Fold, a ſurging Maze; his Head
Creſted aloft, and Carbuncle his Eyes;
With burniſh'd Neck of verdant Gold, erect
Admidſt his circling Spires, that on the Graſs.
Floated redundant, *Book* IX.

[o] *Joſeph. Antiq.* Lib. 1. Cap. 2. [p] *Baſil. Hom. de Paradiſo, & Damaſcen. de Orthod. Fid.* Lib. 2. Cap. 19.
[q] Gen. iii. 15. [r] Our ingenious *Milton* makes *Satan*, as ſoon as he had entered into the Serpent, immediately addreſs himſelf to *Eve*; who, upon hearing him ſpeak, enquires by what Means he came to that *Faculty*, and is told, that, by eating of a certain Tree in the Garden, (but the Name he conceals from her) it came upon him, to his own great Surprize:

I was at firſt, as other Beaſts, that graze
The trodden Herb, of abject Thoughts and low;——
'Till on a Day, roving the Field, I chanc'd
A goodly Tree, far diſtant, to behold,
Loaded with Fruit of various Colours mixt,
Ruddy and Gold.———
To ſatisfy the ſharp Deſire I had
Of taſting thoſe fair Apples, I reſolv'd
Not to defer.———
Sated at length, ere long, I might perceive
Strange Alteration in me, to Degree
Of Reaſon in my inward Powers, and Speech
Wanted not long, tho' to this Shape retain'd.
Thenceforth to Speculations high or deep
I turn'd my Thoughts, and with capacious Mind
Conſider'd all Things viſible in Heaven,
Or Earth, or Middle.——— *Paradiſe* Loſt, *Book* IX.

This whole Scene of the Devil's tempting *Eve* in the Form of a Serpent, is wrote with ſo much Art, as well as thorough Knowledge of the beſt Interpreters, that I cannot but recommend it to my Reader, as an excellent Comment on that Part of the third Chapter of *Geneſis*. [s] *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry, and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

Adam and *Eve* in this bright *Appearance*, uſurped the Organs of one of theſe ſhining Serpents, which, by his Art and Skill in natural Cauſes, he might improve into ſuch a ſurpaſſing *Brightneſs*, [t] as to repreſent to *Eve* the uſual *Shechinah*, or *Angelical* Appearance, ſhe was accuſtomed to; and having done this, [u] it was no Wonder, that he more eaſily deceived our firſt unhappy Mother, who might then probably take him for one of the Angels, appertaining to God's *glorious Preſence*, and now ſent down from Heaven to aſſiſt her, as ſhe had often perhaps experienced before, during her Stay in Paradiſe.

[x] HOWEVER this be, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that it was ſome beautiful Creature, whom *Eve* took to be an Angel, that wiſhed her well, while he diſcourſed with her. For, 'tis impoſſible to conceive, that ſhe ſhould be ſo ſimple and ignorant, as to think that Beaſts could ſpeak, much leſs, that they knew more of God's Mind than herſelf: Nor ſeems it credible, how ſhe could be deceived any otherwiſe, than by ſome Creature, which appeared ſo gloriouſly, as to make her miſtake it for an heavenly *Miniſter* coming, as ſhe might ſuppoſe, to explain unto her the Senſe and Meaning of the Divine Command. And, accordingly, if we obſerve in what Manner the Tempter addreſſes himſelf to her, we ſhall find our Suppoſition confirmed.

The Manner of his tempting Eve.

A LEARNED *Jew* [y] has expounded this Tranſaction in a very new and ingenious Manner. He pretends that the *Serpent* did not ſpeak at all, neither did *Eve* ſay any Thing to it; but that, being a very nimble and active Creature, it got upon the *Tree of Knowledge*, took of the Fruit, and eat of it; that *Eve*, having ſeen it ſeveral Times do ſo, and not die, concluded with herſelf that the ſaid Fruit did not occaſion *Death*, and that it might be grateful to the Taſte. By this Action, ſays he, the Serpent gave the Woman to underſtand, as much as if it had ſpoke, that ſhe ſhould not die for eating the Fruit; whereupon ſhe concluded that God had laid the *Prohibition* upon them, purely to debar them from the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

[z] THIS Opinion is very plauſible; and yet it muſt be owned, that the Text ſeems to expreſs ſomething more, and that there was a real *Dialogue* between the Woman and the Serpent, wherein the Serpent had the Advantage of her. To perſiſt therefore in our former Expoſition, it is not improbable, [a] that the Tempter, before ever he ſpoke to *Eve*, repreſented himſelf as one of the *heavenly Court*, who came to congratulate the Happineſs, that God had beſtowed upon them in *Paradiſe*, which was ſo great, that he could not eaſily believe, he had denied them any of the Fruit of the Garden: He deſired therefore to be ſatisfied, from her own Mouth, of the Truth of what he pretended to have heard, or to know, how they underſtood the Command of God: *Yea, hath God ſaid, ye ſhall not eat of every Tree of the Garden?* And, as the Woman acquainted him with the whole Tenor of the Prohibition, (to weaken her Faith) he firſt ſuggeſts her Miſtake in the Meaning of it, *Ye ſhall not ſurely die*; and then (to flatter her Ambition) he deludes her with a falſe Promiſe: *God does know, that in the Day ye eat thereof, your Eyes ſhall be opened, and ye ſhall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil.* As if he had ſaid,

" AND, can it poſſibly be, that ſo good a God, who has ſo lately been ſo boun-
" tiful to you, as to give you a *Being*, and inveſt you with *Dominion*, and make
" you the chief *Favourites*, that he has, ſhould now deny you any Thing? Has he
" indeed forbid you the Uſe of the Tree of Knowledge, but why did he plant it
" at all? Why did he adorn it with ſuch beautiful Fruit? Why did he place you
" in this Garden, to ſee and behold it daily, but that he has a ſecret Deſign (however
" he

[t] This ſeems to be the Opinion of *Tertullian*, when he tells us, that Eve *gave Attention to the Serpent, as to the Son of God*, and again, that the Serpent from the Beginning was one, that *ſacrilegiouſly* uſurped the Divine Image. De Præſcrip. Hæret. pag. 220. Et adv. Valent. Cap. 2. pag. 251. [u] Our learned and ingenious Mr *Mede* has another Way of accounting for the Devil's Succeſs, in his Temptation of the Woman. He ſuppoſes, that, as it was the Law of Spirits, in their Commerce with Men, to preſent themſelves under the Shape of ſome viſible Thing; ſo it was to be likewiſe under the Shape of ſome ſuch Thing, as, more or leſs, reſembled their Condition; and that, as the *Glorious* Spirits might take no other Shape, than that of *Man*, ſo the *Apoſtate* Spirits could appear in no other Likeneſs but that of a *Beaſt*, thereby to denote their Abaſement: And yet, becauſe the Devil here took upon him the Shape of the *moſt wiſe* and *excellent* of all Beaſts, he ſo blinded the Woman's Eyes with an Opinion of his Excellency and Sagacity, that, in a Manner, ſhe forgot, or regarded not, that he was one of the *wicked* and *apoſtate* Spirits; which occaſioned her miſerable Ruin and Overthrow. *Diſcourſe* xiv. But this Opinion turns upon too many Suppoſitions: It accounts not ſo well for the Woman's complying with the Tempter, nor does it anſwer the great Difficulty, *how ſhe came to be ſo very culpable, if ſhe knew not who the Tempter was*, much better than the other. [x] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [y] *Iſaac Abarbinel.* [z] *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [a] *Patrick*, ibid.

" he may conceal it from you) that you ſhould eat it, as well as the reſt? And " therefore he *conceals* it from you, becauſe he is minded to keep you in Ignorance, " and not admit you to that Plenitude of Happineſs, which your eating of this Tree " would confer upon you. [b] Its ſovereign Quality is to illuminate ſtrangely the " Underſtanding, and advance all the other Faculties of the Soul to ſuch a Sublimity, " that *eat but of it*, and ye ſhall be like Angels; nay, ye ſhall be like Gods; " your Beings ſhall be ſecure in your own Hands, and your Happineſs vaſt and " inconceivable, and independent on any other. Why ſhould you ſhrink back, or " be afraid to do it then? You have now an Opportunity of making yourſelves for " ever; and the Treſpaſs is nothing: What Harm in eating a little Fruit? Why this " Tree of Knowledge more ſacred than all the reſt? Can ſo great a Puniſhment as " *Death* be proportionate to ſo ſmall a Fault? I come to aſſure you that it is not; " that God has relaxed the Rigour of the Prohibition, and eat you what you will, *ye* " *ſurely ſhall not die.*"

The Fall of the Woman.

THIS ſeems to be a natural *Paraphraſe* upon the Tempter's Words; and by ſome ſuch cunning *Harangue* as this it was, that he gained the Ear of *Eve*: And when he had done this, [c] he prevailed with her to fix her Eye upon the Fruit; he remarked to her its *Pleaſantneſs* to the Sight, and left her to gueſs at the *Deliciouſneſs* of its Taſte. *Eve*, in the very Midſt of the Temptation, had a Freedom of Choice; but the wild Conceit of knowing *Good and Evil*, of becoming *like God*, and of changing her Felicity (great indeed, but ſubordinate) for an *independent* State of Happineſs; and eſpecially the deceitful *Bait* of a preſent *ſenſual* Pleaſure blinded her Reaſon by Degrees; and, as ſhe ſtood gazing on the Tree, filled all her Thoughts, and the whole Capacity of her Soul. The Sight of the Fruit provoked her Deſire; the Suggeſtions of the Tempter urged it on; and the very Prohibition itſelf added ſomething to inflame it; ſo that, at all Adventures, ſhe put forth her Hand, and plucked, and eat:

[d] Earth felt the Wound, and Nature from her Seat,
Sighing thro' all her Works, gave Signs of Woe,
That all was loſt.

Of the Man.

SHE however had no ſuch *Senſe* of her Condition, but fancying herſelf already in the Poſſeſſion of that *chimerical* Happineſs, wherewith the Devil had flattered her, ſhe invited her Huſband to partake with her. The moſt abſurd Arguments appear reaſonable, and the moſt unjuſt Deſigns equitable, when the Perſon, that propoſes them, is beloved. [e] The Devil therefore knew very well what he did, when he made his firſt Application to the Woman, perceiving her not only to be *weaker* by Nature, but to have ſuch a powerful *Aſcendency* over her Huſband's Affections, that he could not well deny her any Thing. Her Charms and Endearments, he knew, would be of more *Efficacy*, than all the ſubtle Motives, which he could ſuggeſt; and therefore he made Uſe of her to engage him in the Defection. And [f] he, like an *uxorious* Man, (after ſome Reluctancy, we may ſuppoſe) was prevailed on, by her Intreaties, contrary to his Senſe of Duty, and the Convictions of his own Breaſt, to violate the Command, merely becauſe ſhe had done it, and to ſhare whatever Fate God's Indignation for this Tranſgreſſion ſhould bring upon her: For ſo the Words of his Excuſe ſeem to imply, *The Woman, whom thou gaveſt to be with me*, (and to be my other Self) *gave me of the Tree, and I did eat:* 'Twas through her Perſuaſion, and out of the paſſionate Affection I had for her, that I was likewiſe drawn in to commit this Sin. Thus the *Sollicitations* of the Woman ruined the Man, as the *Inchantments* of the Temper ruined the Woman: She held forth the fair

[b] *Eve*, upon the Sight of the forbidden Tree, unto which the Serpent had conducted her, ſeems ſurprized, and refuſes to eat, alledging the ſevere Prohibition of God; whereupon the Poet makes the Tempter artfully break out into this rapturous Commendation of it:

O ſacred, wiſe, and Wiſdom-giving Plant,
Mother of Sciences! Now I feel thy Power
Within me clear, not only to diſcern
Things in their Cauſes, but to trace the Ways
Of higheſt Agents, deem'd however wiſe.
Queen of the Univerſe! do not believe
Thoſe rigid Threats of Death——MILTON, Book ix.

[c] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [d] *Milton*'s Paradiſe Loſt, Book ix. [e] *Mede*'s Diſcourſes. [f] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I.

fair enticing Fruit to him, and he, rather than ſee her periſh alone, choſe to be involved in the ſame common Guilt.

Earth trembled from her Entrails, as again
In Pangs, and Nature gave a ſecond Groan.
Sky lowr'd, and, muttering Thunder, ſome ſad Drops
Wept, at compleating of the mortal Sin.——MILTON, Book ix.

Why God permitted it.

"BUT why did God permit them thus to be undone? Why did he not ſend them "Succours from above? When ſo great a Price, as the Lives of all Mankind, was "ſet upon their Heads, why did not he enable them to overcome the Wiles of "the Tempter? Why did not he order a *Guard* of Angels, or ſome more plentiful "*Influxes* of his bleſſed Spirit, to aſſiſt them, in this unequal Conflict?" Theſe are Enquiries that may well enough be made, and therefore, to ſatisfy them, and withal to vindicate the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of Almighty God, in permitting this Event, we ſhould do well to conſider, that God having created Man a *Free-Agent*, and now put him in a State of *Probation*, he could not lay any *Reſtraint* upon him, nor communicate any *Aſſiſtance* to him, but what was conſiſtent with the *Nature* he had given him, and the *State* he had placed him in. [g] Had God, to prevent Man's Sin, taken away the *Liberty* of his Will, he had thereby deſtroyed the Foundation of all Virtue, and the very Nature of Man himſelf; for Virtue would not have been *ſuch*, had there been no Poſſibility of acting contrary, and Man's Nature would have been *Divine*, had it been made *impeccable*: [h] Had God given our firſt Parents ſuch powerful Influences of his holy Spirit, as to have made it *impoſſible* for them to ſin, or had he ſent a *Guard* of Angels to watch and attend them ſo, as to hinder the Devil from *propoſing* any Temptation, or them from *hearkening* to any; had he, I ſay, *ſupernaturally* over-ruled the *Organs* of their Bodies, or the inward *Inclinations* of their Minds, upon the leaſt Tendency to Evil, in this Caſe, he had governed them, not as *free*, but as *neceſſary* Agents, and put it out of his own Power to have made any Trial of them at all. All therefore that he could do, and all that in Reaſon could be expected from him to do, was to give them ſuch a ſufficient Meaſure of Power and Aſſiſtance, as might enable them to be a Match for the *ſtrongeſt* Temptation: And this, there is no Queſtion to be made, but that he did do.

He no ways to be blamed.

[i] WE indeed, in this *degenerate* State of ours, find a great deal of Difficulty to encounter with Temptations: We feel a great *Blindneſs* in our Underſtanding, and a *Crookedneſs* in our Will: We have *Paſſions* ſtrong and ungovernable, and experience oftentimes an *Inclination* to do Evil, even before the Temptation comes. But our firſt Parents, in their *primitive* Rectitude, ſtood poſſeſſed of every Thing as advantageous the other Way. They had an *Underſtanding* large, and capacious, and fully *illuminated* by the Divine Spirit: Their *Will* was naturally inclined to the *ſupreme Good*, and could not, without Violence to its Nature, make Choice of any other; by which Means it came to paſs, that it was as hard for them to ſin, as it is difficult for us to abſtain from ſinning; as eaſy for them to elude Temptations then, as it is natural for us to be led away by Temptations now. And therefore, if, notwithſtanding all theſe mighty Advantages towards a State of *Impeccancy*, they would chuſe to expreſs a Contempt of God's Authority, and to break thro' all Reſtraints to come at their Sin, their Perverſeneſs and Obſtinacy are only to be blamed, and not the Inſufficiency of the Divine Aſſiſtance.

IT cannot be denied indeed, but that the *Diſorder*, brought upon us by their Tranſgreſſion, was great and grievous; and yet there will be no Cauſe to complain, much leſs any Reaſon to impeach the Goodneſs of God for it, eſpecially if it be conſidered farther, —— that what he thought not fit to prevent by his Almighty Power, he has nevertheleſs thought fit to repair by the *Covenant of Mercy* in his Son *Jeſus Chriſt*. By him he has propounded the ſame *Reward*, eternal Life after Death, which we ſhould have had, without Death, before, and given us a better Eſtabliſhment for our *Virtue* now, than we could have had, had we not been Sufferers by the firſt Tranſgreſſion.

FOR let us ſuppoſe, [k] that, notwithſtanding our firſt Parents had ſinned, yet God had been pleaſed, that *original* Righteouſneſs ſhould have *equally* deſcended upon all their Poſterity; yet we muſt allow, that any one of their Poſterity might have been

[g] Simplicius, in Epic. page 187. [h] *Nicholls's* Conference, Vol. I. [i] Ibid. [k] *Young's* Sermons.

been foiled by the *Wiles* of the Tempter, and fallen, as well as they did: Now had they ſo fallen, (the *Covenant of Grace* being not yet founded) how could they have ever recovered themſelves to any Degree of Acceptance with God? Their Caſe muſt have been the ſame, as deſperate, as forlorn, as that of fallen Angels was before: Whereas now, in the preſent State of Things, our Condition is much ſafer. Sin indeed, by Reaſon of our preſent Infirmity, may more eaſily make its *Breaches* upon us, either through *Ignorance* or *Surprize*; but it cannot get *Dominion* over us, without our own deliberate Option; for it is an expreſs Goſpel-Promiſe againſt the Power of Sin, that [l] *it ſhall not have Dominion over us*; againſt the Power of the Devil, *that greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the World*; againſt the Power of Temptations, that [m] *God is faithful, who will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able*; againſt Diſcouragement from the Pretence of our Infirmities, that [n] *we may do all this through Chriſt that ſtrengthens us*; and in Caſe of failing, [o] *that we have an Advocate with the Father, and a Propitiation for our Sins*. Thus plentifully did God provide for Man's *Stability*, in that State of *Integrity*; thus graciouſly for his *Reſtoration*, in this State of *Infirmity*; in both Caſes his *Goodneſs* has been conſpicuous, and has never failed.

The Heinouſneſs of the Crime.

BUT it may be objected perhaps againſt this Attribute, "that the Sin of our "firſt Parents could hardly deſerve ſo ſevere a Puniſhment, as what was inflicted "upon them; that the eating of a Fig, an Apple, or whatever the Fruit was, ſeems "to be a *ſlight* and *venial* Offence, and no Way proportionate to God's Indigna"tion againſt them, and their Poſterity for it." We take wrong Meaſures however, [p] if we ſuppoſe that Good and Evil are only in the Nature of the Thing, and not in the Commands and Prohibitions of God, and ſo eſtimate the Degree of an Offence from the *Quality* of the Thing forbidden, more than the *Authority* of the Legiſlator. [q] Whatever God is pleaſed to command or forbid, how *indifferent* ſoever it be in itſelf, is, for that very Reaſon, ſo far as it is commanded or forbidden by him, as truly Good or Evil, as if it were *abſolutely* and *morally* ſo; becauſe it is enacted by the ſame Divine Authority, that makes all *moral* Precepts obligatory to us. [r] Nay, the *lighter* and more *indifferent* the Matter of the Precept is, the greater is the Impiety of the Tranſgreſſor in preferring ſo trivial a Thing before God's Will and Pleaſure, and in deſpiſing his Wrath and Indignation, when it might ſo eaſily have been avoided.

The Aggravations of it.

LET it not then be thought, that the eating of the forbidden Fruit was a light and inſignificant Matter; for if we conſider it in all its aggravating Circumſtances, we muſt allow, that it was not only a bare *Diſobedience* to God's Command, but a perfect *Infidelity* to his Promiſes and Threats: That it was [s] a Kind of *Idolatry* in them, to believe the *Devil*, and to put a greater Truſt in him, than in *God*; [t] a prodigious *Pride*, to deſire to be *like God*, and ſuch a *diabolical* Pride, as made the evil Angels fall from Heaven; [u] *Envy* and *Diſcontent*, to think that God had denied them the Perfections belonging to their Nature; *Covetouſneſs* and [x] *Sacrilege*, to deſire and rob God of that, which he had made holy to himſelf, in Token of his Dominion and Sovereignty; [y] ſtrange and accountable *Folly*, to part with his Favour, which is better than Life, for the Pleaſures of Taſte and Curioſity; and one of the moſt barbarous *Cruelties*, that ever was committed, to deſtroy the poor Souls of ſo many of their Offſpring, to diſinherit all their Children, before they were born, and doom them to *Slavery*, before they knew the Price of *Liberty*.

ADD to this, that it was a Diſobedience againſt God; a God, [z] who not only knew beſt how to govern them, and what was moſt for their real Good and Advantage; [a] but who ſo lately had given them *Being*, and beſtowed ſo much Happineſs on them, and made them *Lords* over all, and reſtrained nothing from them, but only the Uſe of this one Tree: Add again, that they committed this Sin, in [b] the very Place of God's ſpecial *Preſence*, againſt the cleareſt *Conviction* of Conſcience, with Minds fully *enlightened* to diſcern it, with Wills ſufficiently fortified to decline it, and without any outward *Compulſion*, or inward Propenſity of Nature to induce them to it; and laying all this together, it will appear, that this was a Crime of ſo *ſingular* an Enormity, and Guilt of ſo heinous a Complexion, that nothing now-

[l] Rom. vi. 14. [m] 1 Cor. x. 13. [n] Phil. iv. 13. [o] 1 John ii. 1. [p] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. [q] *Jenkins*, ibid. [r] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [s] *Bates*'s Harmony, [t] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [u] *Bates*, ibid. [x] *Mede*'s Diſcourſes, p. 27. [y] *Bates*, ibid. [z] *Edwards*, ibid. [a] *Mede*'s Diſcourſes, p. 40. [b] *Bates*, ibid.

The Effects of it.

now-a-days can be ſuppoſed to reſemble it: As will farther appear in the dreadful *Effects*, that thereupon enſued, both to *themſelves* and their *Poſterity*.

To themſelves.

FOR, [c] after the *intoxicating* Juice of the forbidden Tree was gone off, and the Man begun to return to his Senſes again; after the Eyes of his Underſtanding came to be opened, and he to reflect within himſelf upon what he had done, whom he had offended, and whom he had gratified by his Tranſgreſſion; when he began, I ſay, [d] to perceive his own *Nakedneſs*, and the foul *Degradation* of his Nature; how his Innocence, which *cloathed* him before like a Garment, was fled, and Luſt, and other irregular Appetites, which he was an utter Stranger to till that unhappy Hour, had taken Poſſeſſion of his Soul, in what Condition muſt he be? How is Man *diſfigured* by his Fall! How is he *transformed* in an Inſtant from the *Image* of *God* into the Image of the *Devil!*

ADAM, while he continued in his Obedience, enjoyed Peace with God, a ſweet Serenity of Mind, a Divine Calm in his Conſcience, and was full of Satisfaction in himſelf; but after his Sin, he trembled at God's Voice, and was tormented at his Preſence: [e] I *heard thy Voice, and was afraid*, ſays the poor guilty Man: [f] He looked on God as angry and armed againſt him, ready to execute the ſevere Sentence: Conſcience began an early *Hell* within him: *Paradiſe*, with all its Pleaſures, could not ſecure him from the Sting in his Breaſt; and that ſharpened by the Hand of God. What a *Confuſion* of Thoughts, what a *Combate* of Paſſions was he in? When the Temptation, which deceived him, vaniſhed, and his Spirit recovered out of the Surpriſe, and took a clear View of its Guilt, in its true Horror, what *Indignation* did it kindle in his Breaſt? How did Shame, Sorrow, and Deſpair, theſe ſecret *Executioners*, torment his Spirit? The intelligent Nature (his peculiar Excellency above the Brutes) armed Miſery againſt him, and put a keener Edge upon it, by reflecting on the fooliſh Exchange, he had made, of the Favour of God, for the Fruit of a Tree, and by his foreſeeing the *Death*, he juſtly deſerved, hanging over his Head, and ready to devour him.

WE may imagine in Part, but cannot ſufficiently relate, how ſad and deplorable the Condition of *Adam* and *Eve* was, upon their Loſs of God's Favour, and Expulſion from *Paradiſe*. They could not but ſpend their Days in languiſhing Grief, and in continual Sighs and Tears. Paradiſe, they ſaw, ſhut againſt them, and the *Guard* ſtand menacing with a flaming Sword [g]. The Face of God was

[c] *Bates*'s Harmony. [d] Immediately upon eating the forbidden Fruit, the ſacred Hiſtorian tells us, that our firſt Parents *knew themſelves to be naked*, i. e. they were ſenſible, they had tranſgreſſed. Thus, after the Golden Calf was conſecrated *Moſes* is ſaid to have *ſeen the People naked*, Exod. xxxii. 25. And in the New Teſtament γυμνος is ſometimes taken for a *Sinner*, Rev. xvi. 15. Others indeed ſuppoſe, that the Fruit of this forbidden Tree provoked our firſt Parents to *Luſt*, and ſome indecent Motions of the Body; for, according to the Modeſty of the *Hebrew* Tongue, *Nakedneſs* may well enough denote an irregular Appetite to *Venereal* Pleaſures; but, beſides that this Conjecture is without any Manner of Foundation, 'tis hard to conceive, how *Adam* and *Eve* ſhould not know themſelves to be *naked* before their Fall, or why they ſhould be more aſhamed of their Nakedneſs then, than they were before. When they were the only Inhabitants of the World, their Bed, under the Canopy of Heaven, was equally as chaſte, as if it had been covered with a Roof, and ſecured with a Wall, and Ceiling, and Tapeſtry, and therefore this *Nakedneſs* of theirs muſt be underſtood in a *figurative* Senſe. M. *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations. [e] Gen. iii. 10. [f] *Milton* makes *Adam*, after his Recovery from his *Infatuation*, expreſs his Shame and Regret to *Eve* in Terms, that deſerve our Obſervation:

——— ——— ——— How ſhall I behold the Face
Henceforth of God or Angel, earſt with Joy
And Rapture ſo oft beheld? Thoſe heavenly Shapes,
Which dazzle now this Earthly, with their Blaze
Inſufferably bright. O might I here
In Solitude live ſavage, in ſome Glade
Obſcur'd, where higheſt Woods impenetrable
To Star or Sun Light ſpread their Umbrage broad,
And brown as Evening! Cover me, ye Pines,
Ye Cedars, with innumerable Boughs
Hide me, where I may never ſee them more. Book ix.

[g] What is here meant by the flaming Sword, repreſented to be in the Hand of the *Cherubims*, at the Entrance of the Garden of Paradiſe, is variouſly conjectured by Learned Men. But of all Eſſays of this Kind, that of *Tertullian*, who thought it was the *Torrid Zone*, is the moſt unhappy. *Tertul. Apolog.* Cap. 47. Nor is that of *Pſeudo-Anſelm*, who will have it to be a Wall of Fire encompaſſing Paradiſe, much better. *Anſelmi Elucidare*, Cap. 15. And yet we find this followed, in a great Meaſure, by a Learned Man of our own Nation, who, pretending that the original Word ſignifies a *dividing Flame*, as well as a *flaming Sword*, ſuppoſes, that this Flame was an Accenſion of ſome inflammable Matter, round about the Garden, which excluded all Comers to it, till ſuch Time as the Beauty of the Place was defaced. *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. Some *Rabbins* are of Opinion, that this *flaming Sword* was an *Angel*, which they found upon that Paſſage in the Pſalms, where it is ſaid, that *God maketh his Angels Spirits, and his Miniſters a flaming Fire*, Pſal. civ. 4. *Maimonides More Nev.* Part I. Cap. 49. And hereupon another Learned Man of our Nation has imagined, that this *flaming Sword*, which was eſteemed by the *Jews* a ſecond Angel, was of a different Kind to the Cherubim, *viz.* a *Seraph*, or flaming Angel, in the Form of a flying fiery Serpent, whoſe Body vibrated in the Air with Luſtre, and may be fitly deſcribed by the Image of ſuch a Sword. *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry.

was alienated from them, and no Hopes of Conſolation to be expected thence. Sweat and hard Labour were come upon the Man, and great Pain in her Child-bearing had ſeized upon the Woman, ſo that they could not but be filled with *Regret* and Remorſe, whether they reflected on their paſt *Felicity*, or looked forward, and ſaw the innumerable Miſeries attending human Life, all conſequent upon their *Folly*. And, to augment their Sorrow, there ſoon happened a diſmal Effect of their Fall and Depravation, in the unnatural Murther of their dear Son *Abel*, whoſe Name (as ſome expound it) ſignifies *Mourning*, and was given, by a particular Direction of Providence, to denote the *Grief*, that his Death would occaſion to his diſconſolate Parents. This made their Hearts bleed afreſh, and cauſed them to look back with more Seriouſneſs and Self-reproaches upon their vile Apoſtacy, which was the Spring of all the Miſeries they underwent.

Whether they repented of it.

BUT whatever *temporal* Calamities befel theſe Sinners, ſince the Scripture makes no Mention of their *Repentance*, ſome have not ſtuck to affirm, that they died *impenitent*. This, however, ſeems to be too raſh and uncharitable a Conjecture: The ſacred Hiſtory, indeed, is *ſilent* as to many Particulars, becauſe a great Space of Time, eſpecially in its *Introduction*, (as this Part of it may very well be called) is included in the Compaſs of a very few Pages; but as the Promiſe of the *Meſſiah*, who was to redeem and ſave Mankind, was made [h] immediately after the *Fall*, and ſo concerned *them*, as well as others, we have Foundation for a pious Belief, that God's Mercy would not *overpaſs* theſe poor Offenders, at its firſt ſetting out, but rather *begin* with them, to give an Inſtance of his preſent Pity and Kindneſs, and an Aſſurance of his future Goodneſs and Clemency. [i] His Wiſdom and Honour can hardly be ſuppoſed to ſuffer *Satan* to boaſt, that his firſt Conqueſt and Spoils remained *entire*, and met not with an After-defeat. And therefore, [k] if the *Eaſtern Traditions* were to be credited, we might add, that, for a long Time after their Fall, they plunged themſelves into the deepeſt Sorrow: They bemoaned their Fate; they bewailed their Sin; begged Pardon, and performed all the Offices of a ſincere *Penance*, until God was pleaſed to diſpatch an Angel to comfort them, and to give them Aſſurance of their *Reſtoration* to the Divine Favour.

Its evil Effects upon the Serpent.

THESE were the evil Effects and Conſequences, which, by Reaſon of their *Apoſtacy*, more eſpecially befel our firſt Parents: We come now to thoſe of a larger Extent, and wherein their whole Race is concerned. But, before we enter upon theſe, it may not be amiſs briefly to take Notice of the *Sentence* denounced againſt the Serpent, and that the rather, becauſe it may poſſibly ſeem ſtrange to ſome, why God ſhould be ſo incenſed againſt this *Creature*, for what it could no Ways help; having no Intention to ſin, nor any *Cognizance* of what the Devil did with its Body. Now, if we conſider what a bright and glorious Creature the Serpent was before, we cannot but ſuppoſe, that God intended this *Debaſement* of it, not ſo much to expreſs his Indignation againſt it, [l] as to make it a *Monument* of Man's unhappy Fall, a Teſtimony of his Diſpleaſure againſt Sin, and an *inſtructive Emblem* to deter all future Ages from the Commiſſion of that, which brought ſuch Vengeance along with it. [m] In the *Levitical* Law we find an expreſs Command, that if a Man committed any Abomination with a *Beaſt*, the Beaſt was to be ſlain, as well as the Man: And, by *Parity* of Reaſon, the Serpent is here puniſhed, if not to humble the Pride, and allay the Triumph of the *Devil*, by ſeeing the *Inſtrument* of his Succeſs ſo ſhamefully *degraded*; at leaſt to remind the *Delinquents* themſelves of the Foulneſs of their Crime, and the Neceſſity of their Repentance, whenever they chanced to behold ſo noble a Creature, as the Serpent once was, reduced to ſo vile and abject a Condition, merely by the Means of their Tranſgreſſion. And now to proceed.

Upon the Ground.

[n] WHATEVER we read in the antient *Poets*, of the Plenty and Happineſs of the *Golden Age*, was certainly nothing elſe, but ſome *broken* Notions and Traditions of Man's firſt Eſtate in *Paradiſe*, and of that univerſal Harmony, wherein the World, and all Things would have continued, had not his Fall introduced a Change. The Fruits of the Earth, at firſt, were *ſpontaneous*, and the Soil, without being torn and tortured, ſatisfied the Wants and Deſires of Man; but, upon his *Apoſtacy* from God, as a Puniſhment for his Sin, God [o] *curſed the Ground*, and the Ground immediately *brought forth Thorns and Thiſtles*: For we muſt not ſuppoſe, [p] with ſome, that the original *Fertility* of the Earth continued until the *Deſtruction* brought upon it by the

[h] Gen. iii. 15. [i] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [k] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [l] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol I. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Mede*'s Diſcourſes. [m] Lev. xx. 15. [n] Dr *Jackſon*'s Works, Vol. III. [o] Gen. iii. 17, 18. [p] *Burnet*'s Theory, and *Woodward*'s Natural Hiſtory.

univerſal *Deluge*. The Deluge may be ſaid, indeed, to be the Completion of the Curſe of Barrenneſs, but the Curſe commenced, in Part, long before; otherwiſe how could *Adam* be ſaid, [q] *in Sorrow, and in the Sweat of his Face, to eat of it all the Days of his Life?* He died not till about ſeven hundred Years before the Flood, and therefore the *Antediluvian* Earth muſt have loſt Abundance of its natural Riches, if Men were neceſſitated to till it for their Bread; and perhaps it every Year ſenſibly declined in its Fecundity, until that deſtructive Inundation came.

Mens Bodies. [r] WE may lay it down therefore for an irrefragable Truth, becauſe it is founded upon the holy Records, that the Earth was impoveriſh'd upon Man's Tranſgreſſion, and every Creature degenerated when he fell. [s] The Earth and Air, and other Elements became *diſordered*, in ſome Meaſure *unwholeſome*, and ſometimes *fatal*. Hence proceeded Dearth, Scarcity, Peſtilences, Earthquakes, Storms, Tempeſts, Thunder and Lightning, and all Manner of natural Calamities. Man's Body, which is made of earthly Principles, feels the Power of noxious Elements, and every Day participates of the Curſe; from whence proceeds ſuch an innumerable Variety of Diſeaſes and Diſtempers, [t] that the Maſters of *Medics* have not yet been able to furniſh out a perfect *Catalogue* of all the Maladies that infeſt us. We conſume our Days, in this Valley of Tears, amidſt a Multitude of Pains and Uneaſineſſes, of Wants and Neceſſities, of Croſſes and Diſaſters, both in our *private*, and in our *relative* Capacity, which (if no ſudden *Caſualty* overtakes us) waſte and wear us out by Degrees, till at laſt our Bodies ſink into the Grave, and Stench and Rottenneſs become our Portion.

Their Souls. NAY, not only the *Bodies*, but the *Souls* likewiſe of *Adam*'s Poſterity feel the ſad Effects of his *Apoſtacy* from God. The *rational* and divine Part of Man (which was once the Crown and Glory of his Conſtitution) is *defaced*; its original Righteouſneſs perverted, and all the Faculties of his Mind miſerably impaired. His *intellectual* Powers are clouded with Ignorance and Error; the Notions of Good and Evil have loſt their Perſpicuity, and Reaſon itſelf become ſo weak, that it can hardly do its Office. His *elective* Faculty is influenced too much by his Affections and Paſſions, [u] to ſay that it is abſolutely *free*: And though he cannot but perceive, that he has loſt that happy Inclination to Good, which was ſtamped upon his Nature at firſt, yet he has not the Senſe to bemoan his Loſs. His Love and Hatred, his Deſires, his Fears, his Joys, his Anger, his Sorrows, Paſſions that were originally *innocent* and *regular*, are all *unbridled* and *ungoverned* now; they hurry him into Miſchief; they fill him with Perturbation; make him reſtleſs and uneaſy, and are always ending in Vanity and Vexation of Spirit. Theſe are the Bruiſes that our Nature contracted by her Fall: But there is ſtill a more melancholy Conſideration behind, *viz.* That theſe Diſorders in the Underſtanding, Will, and Affections, make Way for more *viſible* ones in the Actions of Mens Lives. From hence proceed Impiety, Profaneneſs, Blaſphemy, Perjury, Covetouſneſs, Injuſtice, Theft, Violence, Malice, Murther, Drunkenneſs, Lewdneſs, Sins of all Degrees, and

[q] Gen. iii. 17, 19. [r] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [s] Our ingenious *Milton* brings in God, ſoon after the Fall, appointing his holy Angels to make an Alteration in the Courſe of the *Celeſtial* Bodies, and to poſſeſs them with *noxious* Qualities, in order to puniſh Man for his Tranſgreſſion:

— — — — — — — — The Sun
Had firſt his Precept ſo to move, ſo ſhine,
As might affect the Earth with Cold and Heat
Scarce tolerable; and from the *North* to call
Decrepit *Winter*; from the *South* to bring
Solſtitial *Summer*'s Heat. To the blank Moon
Her Office they preſcrib'd, to th' other Five
Their *Planetary* Motions and Aſpects
Of noxious Efficacy, and when to join
In *Synod* unbenign; and taught the *fix'd*
Their Influence malign when to ſhower;
Which of them riſing with the Sun, or falling
Should prove tempeſtuous. To the *Winds* they ſet
Their Corners, when with Bluſter to confound
Sea, Air, and Shore; the *Thunder* when to roll
With Terror thro' the dark aërial Hall.———
Theſe Changes in the Heav'ns, tho' ſlow, produce
Like Change on Sea and Land; Sidereal Blaſt,
Vapour, and Miſt, and Exhalation hot,
Corrupt and peſtilent, *&c.* MILTON's *Paradiſe Loſt*, Book X.

[t] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [u] *Vid.* the Tenth Article of the Church of *England*, concerning *Free-will.*

and Vices of all Dimenſions, which not only exclude Men from Heaven and Happineſs, but make them obnoxious to eternal Miſery and Puniſhment in the World to come: [x] *For the Wages of Sin are Death*, eternal Death it muſt be expounded, becauſe it is ſet in Oppoſition to *the Gift of God, which is eternal Life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.*

THUS we ſee, that all Mankind by Nature [y] *is wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked*; [z] *born to Trouble*, and liable to Sin, *as the Sparks fly upwards*; incapable of *Heaven*, and in no Condition to eſcape *Hell*, without the Divine Interpoſition: And to account for this dire Effect, ſome have been apt to imagine, [a] that the Fruit of the forbidden Tree might be *impregnated* with a very *fermenting* Juice, which put the Blood and Spirits into great Diſorder, and thereby diveſted the Soul of that *Power* and *Dominion*, which it had before over the Body; and, by a cloſer and more intimate Union with Matter, reduced it to that miſerable Condition, which has been propagated, along with human Nature, down to Poſterity; as ſome *Poiſons*, we know, will ſtrangely affect the *Nerves* and *Spirits*, without cauſing immediate Death, but make ſuch Alterations in the Body, as, with all the Help of Phyſick, cannot be repaired. But whatever the Nature of the Fruit might be, ſince its Qualities were created by God, to him we muſt have Recourſe in this Enquiry; and, whether the Death, (with all its Train of Evils) that has deſcended to us, lay in the *Tree*, or in the *Will* of God, there is no Queſtion to be made, but that our wiſe Creator might very juſtly decree, that human Nature in general ſhould be affected with, and our Happineſs or Unhappineſs depend upon the Obedience or Diſobedience of our firſt Parents. We daily ſee, that *Children* very often inherit the *Diſeaſes* of their *Parents*, and that a vicious and extravagant Father leaves commonly his Son Heir to nothing elſe, but the Name and Shadow of a great Family, with an infirm and ſickly Conſtitution. And if Men generally now partake of the bad Habits and Diſpoſitions of their immediate Parents, why might not the Corruption of human Nature in the *firſt*, have equally deſcended upon all the reſt of Mankind? The *Rebellion* of a Parent, in all civil Governments, reduces his Children to *Poverty* and *Diſgrace*, who had a Title before to Riches and Honours: And, for the ſame Reaſon, why might not *Adam* forfeit, for himſelf, and all his *Deſcendants*, the Gift of *Immortality*, and the Promiſe of eternal Life? God might certainly beſtow his own Gifts upon his own Terms, and therefore, ſince the Condition was *Obedience*, he might juſtly inflict Death, *i. e.* with-hold Immortality from us; he might juſtly deny us Heaven (for the Promiſe of Heaven was an Act of his free Bounty) upon the Tranſgreſſion and Diſobedience of our firſt Parents. They were our *Repreſentatives*, and in them we fell. But then, amidſt all this Calamity, we have one Thing to comfort us, that [b] *Adam was the Figure of him, that was to come*, and *therefore, as by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; even ſo, by the Righteouſneſs of one, the free Gift came upon all Men unto Juſtification of Life.*

How this was effected.

SECT. III.

Of ORIGINAL SIN.

I KNOW of no Argument in *Divinity*, that is ſurrounded with more Difficulties, and has occaſioned a greater Diverſity of Opinions, than this of *Original Sin*. Original Sin indeed is not, in expreſs Terms, mentioned in the holy Bible; but the Nature of the Thing itſelf, and in what Manner it came to be committed, is ſufficiently related, ſo that thoſe, who admit of the Authority of the Scriptures, make no Queſtion of the *Fact*: The great Matter of Diſpute is, what the Effect of this Tranſgreſſion was, what Guilt it contained, what Puniſhment it merited, and in what Degree its Guilt and Puniſhment both may be ſaid to affect us.

Different Opinions about it.

THE *Pelagians* and *Socinians* agree in [c] affirming, —— that, in the Beginning of the World, there was no ſuch Thing as a *Covenant* between God and Man; that *Adam* was no *Proxy*, or *Repreſentative* for his Poſterity, as is pretended; that the Prohibition was given to our firſt Parents *only*, and they *alone* were culpable in the Tranſgreſſion;

[x] Rom. vi. 23.
[b] Rom. v. 14, 18.
[y] Rev. iii. 17.
[c] *Burnet*, on the Articles.
[z] Job v. 7.
[a] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II.

Tranſgreſſion; that their Sin, in ſhort, was *perſonal*, their Nature *mortal*, and the very ſame with ours; that we have all alike a Liberty of Choice, muſt be puniſhed all for our *own*, and not other People's Miſconduct; and that the Imputation of Guilt, down to this Time, for an Offence ſo many thouſand Years ago committed, ſeems to bear hard upon the Goodneſs and Juſtice of Almighty God.

THE *Remonſtrants* are of Opinion, that *Adam* indeed, as to the Compoſition of his Body, was *naturally* mortal; yet, by the Bleſſing of God, whereof the Tree of Life was a *Symbol* or *Sacrament*, or elſe by the *Phyſical* Virtue of the Tree itſelf, which could cure all Diſeaſes, and fortify and reſtore Life, he was to be *immortalized*. They ſuppoſe therefore, that the Threat made to *Adam*, upon eating the forbidden Fruit, *that he ſhould die*, is to be underſtood *literally*; but to be carried no farther than *natural* Death; [d] which, conſidering the Fears and Terrors, the Miſeries and Uneaſineſſes, that it occaſions, they think, is Puniſhment ſevere enough; though fairly reconcileable to the Notions of God's Juſtice and Goodneſs, becauſe it is but a *temporal* Puniſhment, and is abundantly recompenſed by the *Redemption* and *Reparation* that all Mankind ſhall have in *Chriſt Jeſus*.

OTHERS do ſo far approve of all this, as to think it is a Part of *Original Sin*; but then they believe, that it goes much farther, and that, beſides Mens natural *Mortality*, there is a Weakneſs and Corruption ſpread through the whole Race of Mankind, which diſcovers itſelf in their *Inclination* to Evil, and *Impotency* to that which is good. [e] Of this the Philoſophers, ſay they, from the Light of Nature, and their own Experience and Obſervation of themſelves and others, were very ſenſible; of this the holy Scripture gives us abundant Teſtimony, when it tells us, that [f] *God made Man upright, but he ſought out to himſelf many Inventions*, ſince which Time, [g] *the Imaginations of the Thoughts are evil continually*; and therefore they conclude, that ſince Man was not *originally* made ſo, (for God created him after his own *Image*) he muſt have contracted all this from his *Fall*, and that therefore the Threatening of Death had an higher Signification than the Diſſolution of the Soul and Body, *viz.* the Loſs of *Divine* Favour, of all *ſupernatural* Gifts and Graces, and a total Defection of Mind from God, which immediately commenced upon the Tranſgreſſion.

THE *Supralapſarians*, and other Diſciples of St *Auſtin*, carry this Matter ſtill farther: They believe, that a *Covenant* was made with all Mankind in *Adam*, as their Head and Principal, and a Perſon appointed by God to repreſent them all; [h] that our firſt Parents, by their Tranſgreſſion, fell from their *Righteouſneſs*, and Communion with God, and ſo became dead in Sin, and wholly defiled in all the *Faculties* of their Soul and Body: That, whatever Death was due to them for their Tranſgreſſion, the ſame is conveyed to all their *Poſterity*, by the Way of ordinary Generation: That, from this *original* Corruption, all *actual* Tranſgreſſions do ariſe; but that, without actual Tranſgreſſion, even in its own Nature, it brings Guilt upon every one, that is born into the World, whereby he is bound over to the Wrath of God, and Curſe of the Law, and ſo made ſubject to Death, with all the Miſeries that attend it, *Spiritual*, *Temporal*, and *Eternal*.

THESE are the principal Opinions (for the little *Singularities* are innumerable) in this great and controverted Argument; and, in order to perceive which of them approaches neareſt to the *Standard* of Truth, we muſt make ſome ſhort Enquiry,

1. INTO the *Corruption* of human Nature, and how far it is *criminal* in us.

2. INTO the Nature of *Original Sin*, and how far it it *imputed* to us; and,

3. INTO the *Puniſhment*, that becomes due thereupon, and who are the *proper Objects* of it.

Natural Corruption, its Reality.

THE *Corruption* of human Nature is what not only we, who have the *Revelation* of God for our Information in this Particular, have Reaſon to bewail; but what even thoſe, who had no Vouchſafement of this Kind, have *experienced* in themſelves, though they were unable to account for its *Original*. Hence it is, that we

[d] *Vide* Tractatum, de Imputatione divinâ peccati Adami, per *Dan. Whitby*.
[e] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[f] Eccleſ. vii. 29.
[g] Gen. vi. 5.
[h] *Taylor*'s Polemical Diſcourſes.

we find *Ariſtotle* compared the State of the Soul in the Body to thoſe *Etruſcan Robbers*, who joined dead and living Bodies together; and *Tully* (as he is brought in by St *Auſtin*) ſadly complaining, [l] *That Nature had brought Man into the World, more like a Step-mother than a Mother; with a Body naked, frail, and infirm; with a Mind anxious in Troubles, and dejected in Fears; too weak for Labour, and too propenſe to Luſt; with ſome Sparks of the Divine Fire in his Mind indeed, but theſe ſmothered and obſcured:* Whereupon that Father obſerves, "That *Tully* did "not ſpeak of the unhappy Effects occaſioned by the Diſobedience of our rebellious "Parents, but only drew up an Accuſation againſt Nature; he very well ſaw the "*Thing*, but was ignorant of the *Cauſe*; he knew not the Reaſon, why ſo heavy a "Yoke was laid upon the Sons of *Adam*, and, being unacquainted with the *Sacred* "*Records*, was quite a Stranger to *Original Sin*."

Conjectures concerning it.

AND indeed the Father's Remark was no more than juſt upon that Occaſion; for, if we look into the ſeveral Accounts of the beſt Philoſophers, we ſhall find them very incompetent, if not abſurd, in this Point of Original Corruption. Some of them have imputed it to a Principle *infinitely evil*, a Sort of *Anti-God*, eternally co-exiſting with the true God, and eternally oppoſing him, by annoying and perverting Mankind. But this is a wild and abſurd Notion: [k] For if we conſider, that what is *infinitely evil* muſt, by neceſſary Conſequence, be *infinitely imperfect* and weak, we ſhall ſoon perceive, that what is infinitely weak (however malicious and miſchievous in itſelf) can never be in a Capacity, either to contrive Miſchief, or to execute it: [l] Others therefore, with more Plauſibility, have imagined, that this general Depravation of human Nature proceeded from a pre-exiſtent State, and our Propenſity to Sin in *this* World was an ill Habit of the Soul contracted in *another*, by a voluntary *Deviation* from God; for which Reaſon it is ſent into the Body by Way of *Puniſhment* and *Expiation*. But this is a mere Conjecture, without any Poſſibility of Proof, and has this plain Reaſon againſt it,——[m] That no Man can be puniſhed for his *Amendment*, (as the Suppoſition in this Caſe runs) who knows nothing of his *Offence*; becauſe it is inconſiſtent with the Nature and End of Puniſhment, that the Offender ſhould not be made ſenſible of his Fault, eſpecially when the Puniſhment is deſigned for his Amendment: Beſides, that it ſeems a very improper Way of Correction for *paſt Offences*, to impriſon the Soul in a Body, where, by *the Fleſh's luſting againſt the Spirit*, it is every Day expoſed to the Commiſſion of *more*.

The Scripture-Account of it.

THE only true and ſatisfactory Account therefore of this Matter is what we have from the Word of God, which ſtates the Corruption of human Nature in ſuch Terms as theſe, *viz.* That [n] *by one Man Sin entered into the World, by whoſe Diſobedience many were made Sinners*; that [o] *by Nature*, therefore, *we are the Children of Wrath*, and [p] *unable to receive the Things of the Spirit, or to know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*; for [q] *what is born of Fleſh is Fleſh*, and [r] *who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean?* The Royal *Pſalmiſt*, therefore, makes this free Confeſſion of his natural Depravity, [s] *Behold I was ſhapen in Wickedneſs, and in Sin hath my Mother conceived me*; and St *Paul*, this publick Declaration of his natural Imbecillity to Good, [t] *I know that in me* (i. e. *in my Fleſh*) *dwelleth no good Thing; for to will is preſent with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not: For though I delight in the Law of God after the inward Man, yet I ſee another Law in my Members, warring againſt the Law of my Mind, and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in my Members. O wretched Man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the Body of this Death?*

Various Opinions hereupon.

THESE are plain and undeniable Texts; but then the Queſtion is, in what Senſe they are to be taken. [u] Thoſe, that take them in a *ſtrict* and *literal* Senſe, are apt to infer, that human Nature has not only loſt its *Clearneſs* of Underſtanding, and *Freedom* of Will, and *Order* of Affections, together with the ſupernatural Graces, which conſtituted the *Image of God*; but contracted a *poſitive* Malignity likewiſe, and ſtrong Bent and Inclination to every Thing that is evil and ſinful; inſomuch, that Infants, from the very *Womb*, have all the Seeds and Principles of Wickedneſs in them, which, as they grow up to *Maturity*, viſibly

[l] Non à Matre, ſed à Novercâ Naturâ editum eſſe hominem in vitam, corpore nudo, fragili, & infirmo; Animo anxio ad Moleſtias, humili ad Timores, molli ad Labores, prono ad Libidines; in quo tamen velut obrutus ineſſet Ignis quidem Divinus mentis. *Cic. de Repub. Lib.* 3. [k] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. I. [l] *Jenkins's* Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. [m] Ibid. [n] Rom. v. 12. [o] Eph. ii. 3. [p] 1 Cor. ii. 14. [q] John iii. 6. [r] Job xiv. 4. [s] Pſal. li. 5. [t] Rom. vii. 18, &c. [u] *Voſſius* Hiſt. *Pelag.* Lib. II. Th. 1. and *Whitaker*, of Original Sin.

exert themſelves, unleſs reſtrained by Grace, and purified by Baptiſm: And they give this Reaſon for it,——[x] That *Adam*, by Generation, could tranſmit nothing to his Poſterity, but what he had himſelf; ſince therefore he himſelf was polluted with Sin, he muſt neceſſarily have begotten Sinners like himſelf; for the Scripture-Maxim will always hold true, that *as the Root is, ſuch are the Branches.*

OTHERS are willing to underſtand moſt of theſe Paſſages in a different Senſe, ſo as to relate, not to *original*, but *actual* Sin; to the Iniquity we *contract* by our living in the World, and not any *natural* Depravity, that we bring into it. [y] Hereupon they tell us, that when *Job* aſſerts that *no Man can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean*, his Meaning only is, that God alone can cleanſe and purify the Sinner; that when *David* complains *of the Iniquity, wherein he was conceived*, he means no more than to *aggrandize* his Sinfulneſs, or to own himſelf to be wholly and entirely wicked; that when our Saviour affirms, that *what is born of Fleſh is Fleſh*, he intends it of our *natural* Birth, wherein nothing can tranſcend the Principle, from whence it is deriv'd; that when St *Paul* tells us, we are *by Nature the Children of Wrath, and find a Law in our Members warring againſt the Law in our Mind*, &c. the whole is to be underſtood of Perſons long accuſtomed to Sin, and thereby brought, as it were, under a natural Neceſſity of committing it.

FROM theſe Expoſitions they infer, that the Scripture makes mention of no ſuch Corruption and Depravation of our Souls by *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion; that human Nature is the ſame in us, that it was *originally* in him, only with this Difference, that he was created in the full *Maturity* of his Underſtanding, whereas we are born *Infants*, and for ſome Years after live a mere *animal* Life, and are entirely guided by our *ſenſitive* Appetite, which, falling in with the corrupt Cuſtoms of the World, and the Prevalency of bad Examples, betray us into ſinful Practices, before we come to the free Exerciſe of our Reaſon. [z] This they account the true Cauſe of the univerſal Wickedneſs of Mankind; for to impute it to any *natural* Origin, is to make God, who is the Author of Nature, the Author of Wickedneſs likewiſe: * Since whether the Soul come by *Traduction* or Divine Infuſion, it ſeems equally hard to condemn it to ſuch an *Union* with the Body, as immediately depraves all its Faculties.

Concerning the Guilt of it. THE Sentiments of Mankind about the *Guilt* or *Sinfulneſs* of our natural Corruption, ſeem to vary according to the different Conceptions they have of the Thing. The *Socinians*, and ſuch as eſteem human Nature as perfect *now*, as it was in its *primitive* State, deny all Propenſity to Evil, naturally born with us, and make the *whole* of our own contracting. They remember in Scripture no Directions concerning *Original Guilt*, nor did they ever find any *Liturgy*, either in the *Jewiſh* or *Chriſtian* Church, wherein there is any *penitential* Commemoration of it. The *Jews*, ſay they, knew nothing of it, nor was the Word ever deviſed among *Chriſtians*, until the Times of St *Auſtin*. The Doctors of the Church of *Rome* believe, that *Original* Sin is quite taken away by *Baptiſm*; and therefore, perceiving, that a depraved Diſpoſition ſtill remains in us, they conclude from thence, that it is no Part of Original Sin, but what *Adam*, in his State of Integrity, was not exempted from: Otherwiſe, they can hardly imagine how it was poſſible for the Devil, in his Temptation, to have any Acceſs to him. The Followers of *Calvin* are generally of Opinion, that this Corruption of Nature is *truly* and *properly* a Sin, or rather a *ſinful Habit* inherent in the Will, and impreſſed upon all the Faculties of the Soul; and ſome have carried the Matter ſo far as to affirm, that we are doomed to Damnation before we [a] are born, and are all by Nature *the Image of the Devil.* The Church of *England*, though more moderate in her Expreſſions, has nevertheleſs declared this to be her Sentiment,——[b] that *by Nature we are the Children of Wrath, born in Sin*, and under ſuch a *faulty* State, as *naturally inclines us to Evil*, and juſtly *deſerves God's Wrath and Damnation.* Thoſe, that adhere to the Articles of our Church (for it muſt not be diſſembled, that, in this Point more eſpecially, ſome of her Communion have not been afraid to diſſent from her) to ſhew the real Sinfulneſs of our Original Condition are apt to maintain——[c] that, as when Nature is obſtructed in its *ordinary* Method of Working,

[x] *Limborch*'s Syſtem of Divinity. [y] *Taylor*'s Polemical Diſcourſes. *Whitby de Imputatione Peccati Adami, & Curcellæus de Peccato Originis.* [z] *Taylor*, ibid. * *Whitby*, ibid. [a] Adamus ſibi & poſteris ſuis accepit Imaginem Satanæ, inque eam mutatus eſt. Hincque factum, quod omnes Naturâ (Horribile quidem auditu, ſed tamen verum eſt) quam maxime Diabolo ſimiles ſumus. *Hilderſham* in Pſal. li. Lect. 60.
[b] *Vide* Article IX. her Catechiſm and Form of Baptiſm. [c] *Delaune*, of Original Sin.

Working, the Production is monſtrous, and, by its natural Irregularity, odious to all Beholders; ſo when a rational Creature is defective in any *moral* Qualities, which belong to the Perfection of his Nature, he becomes morally evil, and odious in the pure Eye of God: And, therefore, if there be *Error* in the Underſtanding with regard to our Duty, *Diſobedience* in the Will, or *Irregularity* in the Affections, it is not material to enquire how they came there, whether contracted by evil Cuſtoms, or born with us; they are evidently [d] *a Tranſgreſſion of the Law*, and therefore have in them the true and *formal* Nature of Sin. 'Tis hardly conceivable however (ſince all Sins confeſſedly proceed from an Act of the Will) how Infants, who have *no Knowledge between Good and Evil*, ſhould any other Way be accounted *Sinners*, than by the *Imputation* of another's Guilt: Let us then ſee, in the next Place, what this Imputation means.

Imputation of Guilt.

[e] *TO impute Guilt*, is to reckon a Perſon a Tranſgreſſor of the Law, and therefore liable to the Puniſhment of it, whether he has, in his own Perſon, tranſgreſſed the Law, or not. This in *Civil* Affairs has often taken Place: And that it is the ſame in the *Divine* Adminiſtration, we have ſome Preſumption from Scripture to believe. 'Tis confeſſed on all Hands, [f] that by Chriſt we have an *Imputation* of the *Merit* of his Death, as well as a Purity and Holineſs of Nature conveyed to us by his Doctrine and Spirit: In Oppoſition then to this, (if the Compariſon be cloſely purſued) there muſt be an *Imputation of Sin*, as well as a Corruption of Nature transfuſed to us by *Adam*. This is the more conſiderable (ſay the Patrons of this Opinion) in the Point of Imputation; becauſe, St *Paul* in his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, is very expreſs and particular in it: He tells us, [g] *That by one Man, Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin, and ſo Death paſſed upon all Men; in whom all have ſinned; that by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all to Condemnation, and that by one Man's Diſobedience, many were made Sinners.* Now as theſe Words are poſitive and full, ſo does the Oppoſition, which they bear to the Effects and Benefits of Chriſt's Death, make them of more Weight and Conſideration in this Caſe: Nay, the whole Deſign of the Apoſtle's Diſcourſe ſeems to be defeated, if the Imputation of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion be denied; nor can *Adam*, in any Senſe, be called [h] *the Figure of the Meſſiah*, unleſs all Men were *made Sinners* by his Sin, even as they are *juſtified* by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt.

How effected.

How this Tranſgreſſion comes, at ſuch a Diſtance of Time, to be imputed to us, the Maintainers of this Opinion undertake to explain, by telling us, —— [i] That God, of his free Grace, being willing to enter into *Covenant* with *Adam*, and in *Adam* to extend his Mercy to all Mankind, made him ſtand forth, as the *Repreſentative* and *Surety* of his Poſterity, to indent for them, as well as for himſelf; that the Conditions of this Covenant were *Eternal Life*, and all its conſequential Bleſſings, in caſe of Obedience; but, upon the Violation of the Divine Command, *Eternal Death*, and all its long Train of Miſeries; that in this caſe *Adam* might properly enough ſtipulate for his Poſterity, as he was their common Parent, and had conſequently a natural Right to diſpoſe of them; eſpecially when, in all Appearance, the Conditions of the Covenant were ſo vaſtly to their Advantage; upon his Diſobedience therefore, the Death threatened is as much due to us, as to him; [k] ſince, properly ſpeaking, we ſinned *originally* in the ſame Inſtant, that he ſinned *actually*; becauſe we were then in him, as our *Repreſentative*, and upon that Account, his Tranſgreſſion was *legally* ours.

Differently underſtood by others.

[l] BUT to many other Divines all this ſeems to be a very harſh Opinion, nor can they perceive how it can be conſiſtent with the Goodneſs and Juſtice of God to reckon Men guilty of a Sin, that was committed ſo many thouſand Years ago, and wherein they had no *perſonal* Concern. [m] We can readily conceive, *ſay they*, how God, in the Richneſs of his Grace, may transfer Merit and Bleſſing from one Perſon to another: This is an *Oeconomy of Mercy*, wherein all is free, and ſuch a Method is taken herein, as beſt demonſtrates the Goodneſs of God; but, in the Imputation of Sin and Guilt, which are Matters of *ſtrict Juſtice*, the Caſe is widely different; and therefore we find God often appealing to Mankind concerning the Righteouſneſs of

[d] 1 John iii. 4. [e] *Hopkins*, of the two Covenants. [f] *Burnet*, on the Articles. [g] Rom. v. 12, &c.
[h] Ibid. v. 14. [i] *Hopkins*, ibid. [k] Hoc crimen unius quidem Adami fuit, quatenus is unus Homo erat, ſed idem totius erat Naturæ, quia is Generis Humani Principium fuit ac Radix, adeo ut hac Ratione, ejus voluntas ex Creatoris voluntate cenſeatur noſtra, non quidem propria formaliter, ſed interpretativè; ſive non propria perſonaliter, ſed imputativè; quia non Adamo ſolum, ſed omni poſteritati ad Damnationem imputabatur. *Voſſius in Hiſt. Pelag.* Lib. ii. Th. 1. [l] *Burnet*, ubi ſupra. [m] *Taylor*, of Original Sin, and *Whitby*, *de Imputatione.*

of his Ways; [n] denying expreſsly, *that Children are to ſuffer for their Parents Tranſgreſſion*; and affirming poſitively, [o] *that every one ſhall bear his own Burden*, and [p] *give an Account of his own Works.*

St *PAUL* indeed ſeems to allude to a certain Covenant made between God and *Adam*, whereon this Imputation of Guilt principally depends; but it looks very ſtrange, that we ſhould not find one *Syllable* of this in the Hiſtory of the Creation, and that a Point of ſuch high Concernment ſhould not be delivered with a little more Plainneſs and Perſpicuity, than what ariſe from theſe obſcure Hints. The Apoſtle makes a Compariſon likewiſe between the different Tranſactions of the *firſt* and *ſecond Adam*; but then it muſt be conſidered, that there are many Compariſons in Scripture, which are not to be carried up to an exact Equality. In the Caſe now before us, St *Paul* intends a plain *Imparity*, when he tells us, that [q] *not as the Offence, ſo alſo is the free Gift*; for he thereby certainly means, (as himſelf ſeems to explain it) that the *Grace of God*, through the Merits of *Jeſus*, is of more Extent and Efficacy, than the *Offence of Adam* ever could be: *Adam* indeed *condemned*, and Chriſt *juſtified* us; the one by his Tranſgreſſion, and the other by his Obedience; but the *Penalty*, we receive from the one, is but a *temporal* Death; whereas the *Reward*, we are intitled to by the other, is *everlaſting* Life. This, *ſay they*, is what the Apoſtle principally intends, and enough to juſtify the Compariſon between *Adam* and Chriſt. The only Difficulty is, what he means, when he tells us, that, [r] *by one Man's Diſobedience, many were made Sinners*; and to this they reply, [s] that as Sin is frequently put for the Puniſhment of it, ſo *to be made a Sinner*, ſignifies no more, than to be treated, or puniſhed, as if one were a Sinner. The Puniſhment then, or what we may call the Effects and Conſequences of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion, conſiſting in the Troubles and Miſeries of Life, and the Pains and Agonies of Death, we are all of us deſtined to undergo, and in this Senſe may be called *Sinners*: But, as for the Guilt and Enormity of his Tranſgreſſion, that we have no Concern in; it was his own, not ours; on him alone it reſted; nor did any Thing more, than its *temporal* Effects, deſcend upon his Poſterity.

The Puniſhment of Original Sin.

THE Opinions are no leſs various concerning the *Puniſhment* of Original Sin, and its *Objects*, than they are in Regard to the Imputation of it. The *Cries* of Infants, *ſay ſome*, who are only eloquent to Grief, but dumb to all Things elſe, diſcover that Miſeries attend them. [t] The *Tears*, which are born in their Eyes, ſignify, that they come into a State of Sorrow, and the many Troops of Diſeaſes, that are ready to ſeize them immediately after their Entrance into the World, ſhew the apparent Effects of God's Diſpleaſure, and that Man, from his very Birth, is guilty of ſome great Crime, and conſequently, liable to great Puniſhment. The *Smiles* and harmleſs Looks of tender Infants, *ſay others*, are ſtrong Indications of their native Innocence. They bring no Tokens of *Guilt*, nor any Dread of *Puniſhment* into the World with them. [u] By our bleſſed Saviour they are made the *Patterns* of our Imitation; [x] by his Apoſtle to the *Gentiles*, we are inſtructed in what Inſtances we are to reſemble them: 'Tis their Innocence that we muſt imitate, *if we would enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; and can we then ſuppoſe, that thoſe, who are ſo highly commended in Scripture, come into the World polluted with the blackeſt Guilt, and obnoxious to eternal Vengeance?

Different Opinions about it.

THE Schoolmen indeed, ſuch as follow St *Auſtin* in this Particular, moſt commonly maintain, that *Original Sin*, ſimply conſidered, deſerves no more, than a bare *Loſs* of Heaven, without any Miſery or Suffering: [y] And therefore, for ſuch Infants, as happen to die without Baptiſm, they have invented a quiet *Repoſitory*, wherein they are to abide for ever in a State of Sleep and Inactivity, as it were, and without any Senſe of Pain. The *Calviniſts* carry the Matter much farther, aſſerting, that Original Sin (beſides an Excluſion from Heaven) deſerves the Puniſhment of *Damnation*; and therefore they conclude, that ſuch Infants, as die unbaptized, and are not of the Number of the *Elect*, (which have always a particular Exemption) are, for the Tranſgreſſion of our firſt Parents, condemned to the eternal Torments of Hell-Fire. It muſt be confeſſed, that the Doctrine of the Church of *England*

[n] Ezek. xviii. 20. [o] Gal. vi. 5. [p] Rom. xiv. 12. [q] Ibid. v. 15. [r] Ibid. ver. 19. [s] *In Adamo nos omnes peccare, & per unius Delictum multos conſtitui peccatores*, apud Chryſoſtomum, Theodoretum, OEcumenium, & Theophylactum idem eſt, ac ob Adami peccatum tanquam peccatores tractari, iiſdem pœnis, miſeriis, morti denique obnoxios eſſe, ſive ὑπευθυνίους κολάσει, καὶ καταδικασμένους θανάτῳ pœnæ obnoxios, mortique condemnatos: Ad ſimplicem enim Loci Expoſitionem forſitan ſufficere poteſt, *inquit Origenes*, ut dicamus, condemnationem eſſe Delicti, communem hanc Mortem, quæ omnibus venit, & veniet etſi juſti videantur. *Whitby, de Imputatione*, pag. 46. [t] *Bates*'s Harmony. [u] Matth. iii. 9. [x] 1 Cor. xiv. 20. [y] *Burnet*, on the Articles.

England make too near Approaches to this Opinion, when it tells us, that *in every Perſon born into the World*, Original Sin *deſerves God's Wrath and Damnation*; for [z] tho' the Words might be invented with a particular View to the *Controverſies*, which were managed with ſo much Heat, at the Beginning of the *Reformation*, and, perhaps, with a Deſign to bring all Sides to a better Temper and Accommodation; yet they ſeem to be too ſtrong and expreſs, to admit of thoſe *mollifying* Conſtructions, which [a] ſome, by Way of *Apology*, have thought proper to put upon them.

The whole Queſtion ſtated.

TO extricate ourſelves, in ſome Meaſure, out of the Maze of theſe Opinions, and withal to diſcover, amidſt ſuch Intricacies, what Path will be ſafeſt for us to follow; we may reſolve the whole Controverſy into this one Queſtion, "Whether human "Nature be ſo far *corrupted*, and the Guilt of our firſt Parents Tranſgreſſion ſo "far *imputed* to their Poſterity, that every Perſon, from the Mother's Womb, muſt "neceſſarily go aſtray, and muſt certainly fall into everlaſting Perdition, without the "Means appointed in the new Covenant for his Preſervation:" And to bring ourſelves to a Determination in this Matter, our chief Enquiry muſt be, which Side of the Queſtion is more conſonant to the true Senſe of the Scriptures, and our ſettled Notions of the Divine Nature.

THE Sentiments of the *Fathers* of the Church, much leſs the Altercations of the *Schoolmen*, will help us very little in our Diſquiſitions: [b] The *former* are ſo divided in their Opinions, and the *latter* ſo abſtruſe in their Arguments upon this Subject, that an honeſt Enquirer will find himſelf bewildered, rather than inſtructed; and therefore our ſafeſt Recourſe will be to the Declarations of God's Will, explained in a Manner comporting with his Attributes.

Which Opinion ſuits beſt with God's Attributes.

THAT God, who is the Fountain of our Being, is infinitely pure and holy, and can therefore be neither the *Author* nor *Promoter* of any Sin in us, is obvious to our firſt Conceptions of him: And therefore, if the Corruption of our Nature be ſuppoſed to be ſuch, as *neceſſarily* and *unavoidably* determines us to Wickedneſs, without the leaſt Tendency to Good to give it a Counterpoiſe, thoſe that maintain the *negative* of the Queſtion are in the Right ſo far, as they ſtand in Defence of God's immaculate *Purity*, and are known to be Aſſerters of the *Freedom* of human Choice; without which, the common Diſtinctions of Virtue and Vice, and the certain Proſpects of Rewards and Puniſhments, are entirely loſt: But when they carry the Point ſo far, as to deny any Alteration in human Nature *now*, from what it was at its firſt *Creation*; as to deny, that *Adam*, in his State of Uprightneſs, had any Gifts and Graces *ſupernatural*, any *Clearneſs* in his Underſtanding, or *Strength* in his Will, or *Regularity* in his Affections, more than any Man of *Maturity* and competent Faculties has at this Day: When they adventure to affirm, that there is no *Neceſſity* of Grace in our preſent Condition, to aſſiſt our *hereditary* Weakneſs, to enlighten our Minds, and incline our Wills, and conduct our Affections to the Purpoſes of Holineſs; but that every Man may do what is good and acceptable to God, by the Power of his own *natural* Abilities; they then run counter to the common Experience of human Infirmity; they overlook the Declarations of God's Word concerning his gracious Aſſiſtance, and greatly diſeſteem the kind Operations of that Holy Ghoſt, by which *we are renewed, and ſanctified in the Spirit of our Minds*.

1. *As to the Corruption of human Nature.*

IN like Manner, when the Maintainers of *abſolute Depravation* contend, *that Man*, in his preſent Condition, is *far gone from Original Righteouſneſs, and, of his own Accord*, much *inclined to Evil*; that the *Order* of his Faculties is deſtroyed, and thoſe *Graces*, which conſtituted the *Image of God*, departed from him; that, in this State, he is unable to raiſe himſelf from the Level of common Impotence, but requires the Intervention of ſome *ſuperior* Principle, to aid and aſſiſt him in his Progreſs towards Heaven: They ſay no more than what Experience teaches us, and

[z] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [a] *Taylor*'s Polemical Diſcourſes. [b] *Voſſius*, in his Hiſtory of Pelagianiſm, aſſures us, that the whole *Catholick* Church was always of this Opinion, that *the Guilt of* Adam's *Sin was imputed to his Poſterity to their Condemnation; ſo that Children, dying therein, were conſigned to everlaſting Puniſhment, at leaſt, to an everlaſting Separation from God:* And, to confirm this Aſſertion, he quotes a Multitude of Paſſages out of almoſt all the Doctors of the *Greek* Church. *Taylor* and *Whitby*, and ſome other Writers upon this Argument, produce the Teſtimony of the ſame Fathers, to evince the very contrary Poſition; ſo that there is no depending upon any Thing, where Authors are ſo inconſiſtent with themſelves, and ſo repugnant to one another. The Truth is, before *Pelagius* appeared in the World, moſt of the ancient Writers of the Church were very inaccurate, both in what they thought, and wrote concerning *Original Sin* and *Free Will*, and it ſeems as if the Providence of God permitted that *Heretick* to ariſe, that thereby he might engage the Maintainers of *Orthodoxy* to ſtudy thoſe Points more maturely. *Whitaker*, de Peccato Origin. Lib. II.

what the ſacred Records, which acquaint us with the Diſpenſation of Grace, are known to authorize. But when they carry their Poſitions to a greater Extent, than they will juſtly bear; when they affirm, that, ever ſince the firſt Defection, the Mind of Man is not only much *impaired*, but grievouſly *vitiated* in all its Faculties, having a ſtrong Averſion to every Thing that is good, and an invincible Obſtinacy in what is evil; not one Thought, Word, or Wiſh, that tends towards God, but the Seeds and Principles of every Vice, that bears the Image and Lineaments of the Devil, *inherent* in it: When they advance ſuch Doctrines as theſe, I ſay, they debaſe human Nature too low, and impute ſuch Iniquity to its Maker, as can hardly be wiped off, if every human Soul be naturally inclined to all Kind of Wickedneſs, when it comes out of the Hand of his Creating Power. [c] For if God, by Derivation, has given us a Nature thus wholly bent upon Evil; how can it be ſaid, that *all, which he has made, is good?* *Adam* might have corrupted himſelf indeed, but, properly ſpeaking, we did not; this, if any Way, muſt be occaſioned by the Tenour of God's Decree; and if ſo occaſioned, where is the Excellency of his Power and Providence? Or where the Glory of Man's Creation?

THERE is certainly, therefore, another Way of accounting for this, without any Prejudice to the *Divine* Attributes, and that is, [d] not by aſcribing any *Poſitive Malignity* to human Nature, but only the *Loſs* of the Image of God; becauſe a mere *Privation of Rectitude* in an *active* Subject will ſufficiently anſwer all the Purpoſes, for which a *poſitive Corruption* is pleaded. The Soul of Man, we know, is a *buſy* Creature; by the Force of its own Nature it muſt be in *Action*; but then, without Grace, and the Image of God aſſiſting and adorning it, it cannot act regularly and well: So that the Difference between *Adam* and us, is not that we have violent *Inclinations* to all Manner of Wickedneſs implanted in our Nature, any more than he, in his Innocence, had in his; but that we, in our preſent Condition, want ſundry *Advantages*, which he, in the Height of his Perfection, was not without. He had the free Power of Obedience; he had the perfect Image of his Maker, in all the Divine Qualities of Knowledge and Holineſs, which we have not; and therefore, when we ſay, that he communicated to his Poſterity a *Corrupted Nature*, it muſt not be underſtood, as if that Nature, which he received, was infected with any vicious *Inclinations*, or Habits, to ſway and determine our Will to what is evil; but the Meaning is, that he communicated to us a Nature, which has, indeed, a Power to incline and act *variouſly*, but did not withal communicate to us the *Image of God*, nor that Fulneſs of Knowledge and Power of Obedience, which was requiſite to make all its Actions and Inclinations holy and regular: And our Nature is therefore ſaid to be *corrupted*, becauſe it is *comparatively* bad, becauſe it is reduced to its mere *natural* State, which at the beſt is a State of Imperfection, and deprived of that *Grace*, which ſhould have reſtrained it from Sin, and of thoſe other high Endowments, wherewith it was at firſt inveſted. This is a *fair* Account of our *Original* Corruption: It ſtands clear of the Difficulties that attend the other Opinions, and is not *inconſiſtent* with the Notions we have of the Divine Attributes: For barely to *withdraw* thoſe *extraordinary* Gifts, which were not *eſſential* to Man's Nature, but ſuch as God *additionally* had beſtowed upon him, and he, by his Tranſgreſſion, *unworthily* forfeited, is what agrees very well with the Wiſdom, and Juſtice, and Holineſs of God to do; tho' to infuſe a *poſitive Malignity*, or ſuch a ſtrong Inclination to Wickedneſs in us, as induces a Neceſſity of ſinning, moſt certainly does not.

z. As to the Imputation of Guilt and Puniſhment.

THAT *the Judge of all the World cannot but do right*, and *he, who keepeth Mercy from Generation to Generation*, can have no Hand in any cruel Action, is a certain Truth, and what our firſt Reflections on the Divine Nature teach us. [e] Thoſe therefore, who maintain, that *Adam*'s Sin is not imputed to us to our *Damnation*, or that Children unbaptized are not the Objects of Divine Vengeance, nor ſhall be condemned to Hell, or an eternal Expulſion from God's Preſence, for what was done many thouſand Years before they were born, are ſo far in the right, as they oppoſe an Opinion, that clouds the amiable Attributes of God, and repreſents him in a Dreſs of Horror, and engaged in Acts of extreme Severity at leaſt, if not of Cruelty prepenſe. *Hell* certainly is not ſo eaſy a Pain, nor are *the* Souls of Children of ſo cheap, and ſo contemptible a Price, that God ſhould *ſnatch* them from their Mother's Womb, and throw them into *Perdition*, without any Manner

[c] *Taylor*'s Polemical Diſcourſes. *de Imputatione Peccati Adami.*

[d] *Hopkins*, on the two Covenants.

[e] *Taylor*, ibid, and *Whitby*,

Manner of Concern. His Goodneſs (as the Generality of Chriſtians believe) pardoned *Adam* his great Crime, and received him into Favour again; but, if after the *Original Tranſgreſſor* is forgiven, his Poſterity are ſtill obnoxious to everlaſting Miſery, for no other Reaſon, but becauſe they deſcend from him, what is become of that adorable Attribute? Nay, to condemn Infants to Hell, for a Fault that is not properly their own, is to deal more ſeverely with them, than God did with the *Devils*, who periſhed by their own Act, for a Sin of their own free Choice. When therefore Men argue, in this Manner, againſt ſuch Poſitions as theſe, they are to be commended, inaſmuch as they vindicate the ſacred Attributes of God: But when they carry their Oppoſition to a greater Length than it will juſtly go, ſo as to affirm——That there was no ſuch Thing as a *Covenant* between God and *Adam*; or, if there was, that *Adam* contracted for himſelf only; that his Guilt conſequently was *perſonal*, and cannot, in Juſtice, be imputed to us; that, ſince we had no Share in the Tranſgreſſion, there is no Reaſon why we ſhould bear any Part in its Puniſhment: That we are all born, in ſhort, in the ſame State of Innocence, and are under the ſame Favour and Acceptance with Almighty God, that *Adam*, before the firſt Tranſgreſſion, was. When they advance ſuch Poſitions as theſe, in Maintenance of their Oppoſition, they ſadly forget, that, while they would ſeem *Advocates* for God's Mercy and Goodneſs, they are taking away the Foundation of the *ſecond* Covenant, deſtroying the Neceſſity of a *Divine Mediator*, and overlooking thoſe Declarations in Scripture, which affirm, that [f] *all the World is become guilty before God*; that *all Men, both* Jews *and* Gentiles, *are under Sin, have come ſhort of the Glory of God*, and [g] *are by Nature the Children of Wrath.*

To make an Agreement then between the Word of God and his Attributes in this particular, we may fairly allow, that there was a Covenant between God and *Adam* at his firſt Creation; that, in making that Covenant, *Adam*, as their *Head* and common *Repreſentative*, ſtipulated for all Mankind, as well as himſelf; and that, in his Tranſgreſſion of it, his Guilt, and the Puniſhment due thereupon, was imputed to all his Poſterity: This, we may allow, was the State and Condition, wherein *Adam* left us; but then we muſt remember, [h] that the whole *Scheme* and Deſign of Man's *Salvation* was laid, from all Eternity, in the Divine *Counſel* and Decree; that God, *foreſeeing* Man would fall, determined to ſend his Son to redeem him, and determined to do this long before the Tranſgreſſion happened: So that the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God had effectually provided beforehand againſt all the ill Conſequences of the Fall, and made it impoſſible that *Adam*'s Poſterity ſhould become eternally miſerable, and condemned to the Flames and Pains of Hell, any other Way, than through their own *perſonal* Guilt and Tranſgreſſions. The Redemption of the World, by Chriſt, was decreed, I ſay, from Eternity, and was actually promiſed before any Child of *Adam* was born, even before the Sentence was pronounced upon our firſt Parents; and, as ſoon as it was promiſed, its Benefits, without all Controverſy, commenced. So that, upon this *Hypotheſis*, every Infant, that comes into the World, as it brings along with it the Guilt of *Adam*'s Sin, brings along with it likewiſe the Benefits of Chriſt's *meritorious* Death, *which God has ſet forth as a ſtanding Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World.* Nor can the Want of Baptiſm be any *Obſtruction* to this *Remedy*, ſince the Remedy was exhibited long before any ſuch Rite was inſtituted; and ſince the Rite, when inſtituted, (as [i] ſome learned Fathers tell us) was more a *Pledge* of good Things to come, a *Type* of our future Reſurrection, a *Means* of communicating, in our Lord's Death and Paſſion, a *Form* of Adoption into the heavenly Family, and of Admiſſion to thoſe rich Promiſes of God, which are hid in Jeſus Chriſt, than any *Ordinance* appointed *for the myſtical waſhing away of Sin.*

'TIS a great Error, therefore, in thoſe, who have ſtudied this Argument, that they have run their Enquiries only one Way; either attending to nothing, but what they conceive delivered in the *Holy Scriptures*, or rejecting every Thing, but what they think congruous to *Reaſon*, and the received Notions of the Divine Nature. Whereas,

[f] Rom. iii. 19, 9, 23. [g] Epheſ. ii. 3. [h] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. [i] Scimus enim plurimos Eccleſiæ Chriſtianæ Doctores Infantes ad Baptiſmum admittere, & tamen uno ore eoſdem peccati expertes pronunciâſſe. Baptizantur Infantes, juxta Chryſoſtomum & Theodoretum, ut baptiſmus ipſis ſit *Arrha futurorum bonorum, Typus futuræ Reſurrectionis, Dominicæ Paſſionis communicatio, atque ut ſupernè regenerati, ſanctificati, in Adoptionis jus adducti, & Unigeniti Cohæredes, per Sacrorum Myſteriorum participationem, ſint.* Whitby, de Imputatione Peccati Adami.

Whereas, if they would take both the *Word* and *Attributes* of God along with them in their Enquiries, and interpret the one by the other, they might poſſibly reduce the ſeveral Queſtions, ariſing in their Way, to proper *Solutions*, and the *Whole* to a rational *Syſtem*, without either charging God with Unholineſs and Cruelty, or putting any forced Conſtructions upon plain Texts of Scripture.

The Whole ſummed up.

As long as St *Paul*'s Epiſtles are read, the *Original* Compact between God and Man, the *Depravation* of human Nature, and the *Imputation* of *Adam*'s Guilt, muſt be received as ſtanding *Doctrines* of the Church of Chriſt: But then we are to take great Care, in our Manner of explaining them, that no unworthy *Imputation* fall upon God. And this may happily be effected, if we will but ſuppoſe, that our *hereditary* Corruption is occaſioned, not by the *Infuſion* of any *poſitive* Malignity into us, but by the *Subduction* of *ſupernatural* Gifts from us; that the Covenant of *Grace* commenced immediately after the Covenant of *Works* was broken, and has included all Mankind ever ſince; that the Blood of Chriſt ſhields Children from the Wrath of God; and the Imputation of *Adam*'s Guilt and Obnoxiouſneſs to his Puniſhment are effectually taken away by the meritorious Oblation *of that Lamb*, which *was ſlain from the Foundation of the World.* But this we advance, only as a probable *Hypotheſis*, to make the Word and Attributes of God, as near as we can, in an Argument of this abſtruſe Nature, conſiſtent and uniform.

SECT. IV.

The Murder of ABEL, *and Tranſlation of* ENOCH.

Of the World, 128, &c. Before Chriſt, 3876, &c.

THE firſt ſad Example of the *Corruption* of human Nature, that we find recorded in Holy Writ, is that of *Cain*'s murdering his Brother *Abel*, for no other Reaſon, but that his Brother was a more righteous Man, and [k] *offered unto God a more acceptable Sacrifice than he.* [l] Whence the Right of ſacrificing originally came; whether from Man's Conviction of Guilt, and Deſire to appeaſe the Wrath of Heaven; from a Senſe of Gratitude to God, and Willingneſs to return him ſome of his own Bleſſings; or rather, [m] as ſome imagine, from a Divine *Intimation* and Preſcription, though the Scripture is ſilent as to that Particular: Whether they offered their Sacrifices any where *indifferently*, or had a *particular Place*, choſen by *Adam*, or rather appointed by God, and diſtinguiſhed by the more *viſible* Tokens of his *glorious Preſence:* And, laſtly, Whether they brought their Sacrifices to *Adam*, to be preſented by him, or directly offered them themſelves (as every Man ſeems anciently to have had Power, in his own Family, to do the Office of a Prieſt): Theſe are Queſtions hard to be determined, ſince the ſacred Hiſtorian has made no Mention of them. All that appears from the Account is, that both theſe Brothers brought Offerings, ſuitable to their reſpective Callings; *Cain*, who was an Huſbandman, preſented [n] *the Fruits of the Ground*; and *Abel*, who was a Shepherd, *brought of the Firſtlings of the Flock, and of the Fat thereof*, and [o] *that the Lord had Reſpect unto* Abel, *and his Offering*, *but unto* Cain, *and his Offering*, *he had no Reſpect.*

The Reaſons for ſacrificing at firſt.

The Occaſion of Abel's *Murder.*

[p] THE Manner of God's teſtifying his *Acceptance* of *Abel*'s Sacrifice, the *Jews* are of Opinion, [q] was by Fire deſcending from Heaven, or rather by a Stream of Light, iſſuing from the SHECHINAH, or *glorious Preſence* of God, to whom it was offered, and conſuming it; while he expreſſed his *Diſlike* of *Cain*'s Offering, (as we may conjecture) by forbearing to ſhine upon his Sheaves, or to cauſe them to aſcend, ſo much as in Smoak, towards Heaven. The true Reaſon why God made this Diſcrimination between the two *Worſhippers*, was not ſo much the *Quality*

[k] Heb. xi. 4. [l] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [m] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [n] Gen. iv. 3, 4, 5.
[o] Gen. iv. 4, 5. [p] *Teniſon*, of Idolatry. [q] God's teſtifying his Acceptance of a Worſhipper, by conſuming his Oblation with Fire, is of very early Date; there are ſome Footſteps of it in the *Lamp of Fire*, which paſſed between the Pieces of *Abraham*'s Sacrifice, *Gen.* xv. 17. but, in After-Ages, the Examples of it became more numerous and common. When *Moſes* offered the firſt Burnt-Offering according to the Law, *Lev.* ix. 24. when *Gideon* offered upon the Rock, *Judges* vi. 21. when *David* ſtayed the Plague, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 26. when *Solomon* conſecrated the Temple, 2 *Chron* vii. 7. and when *Elijah* contended with the Prieſts of *Baal*, 1 *Kings* xviii. 38. In all theſe Inſtances God anſwered by Fire. Nay, the very Heathens had ſome Notions of their Gods anſwering in this Manner, and therefore we find *Homer* deſcribing the *Trojans*, going upon a ſucceſsful Attack, in theſe Words, Ζευς δι σφι κεραιδης ἐνδειξια σημαλα φαινων, Ἀστεροπητης. — Iliad X.

Quality, of their Oblations, (as ſome imagine) as the different *Diſpoſition* of their Minds. *Abel* offered [r] *by Faith*, or with a true Spirit of Piety; *Cain*, without a due Senſe of God, or any ſincere Affection to him; and this made the Preference to be given to the former. *Cain*, however, could not brook the Diſtinction; and therefore, from that very Time, began to meditate his Brother's Death. 'Tis poſſible, indeed, that *Eve* might have inſtilled into him an Opinion, that he, being the Firſt-born, was the *bleſſed Seed*, which God had promiſed *ſhould bruiſe the Serpent's Head*, and hereupon he might ſuſpect that God intended to give his *Birth-right* to his Brother, when he ſaw ſuch a diſtinguiſhing Mark of his ſpecial Favour to him, in the very Act of *Sacrificing*; for which Reaſon he might look upon *Abel* with a *jealous* Eye, and, to prevent his ſupplanting him, be tempted to fall upon him, and kill him.

THE ſame Principle, however, which leads wicked Men to commit Crimes, throws them into Deſpair, upon the Denunciation of Puniſhment; and therefore, we find *Cain* complaining of the *Severity* of his Sentence, though it fell far ſhort of the *Heinouſneſs* of his Guilt; [s] *My Puniſhment is greater than I can bear, a Fugitive and Vagabond I muſt be on the Earth, and every one that findeth me, ſhall ſlay me.* To ſecure him againſt this Dread, and withal to prolong his Life in this miſerable Eſtate, in order to deter others from committing the like horrid Actions, the Lord is ſaid to have baniſhed him into the Land of *Nod*, and to have [u] *ſet a Mark upon him, leſt any finding him, ſhould ſlay him*; but what this Mark was, as alſo in what particular Country the Land of *Nod* was ſituated, are Queſtions, that have long exerciſed the Conjectures of the Learned. [x] Some think, that God *ſtigmatized Cain* on his *Forehead* with a Letter of his own Name, or rather ſet ſuch a Brand upon him, as ſignified him to be *accurſed*. Others fancy, that God made him a *peculiar Garment*, to diſtinguiſh him from the reſt of Mankind, who were cloathed with Skins. Some imagine, that his *Head* continually *ſhaked*; others, that his Body *trembled* all over; and others again, that his *Face* was blaſted with Lightning [y] *from the Preſence of the Lord*. Whatever the *Mark* might be, 'tis reaſonable to imagine, that it was a notorious Indication of the Divine Diſpleaſure, that all that ſaw him might ſhun him; and therefore *R. Solomon* fancies, that the very Ground ſhook under him, and made People run away from him, ſaying, *This is the cruel Man, that killed his Brother.*

The Mark ſet upon Cain.

THERE is not that Variety of Opinions concerning the Situation of the Land of *Nod*: The Scripture places it *on the Eaſt of* Eden, and tells us, that *therein* Cain *built a City, and called it after the Name of his Son*, Enoch: [z] Whereupon the learned *Huetius* obſerves, that *Ptolomy*, in his Deſcription of *Suſiana*, places there a City, called *Anuchtha*, and that the Syllable *tha*, which ends the Word, in the *Chaldee* Tongue, is a Termination pretty common to feminine Nouns, and conſequently, no Part of the Name itſelf; from whence he infers, that this *Anuchtha*, mentioned by *Ptolomy*, is the ſame with the City *Enoch*, mentioned by *Moſes*; eſpecially ſince *Ptolomy* places it on the *Eaſt* of *Eden*, which agrees very well with what *Moſes* ſaith of the Land of *Nod*. But, though it be allowed that *Anuchtha* and *Enoch* be both the ſame Name; yet it will not therefore follow, that there

The Land of Nod, *where.*

[r] Heb. xi. 4. [s] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [t] Gen. iv. 13, 14. [u] Ibid. iv. 15.

[x] Almoſt all the Verſions have committed a Miſtake in tranſlating *Gen.* iv. 5. that *God had put a Mark upon* Cain, *leſt any, finding him, ſhould kill him.* The Original ſays no ſuch Thing, and the *Septuagint* have very well rendered it thus, that *God ſet a Sign before* Cain, *to perſuade him, that whoſoever ſhould find him, ſhould not kill him.* This is almoſt the ſame with what is ſaid in *Exod.* x. 1. that *God did ſet Signs before the Egyptians*; and *Iſa.* lxvi. 19. that *he would ſet a Sign before the Heathen:* Where it is evident, that God did not mean any particular *Mark*, which ſhould be ſet on their Bodies, but only thoſe Signs and Wonders, which he wrought in *Egypt*, to oblige *Pharaoh* to let his People go; and the miraculous Manner, wherein he delivered them from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity. This Explication is natural, and agreeable to the Methods of Divine Providence, which is wont to convince the *Incredulous* by Signs and Wonders. Nor could any leſs Thing aſſure *Cain*, (in the Fear he was under) *that the firſt who did meet him, ſhould not kill him*, after what God had ſaid to him, in upbraiding him with his Crime. *Howel*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. *Vid. Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. Upon God's denouncing his Judgments againſt *Cain*, our *Tranſlators* make *Cain* reply, *My Puniſhment is greater than I can bear*, Gen. iv. 13. But, as the *Hebrew* Word, *Aven*, denotes *Iniquity*, rather than *Puniſhment*, and the Verb *Naſha* ſignifies *to be forgiven*, as well as to *bear*, the Words may be rendered, by Way of Interrogation, *Is my Sin too great to be forgiven?* Can I find no Mercy, no Mitigation of the Puniſhment, I have brought upon myſelf? *Behold every one, that findeth me, ſhall ſlay me*, ver. 14. Hereupon God was pleaſed ſo far to favour him, as to give Orders, that no one ſhould kill him; and to this Purpoſe, (as our *Tranſlators* render it) *he ſet a Mark upon* him: But, as the Word *Aoth* is a Sign or Token, (for ſo the *Bow in the Firmament* is called) the Paſſage more properly ſignifies, that God gave, or appointed to *Cain* a Sign or Token, *i. e.* he aſſured him, that no one ſhould kill him; which vacates all the Gueſſes and Conjectures, about the particular *Mark* which God ſet upon him. *Shuckford*'s Connection of the ſacred and profane Hiſtory, Vol. I. Lib. i.

[y] Gen. iv. 16. [z] *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament.

was no other City ſo called, but that which was built by *Cain*. 'Tis certain, that there was another *Enoch*, the Son of *Jared*, and Father of *Methuſelah*, a Perſon of remarkable Piety in the *Antediluvian* Ages; and why might not the City, mentioned by *Ptolomy*, be called after him, in Reſpect to his illuſtrious Character, and miraculous Exemption from Death? Or rather, why might it not take its Name from ſome other *Enoch*, different from both the former, and living ſome Generations after the Flood? For it is ſcarce imaginable, how the City of *Enoch* built before the Flood, ſhould either ſtand, or retain its ancient Name, after ſo violent a Concuſſion, and total Alteration of the Face of Things.

IT is to be obſerved farther, that the Province of *Suſiana*, where *Huetius* places the Land of *Nod*, is one of the moſt *pleaſant* and moſt *fruitful* Countries in the World: But, conſidering that *Cain*'s Baniſhment was intended by God to be Part of his Puniſhment, it ſeems more reaſonable to think, that he ſhould, upon this Account, be ſent into ſome *barren* and *deſolate* Country, remote from the Place of his Nativity, and ſeparate by Mountains, and other natural Obſtructions, from the Commerce of his Relations: For which Reaſon the learned *Grotius* is clearly of Opinion, that the Country, into which *Cain* was ſentenced to withdraw, was *Arabia Deſerta*, to the Barrenneſs of which, the Curſe, that God pronounces againſt him, ſeems not improbably to relate: [a] *And now thou art curſed from the Earth, which has opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand; and, when thou tilleſt the Ground, it ſhall not henceforth yield unto thee her Strength.*

THE only Objection againſt this Opinion, [b] is, that the Land of *Nod* is ſaid to lie *on the Eaſt of* Eden, whereas *Arabia Deſerta* is certainly on the *Weſt*: But if it be conſidered, that the Word, which we render *on the Eaſt of* Eden, means no more, than *over-againſt*, or *on the Side of* Eden, (as the LXX have rendered it) and at the ſame Time, remember, that *Moſes*, when he wrote this Hiſtory, was himſelf in *Arabia Petræa*; we may then perceive, that the *Deſerts of Arabia*, which join to *Eden Weſtward*, lay, in Reſpect to the Place, where *Moſes* wrote, directly *before*, or *over-againſt Eden*, and ſo may ſtill be the Place, where the Land of *Nod*, or the Land of the *Vagabond*, was ſituate.

HOWEVER this be, 'tis certain, that *Cain*, after his Expulſion from the *Preſence* of God, became reprobate to all Senſe of Goodneſs. He forſook the Worſhip of the Creator of the Univerſe, and turned his religious Adoration (as ſome have imagined) to the Sun, Moon, and all the Hoſt of Heaven. The *Infection* of a bad Example took Poſſeſſion of his Poſterity; and they, by their Authority (as [c] being the Inventors of many curious Arts) made Vice faſhionable, and ſo introduced that total *Corruption*, which, in Proceſs of Time, brought on the *Flood*.

Of the World, 987, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 3017, &c.

AMIDST this *Antediluvian* Corruption, *Moſes* makes particular Mention of one Perſon of eminent Sanctity, who [d] *walked with God*, and [e] perſiſted in a long Courſe of ſingular Piety, notwithſtanding the Wickedneſs of the Age, wherein he lived.

Enoch's *Character.*

ENOCH was certainly, in other Reſpects, an extraordinary Perſon; [f] St *Jude* diſtinguiſhes him as a [g] Prophet; the *Arabians* repreſent him as a great Scholar; the *Babylonians*

[a] Gen. iv. 11, 12. [b] *Wells*'s Geography. [c] Vid. Gen. iv. 20, &c. [d] Gen. v. 14.
[e] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [f] Ver. 14, &c. [g] There was, in the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, a Book, not unknown to the *Jews*, and which had for its Title, *The Prophecies of* Enoch; but the Fragments of it, which the Fathers have preſerved, give us no very advantageous Notion of it. *Tertullian*, however, has defended it with the greateſt Warmth, and laments, that all the World is not as zealous, as he, in the Maintenance of its *Authenticalneſs*. He pretends, that it had been ſaved by *Noah* in the Ark, from thence tranſmitted down to the Church; and that the *Jews*, in his Days, only rejected it, becauſe they thought it too favourable to Chriſtianity. *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. The great Objection againſt this Book is, that neither *Philo* nor *Joſephus* (thoſe diligent Searchers into Antiquity) make mention of it; and that it contains ſuch *fabulous* Stories, as are monſtrous and abſurd: But to this we may anſwer, with *Pererius*, that ſuch a Book there certainly was, notwithſtanding the Silence of theſe *Jewiſh* Antiquaries; and that, after the Apoſtles Time, it might be corrupted, and many Things added to it by ſucceeding *Hereticks*, who might take Occaſion, from the Antiquity thereof, and from the Paſſage of *Michael*'s contending with the Devil about the Body of *Moſes*, to interpolate many Fables and Inventions of their own. *Raleigh*'s Hiſtory of the World. St *Jude*, in his Epiſtle, *ver.* 14, ſeems to cite a Paſſage from *Enoch*, but the Notion of *Enoch*'s leaving any Work behind him, has been little credited. There is a Piece indeed, pretending to be his Work; and *Scaliger*, in his Annotations upon *Euſebius's Chronicon*, has given us conſiderable Fragments, if not the whole of it. It was vaſtly admired by *Tertullian*, and ſome other Fathers; but it has ſince their Time been proved to be the Product of ſome Impoſtor, who, according to *Scaliger*, *Voſſius*, *Kircher*, &c. ſeems to have made it ſome Time between the Captivity, and our Saviour's Birth, but according to *Jurieu*, (Crit. Hiſt. Vol. I. page 41.) there are good Reaſons not to believe it even ſo old. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. I. Lib. i.

Babylonians looked upon him as the Author of their Aſtrology; the *Greeks* call him their *Atlas*, and affirm, that *he was the firſt, who taught Men the Knowledge of the Stars, and was himſelf taught by the Angels of God.* But it was not for theſe rare Qualities ſo much, as for his conſummate *Piety* and Virtue, that God allowed him the *peculiar Privilege* of not *ſeeing Death*, and was graciouſly pleaſed to take him to himſelf, [h] that thereby he might ſupport and comfort Mankind, in their State of *Mortality*, with the Hope of a better Life in the World to come: And for this Reaſon it is not improbable, that he was *tranſlated*, in ſome ſuch viſible Manner, (as *Elijah* was afterwards) by a glorious Appearance of the *Schechinah*, from whence ſome heavenly Miniſters were ſent to carry him above: For it is an idle Dream to ſuppoſe, that he was only removed into a *Terreſtial Paradiſe*, to live in the ſame State of happy Enjoyment, that our firſt Parents had, before their Fall. *How tranſlated.*

[i] WE acknowledge now no other *Paradiſe*, but what is repreſented in the Scriptures, as a Place, in which God gives bright Evidences of his Preſence, and communicates his Glory with the utmoſt Majeſty; a Place, which St *Paul* calls [k] *the third Heaven*, [l] whereunto *Elijah* was tranſlated, and, [m] whereinto our bleſſed Saviour requeſts of his Father to enter. And therefore 'tis worthy our Obſervation, that in the three great Periods of the Church, there has ſucceſſively been an Inſtance of a Man (of *Enoch* under the *Patriarchal*, of *Elijah* under the *Legal*, and of *Jeſus* under the *Evangelical* Oeconomy) in both Body and Soul taken up into Heaven, for the Confirmation of the Faith and Hope of thoſe, who lived under theſe ſeveral *Diſpenſations:* And (what is no mean Circumſtance) that, in each of theſe *Periods*, there has been a *gradual* Increaſe of Light in the Evidence, that has been exhibited of another State. [n] 'Twas a *favourable* Intimation for the Faithful in the *firſt* World, to ſee a good Man taken away, and, after his ſojourning upon Earth to be lodged in ſome other Place, than a Tomb: 'Twas a *ſtronger* Preſumption in Favour of thoſe, that lived in the *ſecond* Period, to ſee the Heavens open for the Reception of one of their Prophets, who was carried up thither in a *Chariot of Fire:* But it is a Demonſtration to *Chriſtians*, and, as it were, a taking *Poſſeſſion* of their expected Happineſs, to behold the *Author and Finiſher of their Faith* paſſing through theſe vaſt Spaces, which divide Heaven and Earth, and to hear the *Church-Triumphant* ſummoning [o] *the Gates* of the Palace of Glory *to be opened*, that they might receive him, who was going before to prepare the Places, which he had purchaſed for them in thoſe happy *Manſions.* *Whither.*

SECT. V.

Of the Longævity *of the* Antediluvians.

OF all the ſtrange Matters, that occur in the Story of the firſt Ages, there is nothing, which looks ſo like a *Prodigy*, as the *Longævity* of thoſe Men, who firſt inhabited the Earth; nor is any Event ſo apt to affect us with Wonder, as the vaſt *Diſproportion* between their Lives and ours. [p] We think it a great Thing, if we arrive to fourſcore or an hundred Years, whereas they lived to the Term of ſeven, or eight, or nine hundred, and upwards; and that they did ſo, is inconteſtably true from the joint Conſent both of *Sacred* and *Profane Hiſtory*. The Scripture ſets down the preciſe Age of a Series of *Antediluvian* Patriarchs, and thereby meaſures the Time from the *Beginning* of the World to the *Deluge*; ſo that all *ſacred* Chronology ſtands upon this Bottom. [q] The Hiſtorians of all Ages, both *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, give us the ſame Account of the long *Vivacity* of the firſt Inhabitants of the Earth; nor can we ſuppoſe, that all thoſe Authors, of undoubted Credit and Authority, conſpired together to make, and propagate a *Fable*. *Proved from ſacred Hiſtory.*

THE only *Suſpicion*, that can ariſe in our Minds, upon this Occaſion, is, that the Computation might poſſibly be made, not according to *ſolar*, but *lunar* Years, which happily reduces the longeſt of their Lives much to the ſame Period with our *Their Years not* lunar.

[h] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [i] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [k] 2 Cor. xii. 2. [l] Heb. xi. 5. [m] John xxiii. 43. [n] *Saurin*, ibid. [o] Pſal. xxiv. 7. [p] *Burnet*'s Theory of the Earth, Vol. I. [q] *Manetho*, who wrote the Story of the *Egyptians*; *Beroſus*, who wrote the *Chaldean* Hiſtory; and thoſe Authors, who give us an Account of the *Phœnician* Antiquities; beſides *Molus*, *Hiſtiæus*, and *Hieronymus* the *Egyptian*; and among the *Greeks*, *Heſiodus*, *Hecateus*, *Hellanicus*, *Ephorus*, and *Nicolaus*, give in their joint Suffrage and Conſent, that, in the firſt Ages of the World, Men lived a thouſand Years. *Burnet*, ibid.

our own: But for this there is no probable Foundation. For, beſides that the Scriptures make Uſe of no ſuch *Lunar* Years, (nor is there any Computation, whether *Literal* or *Prophetical*, that proceeds upon them) the manifeſt Diſtinction, that they place between Months and Years, in the Hiſtory of the Deluge, and of the Life of *Noah*, is next to a Demonſtration, that Years were then reckoned, not by *Lunar*, but by *Solar* Revolutions. For, whereas it is ſaid, [r] *that, in the ſix hundredth Year of* Noah's *Life, in the ſecond Month, and on the ſeventeenth Day of the Month, were all the Fountains of the great Deep broken up, and the Windows of Heaven were opened*; and whereas it is ſaid again, that [s] *on the ſix hundredth and firſt Year, in the firſt Month, and on the firſt Day of the Month, the Waters were dried up from off the Earth*; unleſs we can ſuppoſe, that in one and the ſame Verſe and Sentence, theſe two Terms of *Year* and *Month* ſhould be ſo *confounded*, as to ſignify the ſame Thing: we cannot but conclude, that *Noah*'s Years were not the ſame with Months; and, to ſuppoſe after that, that *Noah*'s Years are to be underſtood one Way, and thoſe of his *Fellow-Patriarchs* another, would be a wild and unaccountable Fiction indeed.

THE Space of Time, between the Creation and the Flood, is uſually computed to be 1656 Years, which, if we ſuppoſe to be *lunar*, and converted into common Years, will amount to little more than 127; too ſhort an Interval by much to ſtock the World with a ſufficient Number of Inhabitants. [t] From one Couple we cannot well imagine, that there could ariſe above five hundred Perſons in ſo ſhort a Time; but ſuppoſe them a thouſand, they would not be ſo many, as we ſometimes have in a good Country-Village: And were the *Flood-gates* of Heaven opened, and the great *Abyſs* broken up to deſtroy ſuch a Handful of People? Were the Waters raiſed *fifteen Cubits above the higheſt Mountains*, throughout the Face of the whole Earth, to drown a Pariſh or two? This certainly is more incredible, than the longeſt Age, that the Scriptures aſcribe to the Patriarchs: Beſides, that this ſhort Interval leaves no Room for *ten* Generations, which we find from *Adam* to the Flood; nor does it allow the Patriarchs Age enough, (ſome of them, [u] upon this Suppoſition, muſt not be above five Years old) when they are ſaid to beget Children.

IT has generally been allowed, and may indeed be proved from the Teſtimony of Scripture, as well as other Conſiderations, that our firſt Fathers lived very long, and conſiderably longer, than Men have done ſince: But, according to this *Hypotheſis*, (which depreſſes the Lives of the *Antediluvians*, not only below thoſe, that lived next the Flood, but even below all following Generations to this Day; and makes thoſe firſt Ages of the World, which were always celebrated for Strength and Vivacity, as weak and feeble, as theſe laſt Dregs of Nature) *Methuſelah* himſelf did but reach threeſcore and fifteen. We muſt, therefore, charge the Patriarch *Jacob* with Falſhood, when he complains of the Shortneſs of his Life, in Compariſon of his Forefathers, [x] *the Days of the Years of my Pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty Years; few and evil have the Days of the Years of my Life been, and have not attained unto the Days of the Years of the Life of my Fathers:* For, if the Years of his Fathers were *lunar*, and his *ſolar*, his Complaint muſt be falſe and unjuſt; ſince himſelf was the *oldeſt* Man in the World, at leaſt, had far ſurpaſſed the Age of his Anceſtors: If his Years were *lunar* as well as theirs, how could he be repreſented as an old Man, and the Father of ſo many Children; when, according to that Computation, he muſt be no more than eleven Years and five Months old?

THE Patrons of this Opinion, therefore, muſt needs find themſelves at a Loſs, where to break off the Account of *lunar* Years in Sacred Hiſtory, if they once admit it. If they will have it extend no farther than the Flood, they make the *Poſtdiluvian* Fathers longer-lived than the *Antediluvian*; but will be puzzled to aſſign a Reaſon why the Deluge ſhould occaſion *Longævity:* If they will extend it to the *Poſtdiluvians* likewiſe, they will then be entangled in worſe Difficulties; for they muſt make their Lives miſerably *ſhort*, and their Age of getting Children altogether *incongruous* and *impoſſible*. *Nahor*, for Inſtance, when he was but two Years and three Months old, muſt have begat *Terah*, *Abraham*'s Father; muſt have lived, in all, but eleven Years and ſix Months; and his Grandſon *Abraham*, who is ſaid to [y] have *died in a good old Age, and full of Years*, muſt not have been

[r] Gen. vii. 11. [s] Ibid. viii. 13. [t] *Burnet*'s Theory of the Earth, Vol. I. [u] *Mahaleel*, and his Grandſon *Enoch*, are ſaid to have got Children at ſixty-five Years of Age, which being ſuppoſed Months, they were but five Years old at that Time; a Thing utterly incredible. *Ibid.* [x] Gen. xlvii. 9. [y] Ibid. xxv. 8.

been quite fourteen: Into ſuch *ridiculous* Abſurdities and Contradictions muſt thoſe Men run themſelves, who will not be contented with *Scripture-Chronology!*

IF it be demanded, for what farther Reaſons this Scripture-Chronology may be thought true, and what poſſible Cauſes may be aſſigned for the *Longævity* of the firſt Patriarchs, in Compariſon of us; we might have thought it a peculiar Bleſſing and Reward proceeding from God, had it gone always in Conjunction with Innocence of Life and Manners: But ſince it was common to good and bad Men alike, and laſted until the Time of the *Deluge*, long after Mankind became degenerate, the Learned, in all Ages, have invented other Reaſons for it. *The Cauſes of their* Longævity.

SOME have imputed this extraordinary Length of Life to the *Manner* of their Living, and the Sobriety and Simplicity of their Diet; that they eat no Fleſh, and had none of thoſe Provocations to Gluttony, which Wit and Vice have ſince invented. This indeed might have ſome Effect, but not poſſibly to ſuch a Meaſure as we now ſpeak of; ſince there are many *monaſtical* Perſons, who live very abſtemiouſly all their Lives long, and yet ſeldom ſurpaſs the uſual *Period*. Others have imputed it to the Excellency of their *Fruits*, and ſome unknown Virtue in the Herbs and Plants of thoſe Days; but the Earth, we know, was curſed immediately after the Fall, and its Fruits, we may ſuppoſe, gradually decreaſed in their Virtue and Goodneſs, until the Time of the Flood; and yet we do not ſee that the Length of Mens Lives decreaſed at all, during that Interval. Nay, *Methuſelah*, who was *Noah*'s Grandfather, and but one entire Remove from the *Deluge*, lived longer, than any of his Forefathers; and therefore we may infer, that the *Longævity* of thoſe Days depended neither upon the *Quantity* nor *Quality* of their Food. *Different Opinions.*

OTHERS have thought that the long Lives of Men of the Old World proceeded from the Strength of their *Stamina*, or firſt Principles of their bodily Conſtitution, which, if they were equally ſtrong in us, would maintain us, as they think, in Being as long; but though it be granted, that both the Strength and Bulk of their Bodies were greater than our's, and that a Race of ſtrong Men, living long in Health, would have Children of a proportionable ſtrong Conſtitution: Yet, that this was not the ſole and adequate Cauſe of their *Longævity*, we have one plain Inſtance to convince us, *viz.* That *Shem*, who was born before the Deluge, and had in his Body all the Virtue of the *Antediluvian* Conſtitution, fell three hundred Years ſhort of the Age of his Forefathers, becauſe the greateſt Part of his Life was paſſed after the Flood.

FOR this Reaſon, the ingenious Author, I laſt quoted, imagines, that before the Flood, the *Situation* of the Earth to the Sun was *direct* and *perpendicular*, and not, as it is now, *inclined* and *oblique*. From this Poſition he infers, that there was a perpetual *Equinox* all the Earth over, and one continued *Spring*; and thence concludes, that the *Equality* of the Air, and *Stability* of the Seaſons, were the true Cauſes of the *Longævity* of Mankind before the Flood; whereas the Change, and Obliquity of the Earth's Poſture, occaſioned by the Deluge, altered the Form of the Year, and brought in an Inequality of Seaſons, which cauſed a ſenſible Decay in Nature, and a gradual Contraction in human Life.

HIS Reaſoning upon this Point is very elegant, [a] "There is no Queſtion, *ſays* "*he*, but every Thing upon Earth, and eſpecially the *animate* World, would be "much more permanent, if the general Courſe of Nature was more *ſteady* and "*uniform*. A Stability in the Heavens makes a Stability in all Things below, and "that Change and Contrariety of *Qualities*, which we have in theſe Regions, is "the Fountain of Corruption; ſince, either by inward *Fermentations*, or outward "*Impreſſions*, Bodies are no ſooner well conſtituted, but they are tending again to "Diſſolution. The *Æther* in their little Pores, the *Air* in their greater, and the "*Vapours* and *Atmoſphere* that ſurround them, ſhake and unſettle their Texture and "Continuity: Whereas, in a fixed State of Nature, where theſe Principles have "always the ſame conſtant and uniform Motion, a long and laſting Peace enſues, "without any Violence, either within or without, to diſcompoſe them. We ſee, "by daily Experience, *continues he*, that Bodies are kept better in the ſame *Medium*, "(as we call it) than when they are ſometimes in the Air, and ſometimes in the "Water, moiſt and dry, hot and cold, by Turns; becauſe theſe different States "weaken the Contexture of their Parts. But our Bodies, in the preſent State of "Nature, *Dr* Burnet's *Opinion.*

[a] *Burnet's* Theory of the Earth, Vol. I. [a] Ibid. *page* 275.

" Nature, are put in a hundred different Mediums, in the Courſe of a Year; the " Winds are of a different Nature, and the Air of a different Weight and Preſſure, " according as the Weather and Seaſons affect them. All theſe Things are enough " to wear out our Bodies, though they were made of *Oak*, and that in a very ſhort " Time too, in Compariſon of what they would laſt, if they were always of one " and the ſame Temper."

Rejected. BUT his grand Miſtake is, that it was not ſo in the primitive Earth: That Earth (as we ſhewed before) had an *annual* as well as *diurnal* Motion: [b] It ſtood to the Sun in the ſame *oblique Poſture* and Situation, and was conſequently ſubject to the ſame Seaſons and Viciſſitudes, that the preſent Earth is; and if the Air was more mild, or the Elements more favourable at that Time, this we may account the peculiar Bleſſing of God, and not the Reſult of the Earth's Poſition to the Sun, or any fancied *Stability* in the Weather. The Truth is, whatever we may attribute to *ſecondary* Cauſes, why Bodies, that are naturally mortal and corruptible, ſhould ſubſiſt ſo long, in the primitive Ages of the World; yet the true Cauſe of all is to be aſcribed to the Will of God, who *impregnated* our firſt Parents with ſuch *Vigour*, and gave their Poſterity, for ſome Time, ſuch *robuſt* Conſtitutions, as depended not upon the Nature of their Diet, the Stability of the Seaſons, or Temperature of the Air.

AFTER the Flood, God made a ſudden Alteration in the Length of Mens Days: For, perceiving the general Iniquity to increaſe again, and thereupon deſigning to make an *Alteration* in the World's Continuance, he haſtened the Period of human Life, that the *Number* of Souls, he intended to ſend into the World, before the *final Conſummation* of all Things, might have a ſpeedier Probation. Man's Age accordingly went on, ſinking by gentle Degrees, (but ſtill in Motion and Declenſion) until, a little before *David*'s Time, it came to be fixed in what has been the common Standard ever ſince: [c] *The Days of our Age are threeſcore Years and ten, and though Men be ſo ſtrong, that they come to fourſcore Years; yet is their Strength then but Labour and Sorrow; ſo ſoon paſſeth it away, and we are gone.* This is the ſtated Period; and therefore for us, who live in this *Poſtdiluvian* Age, and have the Term of our Trial ſo much ſhortened, the ſubſequent Prayer of the devout Pſalmiſt will always be neceſſary, always ſeaſonable; [d] *So teach us to number our Days, that we may apply our Hearts unto Wiſdom.*

SECT. VI.

Of the Religion of the Antediluvians, *and their Corruption.*

IT is a miſtaken Notion of ſome Writers, who affirm, that, for almoſt two thouſand Years, at the firſt Beginning of the World, Mankind lived without any *Law*, without any *Precepts*, without any *Promiſes* from God; and that the *Religion* from *Adam* to *Abraham* was merely *natural*, and ſuch as had nothing, but *right Reaſon*, for its Rule and Meaſure. The *Antediluvian* Diſpenſation, indeed, was in a great Meaſure founded upon the Law of *Nature*; but ſtill, it muſt be acknowledged, that there was a *divine Precept* concerning *Sacrifices*; that there was a *divine Promiſe* concerning the *bleſſed Seed*; and that there were ſeveral other *Laws* and *Preſcriptions* given the Patriarchs, beſides thoſe, that were built upon mere Reaſon.

Sacrifices appointed. [e] THE Law of Sacrifices (which at this Time, was in uſe) was partly *natural*, and partly *divine*. As Sacrifices were Tokens of *Thankfulneſs*, and Acknowledgments, that the Fruits of the Earth, and all other Creatures for the Uſe and Benefit of Man, were derived from God, they were a *Service* dictated by natural Reaſon, and ſo were natural Acts of Worſhip; but as they carried with them the Notion of *Expiation* and *Atonement* for the Sins of Mankind, eſpecially as they refer to the *Meſſias*, and ſignified the *future* Sacrifice of Chriſt, they were certainly inſtituted by God, and the Practice of them was founded upon a *divine Command*. If it be aſked, whether Sacrifices were preſcribed before, or after the Fall of *Adam*, the Anſwer may be——That ſuch Sacrifices, as were purely *Euchariſtical*, i. e. ſuch as

[b] Vide *Keil*'s Examination of *Burnet*'s Theory. *Lib.* I. & Wolkel, *Lib.* II. [c] Pſal. xc. 10. [d] Ibid. 12. [e] Epiſcopius Inſtit. *Lib.* II. *c.* 2.

as were *natural Tokens* of Thankſgiving for Benefits received, were, in all Probability, uſed by *Adam*, even while he continued in *Paradiſe*; but ſuch as were *expiatory*, and deſigned to obtain the Remiſſion of Sin, were not inſtituted by God, till after Man's Tranſgreſſion; for where there was no Sin, there was no Need of Expiation.

Publick Worſhip inſtituted.

IT is not to be doubted, but that *Adam* inſtructed his Children [f] to worſhip and adore God, to commemorate his Goodneſs, and deprecate his Diſpleaſure; nor can it be well ſuppoſed, but that they, in their reſpective Families, put his Inſtructions in Execution: And yet we find, that, in the Days of thoſe pious and renowned Patriarchs, *Seth* and *Enos*, (beſides all *private* Devotion) a *publick* Form of Worſhip was ſet up, and Men met together in larger Societies, [g] *to call upon the Name of the Lord.* For the plain and genuine Senſe of *calling upon the Name of the Lord*, in this Place, (both according to the *Original*, the *Septuagint*, and other Verſions which are moſt exact) is this — [h] That though *Adam*, *Seth*, and others had *called on God*, in their Houſes and Families, long before this Time; yet *now* they aſſembled together *publickly*, and had the *Rites* of the Religion, which God had appointed them, ſettled and fixed. They had *Liturgies* (as we call them) appointed at ſet Hours; and, perhaps, as *Cain* then built *Cities* for his Deſcendants to live in, ſo *Enos* built *Temples*, and Places of divine Worſhip, for *his* to reſort to.

Ceremonial,

THE Diſtinction of *clean* and *unclean* Animals was another Part of the Diſpenſation before the Flood: God refers *Noah* to it, as a Thing well known, when he commands him to put [i] *into the Ark ſeven Pair of clean, and two of unclean Creatures.* [k] And though, in reſpect of Man's *Food*, this Diſtinction was not before the Law of *Moſes*, yet ſome Beaſts were accounted *fit*, and others *unfit* for Sacrifices, from the Beginning: The former were eſteemed *clean*, the latter *unclean*; and it ſeems ſafer to make a *poſitive* Law of God (though we have no Record of it) the *Foundation* of this Diſtinction, than to imagine, that Men, in ſuch Matters as theſe, were left to their own Diſcretion.

and moral Precepts given.

THE Prohibition of *marrying with Infidels* was another Article of this *Diſpenſation*, as appears by God's angry Reſentment, when the Children of *Seth* entered into Wedlock with the wicked Poſterity of *Cain*: And (to mention no more) under this Period were thoſe *great Precepts of the Sons of* Noah, which the *Jewiſh* Doctors make ſo much boaſt of, and thus enumerate: The *Firſt* was, of *ſtrange Worſhip*, or Idolatry; the *Second*, of *curſing* the moſt holy Name, or Blaſphemy; the *Third*, of *uncovering the Nakedneſs*, or unlawful Copulation; the *Fourth*, of *Bloodſhed*, or Homicide; the *Fifth*, of *Theft* and *Rapine*; the *Sixth*, of *Judgments*, or the Adminiſtration of Juſtice in the publick Courts of Judicature: To theſe they add another, prohibiting the *eating of Fleſh* with the Blood in it; but this, ſome affirm, was only delivered to *Noah* and his Sons.

The general Corruption of Mankind, and the Occaſion of it.

THIS was the State of Religion in the *Antediluvian* World, and theſe were ſome of the Laws and Ordinances, which God appointed to the *Patriarchs*, who lived therein; and, indeed, their Laws were ſo *few*, and their Lives ſo *long*, the Matter of their Duty ſo *eaſy*, and the Means of their Inſtruction in it ſo very *advantageous*, that it might juſtly have raiſed our Wonder, how they came ſo univerſally to be corrupted, had not the Holy Scriptures thus pointed out to us the Occaſion: [l] *It came to paſs, when Men began to multiply upon the Face of the Earth, and Daughters were born unto them, that the Sons of God ſaw the Daughters of Men, that they were fair, and they took them Wives of all, which they choſe.* The chief Difficulty is, what we are to underſtand by *the Sons of God*, and *the Daughters of Men*: And in this, [m] ſeveral Interpreters have taken an uncommon Liberty; but, of all the wild Sallies of Fancy, none ſeems more extravagant, [n] than the Opinion of ſuch, as have reputed theſe *Sons of God* to be *good* Angels, or of ſuch, as have held them to be *bad* ones. Whether or no the Verſion of the *Septuagint*, which, (as St *Auſtin* [o] teſtifies) inſtead of *the Sons of God*, had anciently *the Angels of God*, might give Occaſion to this odd Fancy, 'tis hard to determine; but ſo it is, that this Opinion, in all Ages, has had many Followers, both among *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* Expoſitors. From this, they derived their Notions of [p] *Incubi*, or Demons having *carnal* Knowledge of Women;

The Sons of God, and Daughters of Men, what.

[f] *Edwards's* Survey of Religion. [g] Gen. iv. 26. [h] *Edwards's* Survey, Vol. I. [i] Gen. vii. 2.
[k] *Patrick's* Commentary. [l] Gen. vi. 1. [m] *Mede's* Diſcourſes, and *Edwards's* Survey, Vol. II.
[n] *Saurin's* Diſſertations. [o] De Civitate Dei, *Lib.* XV. [p] Several People have had the Trial, ſays St *Auſtin*, and ſeveral have heard it from thoſe, who knew it to be true, that the *Sylvans* and *Fauns*, commonly called *Incubi*, have been often fatal to Women, and have defiled their Bed. It is likewiſe affirmed, with ſo much Confidence, that certain *Demons* (called *Durii* by the *Gauls*) have not only attempted, but likewiſe perpetrated theſe Kinds of impure Actions, that it would be fooliſh to make any Queſtion of it. *De Civit. Dei*, Lib. LXV.

Women; from this they ſettled [q] Marriages between the *upper* and the *lower* World; and, from thoſe Marriages, produced a Race of *Giants on the Earth, which became mighty Men, and of old, were Men of Renown.*

BY *the Sons of God,* [r] others have underſtood the *great Men* of the World, the Nobles, and Rulers, and Judges, and other People of high Rank, and inveſted with Authority; and by *the Daughters of Men,* thoſe of the meaner and inferior Sort of People: Accordingly they tell us, that the Verb *(labath)* both here, and in ſeveral other Places of Scripture, does not only ſignify *to take,* but *to take by Force and Violence,* i. e. to *raviſh.* The Deſign of *Moſes* then, *ſay they,* being to aggravate the Wickedneſs of the *Antediluvian* Age, he ſhews, that ſuch as lived in an high Station, and ſhould have ſcorned inglorious Actions; ſuch as were placed in Authority, and, conſequently, ſhould have puniſhed and diſcountenanced Vice, were the greateſt *Examples* and *Promoters* of all Lewdneſs and Debauchery. This is no bad Interpretation; but there is another, which ſeems more natural, and comes up to the Senſe of the Holy Penman better.

THE two great *Families,* we know, derived from *Adam,* viz. that of *Cain,* and that of *Seth,* (who ſucceeded righteous *Abel)* at this Time *divided* the whole World between them; and, as they differed in their Tempers and Manners, ſo they were diſtinguiſhed by very different Appellations. The Offspring of *Cain,* being departed from all Senſe of Religion, and wholly given up to worldly Pleaſures, were called *Men,* or *the Sons of Men*; but the Offspring of *Seth,* becauſe they addicted themſelves to Virtue, and profeſſed the Worſhip of the true God, were called the *Sons of God.* Upon the Baniſhment of *Cain,* theſe two Families, at firſt, lived at a conſiderable Diſtance from each other: They inhabited different Countries, and were *diſtinct* Societies; but when, by the great Increaſe of Mankind in the firſt Ages of the World, they began to *enlarge* their Compaſs, and draw nearer to each other, the Deſcendants of *Seth* were ſtruck with the Beauty of the Daughters of the Race of *Cain*; and, to remove all Obſtacles of Separation from Creatures ſo full of Charms, they, [u] contrary to the Injunction of their Forefathers, contracted Marriages with them; and ſo, entering into a new *Scheme* of riotous Living, in a very few Years, bid Adieu to their Virtue and Religion. For in this Alliance it happened, as it always fell out in ſucceeding Ages, when an *holy* Nation mingled with a *profane*; viz. That the Godly adopted the wicked Manners of the Profane, but the Profane never imitated the Virtues of the Godly. The Children of *Seth* became, in a ſhort Time, as wicked as the *Cainites*; and, from this unhappy Conjunction, there aroſe a *monſtrous* Generation, that was ſtill more profligate. The *great Ones* were Tyrants and Oppreſſors; the meaner Sort were lewd and *Atheiſtical*; all were Profane, all Idolaters; ſo that *the Earth was filled with Violence,* with Cruelty, with Laſciviouſneſs, with Impiety, as if there had been a *Confederacy* among Mankind to exterminate Religion out of the World, and a Kind of *Emulation* among them, who ſhould excel in Wickedneſs; who ſhould violate the Laws of God, and trample upon his holy Worſhip with the leaſt Remorſe, and moſt Eagerneſs; until they provoked the Divine Indignation to pour out his Fury upon them in that general *Inundation,* wherein all were deſtroyed, except *Noah* and his ſmall Family, [x] *who were found Perfect and Righteous in the Time of Wrath, and were left, as a Remnant unto the Earth, when the Flood came.*

[q] *Joſephus* was of this Opinion, (*Antiq.* Lib. i. Cap. 4.) and is therein followed by *Philo,* who thus quoting the Words of *Moſes, (De Gigant.* pag. 284.) *the Angels of God ſeeing the Daughters of Men,* &c. confirms what St *Auſtin* ſays, that the *Septuagint* did anciently render it, *the Angels of God,* inſtead of the *Sons of God. Saurin's* Diſſertations. [r] Gen. vi. 4. [s] Vid. *Patrick's* Commentary, and *Howell's* Hiſtory of the Bible. [t] *Patrick* and *Howell,* ibid. [u] This was ſtill a greater Crime in the Children of *Seth,* if we may credit what an *Arabick* Writer (mentioned by *Selden,* in his Book *de Diis Syriis)* relates of them, *viz.* That they had ſworn, by the Blood of *Abel,* they would never leave the mountainous Country, which they inhabited, and go down into the Valley, where the Children of *Cain* lived; but what enticed them (ſays the ſame Author) to break this Oath, was the Beauty of *Naamah,* (whom *Voſſius* [*de Orig. Idol.* Lib. i.] takes to have been the Heathen *Minerva,* or *Venus)* and the Muſick of her Brother *Jubal,* who was certainly *Apollo.* For it is to be obſerved, that theſe Children of *Cain* ſpent all their Time in Feaſting, Muſick, Dancing, and other ſuch Sports and Paſtimes, as allured the others to come down, and marry with them. *Patrick's* Commentary. [x] Ecclus xliv. 17.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The moſt memorable Tranſactions, from the FLOOD, *to the* CALLING *of* ABRAHAM.

Of the World. 1656, &c. *Before Chriſt.* 2348, &c.

THE Flood is one of the greateſt and moſt terrible Events, that we find recorded in Hiſtory: It ſwept away all Mankind, except eight Perſons and with them the Memory of all Things, that had ever been tranſacted in the World until that Time, except what the holy Scriptures have preſerved. The Alteration it made in the *Face of Nature*, and (as [a] ſome ſuppoſe) in the very *Situation* and *Figure* of the Earth has left Monuments (as long as the World ſhall endure) of God's ſevere Indignation againſt Sin; and 'tis probably for this very Reaſon, that *Moſes*, who, in his Narration of other Events, is ſo brief and conciſe, in this great Inſtance of Divine Vengeance is ſo minute and particular, as to recount the Occaſion, the Time, the Cauſe, the Extent, Increaſe, Continuance, Diminution of it, and whatever other Circumſtances, are requiſite to make an Account full and awakening.

The Truth and Reality of the Flood.

THAT ſixteen hundred and odd Years after the World was made and inhabited, it was quite overflowed in a *Deluge* of Water, in the Manner that *Moſes* relates; ſo that all Things in it, Mankind, and other living Creatures, were deſtroyed, excepting only *Noah* and his Family, who, by a ſpecial Providence of God, were preſerved in a certain *Ark*, or Veſſel, made like a Ship, and ſuch Kind of living Creatures, as he received into this Ark, [b] is abundantly manifeſt, from the clear and concurring Teſtimonies of the moſt ancient Writers and Nations in the World.

JOSEPHUS, [c] in his Book againſt *Appion*, tells us, "That *Beroſus* the *Chaldean*, "following the moſt ancient Writers, relates the ſame Things that *Moſes* does, con- "cerning the great Deluge, the Deſtruction of Mankind by it, and the Ark wherein "*Nochus* (the ſame with *Noah*) was preſerved, and which reſted on the Tops of the "*Armenian* Mountains." *Abydenus*, as he is quoted [d] by *Euſebius*, takes Notice of the Wood of the Veſſel, wherein *Xiſuthrus* (ſo he calls *Noah*) was ſaved; he tells us, that the People of *Armenia* made Uſe of it for *Amulets* to drive away Diſeaſes; nor does he forget to relate the ſending out *Birds*, to know if the Flood was aſſwaged. [e] *Cyril* produces a Paſſage out of *Alexander Polyhiſtor*, wherein Mention is made of a certain *Egyptian* Prieſt, who related to *Solon*, out of the ſacred Books of the *Egyptians*, (as he ſuppoſes) that, before the particular Deluges, known and celebrated by the *Grecians*, there was, of old, an exceeding great Inundation of Waters, and Devaſtation of the Earth: And, to mention no more, [f] *Lucian* gives a long Account of an ancient *Tradition*, which the People of *Hierapolis* had of the Deluge, [g] varying very little from what our ſacred Hiſtorian relates of it.

[a] *Burnet's* Theory, Vol. I. [b] *Stillingfleet's* Origines Sacræ. [c] Lib. i. [d] Præpar. Evang. Lib. ix. [e] Contra Julianum. De Deâ Syriâ. [g] The Account, though ſomewhat long, is not unpleaſant, and well deſerves our Obſervation. This Race of Men, ſays he, which now is, was not the firſt: Theſe are of a ſecond Generation, and from their firſt Progenitor *Deucalion*, who increaſed to ſo great a Multitude, as we now ſee. Now of thoſe former Men they tell us this Story: —— They were contentious, and did many unrighteous Things; they neither kept their Oaths, nor were hoſpitable to Strangers, for which Reaſon this great Misfortune came upon them. All of a ſudden, the Earth diſſemboweled herſelf of a great Quantity of Water; great ſhowers fell; the Rivers overflowed; and the Seas ſwelled to a prodigious Height; ſo that all Things became Water, and all Men periſhed: Only *Deucalion* was left unto the ſecond Generation, upon the Account of his good Counſel and Piety. Now the Manner wherein he was ſaved was this: He had a great Λάρναξ, *i. e.* an Ark, or Cheſt, into which he came with his Children, and Women of his Houſe; and then entered Hogs, and Horſes, and Lions, and Serpents, and all other Animals, which live upon the Earth, together with their Mates. He received them all, and they did him no Harm; for, by the Aſſiſtance of Heaven, there was a great Amity between them; ſo that all ſailed in one Cheſt, as long as the Waters did predominate. But theſe are Matters that all the *Greek* Hiſtories of *Deucalion* relate. What happened afterwards (as it is told by the Inhabitants of *Hierapolis*) is worthy our Obſervation, *viz.* that in their Country there was a *Gap*, into which all this Water ſunk; whereupon *Deucalion* built Altars, and a Temple, which he conſecrated to *Juno*, over the very *Gap*. To verify this Hiſtory, not only the *Prieſts*, but the other Inhabitants likewiſe of *Syria* and *Arabia*, twice every Year, bring Abundance of Water, which they pour into the Temple, and though the Gap be ſmall, yet it receives a prodigious Quantity of it; and when they do this, they relate how *Deucalion* firſt inſtituted this Cuſtom, to be a *Memorial* of this Calamity, and of his Deliverance from it.

Its Univerſality.

FROM theſe, and many more Authorities of the like Nature, which [h] the Learned in all Ages have produced, it ſeems to be a manifeſt Point, that the Truth and Certainty of a Deluge was always acknowledged by the Ancients; nor was the Extent and Univerſality of it ever called in Queſtion, till ſome modern Authors, obſerving the Difficulty of finding out Waters ſufficient to drown the World, in the Manner that *Moſes* deſcribes it, have ventured upon a very bold Expedient. [i] *They ſay,*

Objections againſt it.

" That *Noah*'s Flood was no more, than a *National* Inundation, confined to *Judea*,
" and the Regions thereabouts, or perhaps to that Tract of Ground, which lies
" between the four Seas, the *Perſian*, the *Caſpian*, the *Euxine*, and the *Syrian*:
" *And to ſtrengthen this Aſſertion, they preſume*, that, ſince the primary Deſign of
" the Flood was to deſtroy Mankind only, who could hardly be thought, in ſo ſhort
" a Time, to have overſpread the whole Face of the Earth, there was no Neceſſity
" to carry the Waters beyond the Bounds of what was inhabited; that the Waters,
" required to raiſe the Deluge ſome *fifteen Cubits above the higheſt Mountains*, are more
" than what the Clouds, the Rivers, the Sea, and all the ſuppoſed *Cavities* of the
" Earth are able to produce; nor can they conceive, how the Ark (even according
" to the *Moſaic* Menſuration) could be capable of containing half the Number of
" Creatures, which [k] ſeven Couple of every clean Species in the World, and one of
" the unclean, would neceſſarily amount to."

Anſwer'd from Reaſon.

OF what Capacity the Ark was to receive the living Creatures, that were to enter into it, and other Things neceſſary for their Subſiſtence, we ſhall have Occaſion to take Notice, when we come to enquire into its particular Make and Menſuration. In the mean Time, we cannot but obſerve, what little Need there was for any Ark at all, wherein to preſerve *Noah* and his Family, in caſe the Deluge was not univerſal; [l] ſince he might have ſaved both himſelf and them, only by retiring into ſome neighbouring Country, as *Lot* and his Family ſaved themſelves by withdrawing from *Sodom*, when that City was to be deſtroyed. This had been an eaſier Thing, and much more commodious than the great Preparations he made of a large Veſſel, with Rooms for the Reception and Accommodation of Beaſts and Birds. [m] *Beaſts* might have poſſibly ſaved themſelves by Flight; but if they did not, he might have eaſily, after the Deluge was over, furniſhed himſelf from ſome other Places, which the Deſolation had not reached: And as for the *Birds*, they, without much Difficulty, might have flown to the next dry Country; perching upon Trees, or the Tops of Mountains by the Way, to reſt themſelves if they were tired; becauſe the Waters did not *prevail upon the Earth* all on a ſudden, but ſwelled by Degrees to their appointed Height.

From Scripture.

THE Scripture, on the contrary, is ſo far from giving us the leaſt Hint of this, that it introduces God laying this Command upon *Noah*, [n] *Of every living Thing of all Fleſh, two of every Sort, ſhalt thou bring into the Ark, to keep them alive with thee*; and gives us the fulleſt Account imaginable of their entire Deſtruction, *viz.* that [o] *all Fleſh, which moved upon the Earth*, every Creature, *in whoſe Noſtrils was the Breath of Life, every living Subſtance, which was upon the Face of the Ground*, whether *Man or Cattle, or creeping Things, or Fowl of the Heaven, all died* and were loſt; except *Noah, and ſuch as were with him in the Ark.*

THIS, one would think, were enough to give us Aſſurance of the *Univerſality* of the Deluge; and yet, to remove all Scruple and Doubtfulneſs, the Divine Hiſtorian furniſhes us with another Argument, as demonſtrative as any, when he tells us, that [p] *the Waters prevailed exceedingly upon the Earth; and all the high Hills, that were under the whole Heaven* (and conſequently, quite round the Earth) *were covered; fifteen Cubits upward did the Waters prevail, and the Mountains were covered.* To illuſtrate then, what a ſtrong Proof, againſt any *partial* or *limited* Inundation, this Account of it is, [q] let us ſuppoſe, that the *Aſiatick* and *Armenian* Mountains only were covered with theſe Waters; yet we muſt allow, that unleſs there was a Miracle to keep them upon *Heaps*, they would certainly flow throughout the Earth; for theſe Mountains are high enough to make them fall every Way, and join with the Seas, that encompaſs the Earth. We cannot imagine how Hills and Mountains of Water could have hung about *Judea*, as if they had been *congealed*; or how a huge Maſs thereof could have ſtood upon the Middle of the Earth, like one great *Drop*,

[h] *Vid. Grot. Annot. in Lib.* I. *de Verit. Relig. Chriſt. Voſſ. Iſagog. Chron. Diſſert.* 4. *Bochar. Geogr. Sac. Lib.* I. *Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib.* XVIII. *Euſeb. Chr. Lud. Viv. Scaliger, Burnet, Whiſton, Woodward*, &c. [i] *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations. [k] Gen. vii. 2. [l] *Burnet*'s Theory, Vol. I. [m] *Le Clerc*, ibid. [n] Gen. vi. 19. [o] Ibid. vii. 21. [p] Ibid. vii. 19, 20. [q] *Burnet*, ibid.

Drop, or a *trembling Jelly*, and all the Places about it be dry and untouched. All liquid Bodies, we know, are diffuſive; their Parts being in Motion have no Tie or Connexion one with another, but glide and fall off any Way, as Gravity and the Air preſs them; and therefore, when the Waters began to riſe at firſt, long before they could ſwell to the Height of the Hills, they would diffuſe themſelves every Way, and thereupon, all the Vallies and Plains, and lower Parts of the Earth, would be filled, all the Globe over, before they could riſe to the Tops of the Mountains, in any Part of it.

NAY, let us ſuppoſe, [r] that this Water fell not throughout the whole Earth, but in ſome particular *Country*, and there, at firſt, made a great *Lake*; yet this Lake, when it began to ſwell, would every Way diſcharge itſelf by any Deſcents and Declivities of the Ground; and theſe Iſſues or Channels, being once made and ſupplied with new Waters, puſhing them on forwards, would continue their Courſe, till they arrived at the Sea, juſt in the Manner as we ſee Rivers do at preſent. So that, from the very Nature of the Element, it appears, that Water could not aſcend to the Tops of the higheſt Mountains, without diffuſing itſelf over the Face of the Earth; and conſequently, that, if ever there was a Deluge, which roſe to the Height that *Moſes* deſcribes, it muſt of Neceſſity have been *univerſal*.

From the Number of the World's Inhabitants.

HOW many wiſe Ends the Providence of God might have in bringing this Deſtruction upon the Earth, 'tis impoſſible for us to find out; but even ſuppoſing he had but this One, *viz.* to rid himſelf of a *Generation*, that were become *profligate*, and paſt all Hopes of amending; [s] yet the Number of Mankind, which before the Flood was vaſtly ſuperior to what the preſent Earth, perhaps, is capable of ſuſtaining, cauſed every Place to be *inhabited*, and (that none might eſcape the avenging Hand) cauſed every Place to be *overflowed*.' Tis a groundleſs and forced Conceit therefore to imagine, that *Judea* only, and ſome other Parts about it in *Aſia*, were ſtored with People, when the Deluge was brought upon the old World; for, if we conſider the *Longævity* of the firſt Inhabitants of the Earth, and the pretty near Equality of their Ages, (which ſeems to have been providentially deſigned for the quicker Propagation of Mankind) we ſhall ſoon perceive, that, in the Space of ſixteen hundred Years, Mankind would become ſo numerous, that the chief Difficulty would be where we ſhould find Countries to receive them. For, [t] if in the Space of about two hundred and ſixty Years (as the ſacred Hiſtory acquaints us) the Poſterity of *Jacob*, by his Sons only, (without the Conſideration of *Dinah* his Daughter) amounted [u] *to ſix hundred thouſand* Males, above the Age of twenty, all able to go forth to War; what Increaſe may not be expected from a Race of Patriarchs, living ſix, ſeven, eight, nine hundred Years a-piece, and ſome, * till the *five hundredth Year* of their Lives, begetting Sons and Daughters? The Multiplication muſt needs be exceedingly great, and (as [x] ſome have made their Computation) the Number of the *Antediluvians*, in the Times near the Flood, would eaſily amount to above 500,000 Millions, *i. e.* to a thouſand Times as many, as our preſent Earth has, in all Probability, now upon it, and indeed to ten Times as many, as the Earth, in its preſent Conſtitution, ſince the *Deluge*, can well be ſuppoſed capable of maintaining, and conſequently, (to deſtroy its Inhabitants) the Inundation muſt have fallen upon every Quarter, and encompaſſed the whole Globe.

From the History of all Nations.

AND accordingly, if we take the Circuit of the Globe, and enquire, of the Inhabitants of every Climate, we ſhall find, that the Fame of this Deluge is gone through the Earth, and that there are Records and Traditions of it, in every Part of the known World. [y] The *Americans* acknowledge, and ſpeak of in *their* Continent; the *Chineſe*, who are the moſt diſtant People in *Aſia*, have the Tradition of it; [z] the ſeveral Nations of *Africa* tell various Stories concerning it; and, in the *European* Parts, the Flood of *Deucalion* is that of *Noah*, only related with ſome Diſguiſe: So that we may trace the Deluge quite round the Globe, and (what is more remarkable ſtill) every one of theſe People have a *Tale* to tell; ſome one Way, ſome another, concerning the Reſtoration of Mankind, which is an Argument that they thought all Mankind was once deſtroyed in that *Deluge*.

And from the Earth itſelf.

BUT not to go ſo far for our Proofs, if we will but turn aſide the Surface [a], and look into the Bowels of the Earth itſelf, we ſhall find Arguments enough for our Conviction; for the *Beds of Shells*, which are often found on the Tops of the higheſt

[r] *Burnet*'s Theory, Vol. I. [s] *Whiſton*'s Theory. [t] Ibid. [u] Exod. xii. 37. * Gen. v. 32.
[x] *Whiſton*'s and *Burnet*'s Theories. [y] *Burnet*, ibid. [z] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [a] *Woodward*'s Natural Hiſtory.

higheſt Mountains, and the *petrified* Bones and Teeth of Fiſhes, which are dug up, hundreds of Miles from the Sea, are the cleareſt Evidences in the World, that the Waters have, ſome Time or other, overflowed the higheſt Parts of the Earth. The Truth of theſe Matters is not to be conteſted *now* by any, that have but the leaſt Inſight into *Experimental Philoſophy*: Nor can it, with any Degree of Probability, be ſaid, that theſe *ſubterraneous* Bodies are only the *Mimickry*, or Mock-Productions of Nature; for that theſe are *real Shells*, the niceſt Examination both of the Eye and *Microſcope* do atteſt; and that they are *true Bones* may be experienced by burning them, which, as it does other Bones, turns them firſt into a Coal, and afterwards into a *Calx*.

" BUT, if the Flood was ſo immenſe and boundleſs, where ſhall we find a ſuffi-
" cient Quantity of *Element* to anſwer this Purpoſe? [b] Eight Oceans of Water will
" hardly be enough to overflow the whole Globe; and yet, if we ranſack every
" Storehouſe, the Earth will ſay, *'tis not in me*; the Sea will ſay, *'tis not in me.*
" The Clouds may empty themſelves in vain, and *though one Abyſs call to another*
" *Abyſs*, yet will not they be able to ſatisfy our Demands: What then ſhall we do?
" or whither turn our Thoughts, in this our Exigence, for a Supply?"

THIS, it muſt be allowed, is a very great Difficulty upon ſuch, as are willing to exclude the Almighty Power of God, or, at moſt, allow it but a very partial Agency in this aſtoniſhing Event: And therefore, before we come to illuſtrate the Account, which the ſacred Hiſtory has given us, it may not be amiſs to examine into the Nature of the other *Expedients*, which the Wit of Man has deviſed, as Aſſiſtant to the common Cauſes, which God has aſſigned.

THE two learned and ingenious Perſons, whoſe *Theories*, [c] upon another important Subject, we had Occaſion once before to conſult, have tried the utmoſt of their Invention, in the Deſtitution of a Sufficiency of Water, as they think, to find out other Means, that may be equivalent; but in this they have had but poor Succeſs, ſince moſt of their Suppoſitions are either quite *erroneous*; or, upon Examination, *incompetent* for the Work.

The Subſtance of Dr Burnet's *Theory.*

THE former of theſe ſuppoſes, " That, in the Cavity of the *Antediluvian* Earth,
" was repoſited the whole Maſs or Body of Waters belonging to it, which the
" Scripture calls TEHOM RABBA, *the great Deep*, or *Abyſs*: That this *Abyſs* was
" incruſted, as it were, or ſurrounded with an *Arch of Earth*, which was neither ſo
" thick nor ſolid however, but that the Rays of the Sun, beating always upon it,
" made in Time great *Cracks* and Fiſſures in it, and by that Means rarified the
" Waters, that were lodged within: That the Waters, thus rarified, and requiring
" more Space, than they needed before, preſſed violently againſt this *exterior Cruſt*,
" to make it give Way to their *Dilatation*; and that by this Means, in the Fulneſs
" of God's appointed Time, the Fabrick of the Earth was broken, the Frame of
" it torn in Pieces, as by an Earthquake, and thoſe great Portions and Fragments,
" into which it was divided, fell down into the *Abyſs*, ſome in one Poſture, and
" ſome in another." So that, according to the Senſe of this *Theoriſt*, the *Deluge* was occaſioned by the *Diſſolution* of the *primæval* Earth; the Diſſolution of the Earth, by the *Fermentation* of the incloſed Waters; the Fermentation of the Waters, by the continued intenſe *Heat* of the *Sun*; and the great Heat of the Sun, by the *perpendicular* Poſition of the *Axis* of the Earth, to the *Plane* of the *Ecliptick*. [d] But if the Axis of the primitive Earth was inclined to the *Plane* of the *Ecliptick*, in the very ſame Manner, that the preſent Earth is, (and [e] for this we have given ſufficient Reaſons before) then was there the ſame Variety of Seaſons and Alterations of Heat and Cold, that there is now; and conſequently, all the Arguments, which he draws from the Heat and ſtrong Action of the Sun upon this *primæval* Earth (and this ſeems to be the chief Foundation of his whole *Hypotheſis*) infallibly fall to the Ground.

Anſwered and refutea. [f]

BUT ſuppoſe that the Heat of the Sun was as intenſe, as he would have it; [f] yet it contradicts Senſe and common Experience to ſay, that it would ever affect the Earth to ſuch a Degree, as to cauſe great Cracks and Fiſſures in it, or penetrate its *Cruſt* ſo far, as to ferment the Water, and to raiſe it into Vapour, ſince in *Vaults*, and other ſubterraneous Cavities, we find no ſenſible Alteration of Heat in Summer and Winter;

[b] So ſays Dr *Burnet*; but Mr *Keill*, upon the loweſt Computation, makes them twenty-two. *Vide* his Remarks upon Mr *Whiſton*'s Theory. [c] *Vide* Page 203, an Examination of Dr *Burnet*'s and Mr *Whiſton*'s Theories, concerning the Creation. [d] *Keill*'s Examination of *Burnet*'s Theory. [e] *Vid.* Page 203. [f] *Vid. Keill*'s Examinat. paſſim.

Winter; and in *Barbadoes*, and other Iſlands near the *Equator*, we perceive none of thoſe huge Cracks, which the *Theoriſt* ſuppoſes in the *Antediluvian* Earth, though the Sun has ſhone above thrice as long upon them, as it did upon it. Nay, ſuppoſe the Effect of the Sun, upon the primitive Earth, to be what the *Theoriſt* imagines; yet ſince (according to his Hypotheſis) the Abyſs had, at firſt, all the Water included in it, and was all along the great *Store-houſe* of the Rivers and Fountains, that watered the Ground; 'tis much to be feared, that, by the inceſſant Exhalations of the Sun, (if the Sun did penetrate ſo far) this Store-houſe would, [g] in the Space of ſome hundred Years, be quite exhauſted: But, if it were not, 'twould be difficult to prove, how the mere Fermentation of Water could break through an Arch of ſolid Matter lying upon it ſome hundred Miles thick; how *one* Ocean of Water, (for he ſuppoſes no more in the Abyſs) however toſſed and agitated, could cauſe an univerſal Deluge, [h] when himſelf, for the ſame Purpoſes, requires no leſs than *eight*: And laſtly, how a Deluge, thus occaſioned by the *Diſruption* of the Abyſs, and violent *Agitation* of the Waters, ſhould ever laſt ſo long, as the Scriptures inform us *Noah*'s Flood did, [i] *an hundred and fifteen Days*, without abating, *on the Face of the Earth*. [k] Water, we know, driven with great Violence upwards, falls down again in a very ſhort Space of Time; and can we imagine, that the Water, which was raiſed by the Fall of the *Cruſt* of the Earth, could laſt many Days, or, indeed, many Hours, without deſcending again into its ancient Channel? Since, therefore, the Shock and Commotion of the Abyſs, by the Fall of the Arch of Earth into it, (how violent ſoever we ſuppoſe it) would occaſion no more than a *tranſient* Effect (whereas the Flood, related by *Moſes*, was of a long and laſting Continuance); for this very Reaſon it will follow, [l] that *the Diſruption of the Abyſs, or Diſſolution of the primæval Earth, and its Fall in the Abyſs, could never be the Cauſe of the Deluge* recorded in Scripture.

The Subſtance of Mr Whiſton's *Theory.*

THE Expedient, which the other learned *Theoriſt* has invented for the Supply of a ſufficient Quantity of Water, in order to effect a general Deluge, is the *Trajection of a Comet*. For he ſuppoſes, [m] "That, at the Time of the Deluge, a *Comet* "came very near, and paſſed by the Earth; that, as it approached, and came be"low the Moon, it raiſed a *vaſt Tide*, both in the Sea, that was on the Surface, and "in the Abyſs, that was under the *Cruſt* of the Earth; that this Tide and the At"traction of the Comet changed the *Abyſs*, and with it the ſuper-incumbent Earth "(after it had ſtretched it, and made innumerable Cracks in it) from a *ſpherical* "to an *oval* Figure; that this Comet, in its Deſcent towards the Sun, paſſing cloſe "by the Body of the Earth, involved it in its Atmoſphere and Tail, for a conſidera"ble Time; that *preſſing* the Earth very violently, it forced Abundance of ſubter"raneous Waters out upon its Surface, through the Cracks and Fiſſures, which "were made before; and, leaving a vaſt Track of its Tail behind, furniſhed Wa"ter enough to cover the Face of the whole Earth, for the perpendicular Height "of three Miles." *Thus he ſupplies the Water; and then to remove it, when the Work is done, he ſuppoſes*, "that a very ſtrong Wind dried up ſome, and forced the reſt "into the great Abyſs, where it was repoſited before."

Anſwered and refuted.

THESE are the chief of the *Suppoſitions*, whereby this learned Writer pretends to account for all the *Phænomena* of the Deluge: But though we may allow, (as [n] he ſeems to make it probable) that, at the Time of the Deluge, a *Comet* might come very near the Earth, and cauſe a prodigious Tide in the Seas, that were on its Surface; yet how it ſhould have the ſame Effect upon the *Abyſs*, which was incloſed

[g] Mr *Keill* has made a plain Calculation of this Matter, and concludes it with theſe Words: *Since therefore, according to the* Theoriſt, *the Abyſs was the Store-houſe, which furniſhed the* Antediluvian *Earth with Rivers, and none of them, according to him, ran into it again; and becauſe all the Waters, which were anciently in the* Abyſs, *are now in the Ocean, it muſt needs follow, that in the Space of eight hundred and twelve Years, it would be quite empty, upon Suppoſition that there were as many Rivers in the primitive Earth, as there are now in ours; but becauſe there was then twice as much Land to be furniſhed with Rivers, there being then no Seas, (as the* Theoriſt *ſays) we muſt, in Proportion, allow twice as many Rivers to water the double Quantity of dry Land; and therefore by ſuch a double Quantity of Rivers the Abyſs would be emptied in half that Time*, Page 164. [h] *Burnet*'s Theory, p. 17. [i] Gen. vii. 24. [k] *Keill*'s Examination. [l] *Burnet*'s Theory, p. 104. [m] Comets are Species of Planets, or Bodies revolving about the Sun, and moving in one of the *Conick* Sections, (which, in all Probability, is an *Ellipſis*) whoſe Motions, and (if they have *elliptick* Orbits) whoſe *periodical* Times are as conſtant, certain, and regular, as thoſe of the *Planets*, though, till very lately, generally unknown to the World. *Whiſton*'s Theory. The ſame learned Author endeavours to prove, that the *Comet*, which was ſeen in theſe Parts, *A. D.* 1680, (whoſe Revolution he computes to be in about 575 Years, and whoſe *Trajectory* Sir *Iſaac Newton* has delineated) was no other than that very Comet, which came by the Earth, at the Beginning of *Noah*'s Flood, and was, as he imagines, the Cauſe of the ſame, *ibid.* p. 188. [n] That a Comet did really appear at the Deluge, we have the Teſtimony of ſeveral Authors in *Hevelius*'s *Cometographia*; nay, *Pliny* too, a learned and ancient Author, not only makes Mention (very likely from the *Egyptian* Records) of a Comet, which appeared in the Reign of *Typhon*, (*i. e.* at the Deluge, or immediately before it) but alſo ſpeaks of the direful Effects of it, *ibid.* p. 200.

and fortified with a thick ſolid Cruſt of Earth, or make ſuch convenient *Fiſſures* in it, without ſhattering its whole Compages, is Matter of ſome Amazement. Firm and fluid Bodies, we know, are equally attracted, when the attracting Body is at the ſame Diſtance; and, if ſo, the Approach of the Comet could have no more Effect upon the *Abyſs*, than if it had been all one continued *Solid*; and if it could raiſe no Commotion in the Abyſs, it could never (in the Method the Theoriſt imagines) make any Alteration in the *Figure* of the Earth. Whether the *Atmoſphere* of a Comet be a *watery* Subſtance or no, is far from being clear; but admitting it were, yet that the bare paſſing through it ſhould afford ſuch a prodigious Quantity of Water, as the *Theory* has Occaſion for, or [o] that the Earth, a cold Planet, ſhould go off with 700,000 Miles of the Comet's Tail, which could not be ſupported by the Comet itſelf, but only by Reaſon of the burning Heat of its Body, is a Thing incredible. The Obſervations, however, of the moſt curious Enquiries into this Phænomenon [p] may induce us to think, that the Circle about the Body of the Comet is nothing elſe but the curling and winding round of the Smoak, riſing at firſt to a determinate Height, from all Parts of the Comet, and then making off to that Part of it, which is oppoſite to the Sun: And if this Opinion be true, then could the Earth gain no more Water by paſſing through the *Atmoſphere* of a Comet, than any Thing can do, by paſſing through the Smoak of a *Chimney*: Then was there, indeed, more Danger of a Conflagration, than Inundation; and *Noah* and his Ark ran a manifeſt Hazard of being burnt to Powder by the glowing Heat of this melting Planet.

NOR is the *Theoriſt* much happier in *drawing off* the Waters from the Surface of the Earth, than he is in *bringing* them on. For, whereas he ſuppoſes, that three perpendicular Miles of Water will be ſufficient to effect a Deluge, which (upon a [q] moderate Computation) will amount to twenty-two Oceans of Water, together with the Water that compoſes the preſent Ocean, where ſhall we find a Place for the Reception of ſuch an *immenſe Maſs?* The Air, it muſt be owned, could but receive a ſmall Proportion; the Wind could not be ſuppoſed to dry up a great deal; the Channel of the Sea was already full, and the Cracks and Cavities of the Earth muſt, of Neceſſity, be ſo too; or if we ſhould ſuppoſe (what is an impoſſible Suppoſition) that, during the Time of the Deluge, they remained empty; yet the *Theoriſt* ſuppoſes, that, at moſt, they could but contain half the Quantity of Water requiſite to make the Deluge; and, if ſo, what *can* we imagine would become of the reſt? For, after all theſe *ſubterraneous Cavities* are compleatly full, there would remain *eleven Oceans* more to be diſpoſed of, which (without the miraculous Interpoſition of a Divine Power) could not be removed: And if the Hand of God muſt neceſſarily be called upon to remove the Waters, why ſhould it be forgot, and its Operations overlook'd, in the more ſtupendous Work of bringing them in? For my Part, I cannot think him half ſo conſiſtent, and rational in his Scheme, who takes a World of Pains to bring immenſe Quantities of Waters upon the Stage, and when they have done their Work, has no Way to convey them off again; as him, who *tranſmutes* ſome other Body into Water, for the preſent Occaſion, and, when that is ſerved, reſtores it to its *priſtine* Form and Nature. For if we grant that all natural Bodies, even the *Elements* themſelves, may be mutually changed into one another, (as few Men doubt, and ſome think they can demonſtrate) why might not the Divine Power and Providence bring together, at that Time, ſuch natural Agents, as [r] might change the Air or Æther, or both together into Water, and ſo ſupply what was wanting in Rains, and extraordinary Eruptions of Springs. But becauſe the Scripture, aſſigning the Cauſes or Means of the Inundation, makes no Mention of any Converſion of Air into Water, but only takes Notice of *the opening the Windows of Heaven*, and the *breaking up the Fountains of the great Deep*; we proceed now to conſider, [s] whether theſe two Cauſes, under the Direction of the Hand of God, be not ſufficient to work this Effect.

BY

[o] *Keill*'s Remarks on Mr *Whiſton*'s Theory. [p] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [q] Vid. *Keill*'s Remarks, p. 219. [r] This Cauſe, the Converſion of Air into Water, the learned *Kircher* alledges as the undoubted inſtrumental Cauſe or Means of the Deluge, in theſe Words: *Dico totum illum Aëreum Spatium, uſque ad ſupremam Regionem Aëris, præpotentis Dei virtute in aquas, per inexplicabilem nubium coacervatarum multitudinem, quâ replebatur, converſam eſſe; cujus ubertas tanta fuit, ut Aër ſupremus cum inferiori in Oceanum commutatus videri potuerit, non naturæ viribus, ſed illius, cujus voluntati & imperio cuncta ſubſunt:* i. e. All that vaſt Space, I ſay, which reaches up to the ſupreme Region of the Air, was, by the Power of the Omnipotent God, and Inſtrumentality of an inexplicable Multitude of Clouds, amaſſed together, and changed into Water; ſo that the upper and lower Air might ſeem to be tranſmuted into an Ocean, not by the Strength of Nature, but by the Power of him, whoſe Will and Power all Things are ſubject to, and obey. *De Arcâ Noë*, Lib. II. [s] *Ray*, of the General Deluge.

BY *the opening of the Windows of Heaven* muſt be underſtood the Cauſing of the Water, which was ſuſpended in the Clouds, to deſcend down upon the Earth, not in ordinary Showers, but in Floods, or (as the *Septuagint* interpret it) in *Cataracts*, or Spouts of Water; [t] which Travellers are beſt liable to form a Notion of, who have ſeen thoſe prodigious Falls of Waters, ſo frequent in the *Indies*, and where the Clouds many Times do not break into Drops, but fall, with a terrible Violence, in a Torrent. *The* Moſaic *Account.*

HOW far theſe *Treaſures of Water* in the Air might contribute to the general Inundation, we may, in ſome Meaſure, compute, from what we may have obſerved in a *Thunder-Cloud*, [u] which, in the Space of leſs than two Hours, has ſometimes poured down ſuch a vaſt Quantity of Water, as, beſides what ſunk into the dry and thirſty Ground, and filled all the Ditches and Ponds, has cauſed a conſiderable Flood in the Rivers, and ſet all the Meadows on float. Now had this Cloud (which, for aught we know, moved forty Miles forward in its falling) ſtood *ſtill*, and emptied all its Water upon the ſame Spot of Ground, it firſt hung over, what a ſudden and incredible Deluge would it have made in the Place? What then muſt we ſuppoſe the Event to have been, when the *Flood-gates of Heaven* were all opened, and, on every Part of the Globe, the Clouds were inceſſantly pouring out Water with ſuch Violence, and in ſuch vaſt Abundance, for forty Days together? *How far the Clouds contributed.*

'TIS impoſſible for us to have any adequate Conception of the Thing, [x] though the vaſt Inundations, which are made yearly in *Egypt*, only from the Rains, which fall in *Ethiopia*, and the like annual Overflowing in *America* of the great River *Oroonoque*, whereby many Iſlands and Plains, at other Times inhabited, are laid twenty Feet under Water, between *May* and *September*, may give us a faint Emblem; and be of ſome Uſe to cure our Infidelity in this Reſpect.

THE other *Cauſe*, that the Scriptures relate, is *the breaking up of the Fountains of the great Deep*; whereby thoſe Waters, which were contained in vaſt Quantities within the Bowels of the Earth, were forced out, and thrown upon the Surface of it. * That there is a mighty *Collection* of Waters, incloſed in the Bowels of the Earth, conſtituting a large Globe, in the interior or *central* Part of it; and that the Water of this Globe communicates with that of the Ocean, by Means of certain *Hiatus* or Apertures, paſſing between it and the Ocean, is plain by the *Caſpian*, and ſome other Seas, which receive into themſelves many great Rivers, and having no viſible *Outlets*, muſt be ſuppoſed to diſcharge the Water they receive by ſubterraneous Paſſages into this Receptacle, and, by its Intervention, into the Ocean again. [y] The *Mediterranean Sea*, in particular, beſides the many Rivers that run into it, has two great Currents of the Sea, one at the Streights of *Gibraltar*, and the other at the *Propontis*, which let into it ſuch a vaſt Tide of Water, that, many Ages ago, it muſt have endangered the whole World, had it not emptied itſelf by certain ſecret Paſſages into ſome great *Cavity* underneath: And for this Reaſon, ſome have imagined the Earth to be one *great Animal*, [z] whoſe *Abyſs* ſupplies the Place of the *Heart*, in the Body of the Earth, to furniſh all its *Aqueducts* with a Sufficiency of Water, and whoſe ſubterraneous Paſſages are like *Veins* in the Body, which receive Water out of the Sea, as the Veins do Blood out of the Liver, and, in a continual *Circulation*, return it to the Heart again. *The Abyſs, its Reality from Reaſon.*

HOWEVER this be, 'tis certainly more than probable, (becauſe a Matter of Divine Revelation) that there is an immenſe Body of Water incloſed in the Center of the Earth, to which the Pſalmiſt plainly alludes, when he tells us, [a] *that God founded the Earth upon the Seas, and eſtabliſhed it upon the Floods*; that [b] *he ſtretched out the Earth above the Waters*; that he [c] *gathered up the Waters, as in a Bag*, (ſo the beſt Tranſlations have it) *and laid up the Deep, or Abyſs, as in a Store-houſe.* Nay, there is a Paſſage or two in the *Proverbs of Solomon*, (where Wiſdom declares her Antiquity, and Pre-exiſtence to all the Works of the Earth) which ſets before our Eyes, as it were, the very Form and Figure of this Abyſs, [d] *When he prepared the Heavens, I was there, when he ſet a Compaſs upon the Face of the Deep; when he eſtabliſhed the Clouds above, when he ſtrengthened the Fountains of the Abyſs.* Here is mention made of the *Abyſs*, and of the *Fountains of the Abyſs*; nor is there any Queſtion to be made, but that the *Fountains of the Abyſs* here are the ſame with the Fountains of the *From Scripture.*

[t] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [u] *Ray*, of the General Deluge. [x] *Patrick*, ibid. [y] *Woodward*'s Nat. Hiſt. [z] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [a] *Stillingfleet*'s Origines Sacræ. [b] Pſal. xxiv. 2. [c] Ibid. cxxxvi. 6. [d] Ibid. xxxiii. 7. [e] Prov. viii. 27, 28.

the Abyſs, which *Moſes* mentions, and *were broke up*, as he tells us, at the Deluge: And what is obſervable in the Text, the Word, which we render *Compaſs*, properly ſignifies a Circle or Circumference, or an Orb or Sphere; ſo that there was in the Beginning a Sphere, Orb, or Arch, ſet round the Abyſs, according to the Teſtimony of *Wiſdom*, who was then preſent; by the Means of which, the *Fountains thereof were ſtrengthened*; for we cannot conceive how they could have been ſtrengthened any other Way, than by having a ſtrong *Cover*, or *Arch* made over them.

How much it contributed.

IF ſuch then be the Form of this *Abyſs*, that it ſeems to be a vaſt Maſs or Body of Water, lying altogether in the Womb of the Earth, 'twill be no hard Matter to compute what a plentiful Supply might be expected from thence, in order to effect an *univerſal* Deluge. For, [d] if the Circumference of the Earth (even according to the loweſt Computation) be 21000 Miles, the Diameter of it (according to that Circumference) 7000 Miles, and conſequently, from the Superficies to the Center 3500 Miles; and (if according to [e] the beſt Account) the higheſt Mountain in the World (taking its Altitude from the Plane it ſtands upon) does not exceed four perpendicular Miles in Height; admitted we take two hundred Miles for the Depth of the *Cruſt*, before we come to the Abyſs, yet if 3300 Miles deep can be ſuppoſed able to cover four or five Miles in Height; then we cannot but conclude, that in this Abyſs there would be infinitely more Water than enough (when drawn out upon the Surface of the Earth) to drown the World to a far greater Height than *Moſes* relates. The only Difficulty is, how it came to be drawn out from the Abyſs, and 'tis here, indeed, we muſt call in the Aſſiſtance of *Omnipotence*; ſince every other *Hypotheſis*, upon Trial, will prove miſerably lame and defective.

'TIS a groundleſs Objection then to ſuppoſe, that there could be any Defect of Water ſufficient for a Deluge, when the Store-houſes both of the *ſuperior* and *inferior* Regions were ſo well repleniſhed: And ſince it is agreed on all Hands, that, in the Time of the *Chaos*, [f] the Waters did cover the Earth, (we know not how deep) inſomuch that nothing of it could be ſeen, till God was pleaſed to make a Separation, raiſing ſome into the Clouds, and depreſſing others into proper *Channels*, and commanding the *dry Land* to appear; why ſhould it be thought a Wonder, if theſe Waters were raiſed up again by the ſame Hand, that appointed their Place of Abode, to cover the Earth as before; eſpecially when the Waters *above* the Firmament came down to join thoſe *below*, as they did at the Beginning? Why *ſhould it be thought a Wonder*, I ſay, when the Heathens themſelves were not averſe to own the Poſſibility of it; for ſo we find [g] *Seneca*, treating of that *fatal Day*, as he calls it, when the Deluge ſhall come, (for he fancied it ſtill *future*) and queſtioning how it might come to paſs, whether by the Force of the Ocean overflowing the Earth, by perpetual Rains without Intermiſſion, by the Swelling of Rivers, and opening of new Fountains; or (what he rather ſuppoſes) by a general Concourſe and Combination of all theſe Cauſes, concludes his Enquiry at laſt with theſe remarkable Words:

The Opinion of the wiſeſt Heathens.

" There are huge *Lakes*, which we do not ſee, much of the *Sea*, that lies hidden
" and concealed, many *Rivers* that glide in ſecret; ſo that there may be Cauſes of
" a Deluge on all Sides, when ſome Waters flow in under the Earth; others flow
" round about it, and being long pent up, overwhelm it, *&c.* and as our Bodies
" ſometimes diſſolve into Sweat, ſo the Earth ſhall melt; and, without the Help of
" other Cauſes, ſhall find in itſelf what ſhall drown it, *&c.* there being in all Places,
" both openly and ſecretly, both from above and from beneath, an *Eruption* of
" Waters, ready to overflow, and deſtroy it."

The Ark,

HAVING thus provided a ſufficient Quantity of Water for the Deſtruction of the old World, the next Thing they have to conſider is, the *Structure* of the *Ark*, wherein the ſeveral Animals, appointed for the Propagation of the *new*, were to be preſerved, [h] It is very probable, that, when *Adam* and *Eve* were turned out of *Paradiſe*, they were ſtill permitted to continue in the Country of *Eden*, and that,

where built.

upon

[d] Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s Hiſtory. [e] 'Tis very probable, that Men are exceedingly miſtaken as to the Height of Mountains, which comes ſo ſhort of what Sir *Walter Raleigh* allows to them, (*viz.* thirty Miles) that the higheſt in the World will not be found to be five direct Miles in Height: *Olympus*, whoſe Height is ſo extolled by the Poets, does not exceed a Mile and an half perpendicular, and about ſeventy Paces. Mount *Athos*, which is ſaid to caſt its Shadow into the Iſle of *Lemnos*, (according to *Pliny* 87 Miles) is not above two Miles in Height; nay, the very Pike of *Teneriff*, which is reputed the higheſt Mountain in the World, may be aſcended in three Days, (according to the Proportion of eight Furlongs to a Day's Journey) makes it much about the Height of a *German* Mile perpendicular, as *Varenius* confeſſes; which makes the Account of the Flood, and its over-topping the higheſt Mountains much more probable. *Stillingfleet*'s Origines Sacræ. [f] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [g] Nat. Quæſt. Lib. III. Cap. 27. [h] *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament.

upon the Increaſe of Mankind, tho' other Families removed into other Parts, yet the *eldeſt* Son always remained where the firſt Settlement was made: Whence it rationally follows, that *Noah*, being the eldeſt Son in a lineal Deſcent from *Seth*, lived in the ſaid Country of *Eden*, and there built the Ark; becauſe it is confirmed by ſeveral Hiſtorians, [i] that in *Babylonia*, and other adjacent Countries, there was a great Plenty of Cypreſs-Trees (which the Scripture calls *Gopher-wood*) fit for Shipping, and not liable to rot, as having a *bitter* Sap, which hindered Worms from breeding in it; and, for this Reaſon, we need leſs wonder, that we find *Joſephus*, and ſome other Authors, teſtifying, that the Ruins of the Ark continued ſo many Ages.

Its Capacity.

[k] HAD we never ſeen a Ship, and ſhould be told, how many Men, and what Proviſions and Merchandize one of the largeſt *Rate* will carry, it would ſeem no leſs incredible to us, than what *Moſes* tells us of the Things, that were contained in the Ark. The Ark, according to his Account, was [l] *three hundred Cubits* in Length, *fifty* in Breath, and *thirty* in Height; and if (with ſome learned Calculators) we ſuppoſe the Cubit, here mentioned, to have been a Foot and a half long, then was the Length of it (according to that Proportion) four hundred and fifty Feet, the Breadth ſeventy-five Feet, and the Height forty-five. So that the Ark was ſix Times as long as it was broad, ten Times as long as it was high, and the whole Capacity thereof was four hundred and fifty thouſand ſolid Cubits, or one Million five hundred and eighteen Thouſand ſeven hundred and fifty *Cubical* Feet; which was Space abundantly enough to contain all, that was to be ſtowed in it. For it appears from the ſacred Text, that the Ark conſiſted of three *Stories*; and the whole Height of the Ark being thirty Cubits, or forty-five Feet, it may well be ſuppoſed, that the Height was equally divided among the three Stories, and ſo each Story was ten Cubits, or fifteen Feet high, only deducting one Cubit, or a Foot and a half, for the Slope of the Roof, or Cover of the upper Story. It is likewiſe pretty well agreed among Interpreters, that the loweſt Story was appointed for four-footed Animals, as moſt commodious for them; the middle Story for their Provender, and what they were to live upon; and the upper Story, partly for Birds, and what they were to eat; and partly for *Noah* and his Family, together with their Utenſils. And that [m] each of theſe Stories was ſpacious enough, to receive what was to be put therein, according to the forementioned Order, will evidently appear from any of thoſe *Geometrical* Calculations, which learned Men in all Ages have made of the Dimenſions of this Veſſel, and its Contents, (whereunto [n] I refer the Reader for his farther Satisfaction) but, more eſpecially, from what our renowned Countryman Biſhop *Wilkins* has ſaid upon this Argument, who, after an exact Computation, and Adjuſtment of every Thing to its proper Place, very truly, as well as religiouſly, obſerves, " that had the moſt ſkilful *Mathematicians* and " Philoſophers been ſet to conſult, what *Proportions* a Veſſel, deſigned for ſuch an " Uſe, as the Ark was, ſhould have in the ſeveral Parts of it; they could not have " pitched upon any other more ſuitable to the Purpoſe, than thoſe mentioned by

Biſhop Wilkins's *Reflections upon it.*

[i] Hence the Fleet of *Alexander the Great*, which was made at *Babylon*, was all made of Cypreſs-Wood; becauſe in thoſe Parts there was Want of other Wood fit for Shipping. *Appian.* Hiſt. [k] *Du Pin*'s Hiſtory of the Old Teſtament. [l] Gen. vi. 15, 16. [m] Tho' the Number of Animals may, at firſt View, appear to be almoſt infinite, yet, as Biſhop *Wilkins* obſerves, if we come to an exact Calculation, we ſhall find the Number of *Species* much ſmaller than we expect; and not to amount to one hundred of Quadrupeds, and *two* of Birds: And of theſe too muſt be excepted all ſuch Animals as live in the Water, ſuch as proceed from a Mixture of different Species, and ſuch as change their Colour, Size, and Shape, by changing their Climate, and thence, in different Countries, ſeem to be different Species, tho' in Reality they are not. *Wilkins*'s Eſſay. It is to be conſidered likewiſe, that there are but few *Species* of very vaſt Creatures, ſuch as Elephants, Horſes, *&c.* that *Birds* are generally of a ſmall Bulk, and take up but little Room; that if we ſuppoſe *Inſects* to be included, they take up leſs, tho' very numerous; and that leſs Proviſion would ſerve them all, when they were ſhut up cloſe, and did not ſpend themſelves in Motion. *Patrick*'s Commentary. *Buteo*, upon the whole, has demonſtrated, that all the Animals, contained in the Ark, could not be equal to 500 Horſes; and yet, it is not to be queſtioned, but that a Building, as long as St *Paul*'s Church, and as broad as the middle Iſle of that Church is high within, is capable of affording Stabling for ſuch a Number of Horſes. *Lamy*'s Introduction. [n] *Kircher* (in his *Arca Noë*, c. 5.) has given us large Calculations of the Dimenſions of the Ark; and from thence concludes, that this Veſſel was capacious enough to receive, not only *Noah* and his Family, all other Creatures and their Food, but even an entire Province beſides. *Wilkins* (in his Eſſays towards a real Character) has, according to *Buteo*, (in his *Arca Noë*) entered into a large Detail of Things, and given us an exact and compleat Idea of the Capacity of the Ark, and of its Proportion, together with what it was to contain. *Le Peletier* (in his *Diſſer. ſur l'Arch de Noé*) follows another *Engliſh* Author, Dr *Chamberlain*, who, in his *Diſcovery of the Weights and Meaſures of the Jews*, has proved, that the ancient Cubit of the *Jews* is the old *Derab* of *Memphis*; whereupon *Peletier* allows 1,781,377 Cubical Feet of *Paris* for the whole Contents of the Ark, ſo that it might hold, as he pretends, 42,413 Tons of Lading. Another Author has publiſhed another Diſſertation upon the ſame Subject, and upon the ſame Principles; where he compares the Ark to our modern Ships, and computes its Meaſure according to the Tons it might contain, and thereupon makes it larger than forty Ships of a thouſand Tons each. *Vid. Diſſer. Hiſt. Chron. Georg.* &c. D. II. *Journal de Paris ſur Janvier*, 1712. See alſo Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s Hiſtory of the World, and *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament.

" *Moſes:* Inſomuch that the Proportion of the Ark (from which ſome weak and " *Atheiſtical* Perſons have made ſome poor Efforts to overthrow the Authority of " the ſacred Scriptures) does very much tend to confirm and eſtabliſh the Truth " and Divine Authority of them; eſpecially if we duly conſider, that, in thoſe " early Times, Men were leſs verſed in Arts and Sciences; at leaſt, that the Ark " was, in all Probability, the firſt *Veſſel* of any Bulk that was made to go upon " the Water: Whence the Juſtneſs of the Proportion, obſerved in its ſeveral Parts, " and the Exactneſs of its Capacity, to the Uſe it was deſigned for, is reaſonably to " be aſcribed, not to bare human Invention and Contrivance, but to the Divine " Direction, expreſsly given to *Noah* by God himſelf, as the ſacred Hiſtorian ac- " quaints us."

Reflections upon thoſe, that were loſt.

AFTER what has been ſaid of the Capacity of the Ark, and a Proviſion of Water ſufficient to *deſtroy every living Thing upon the Face of the Ground*; we may here make a Stand, and conſider a little with ourſelves this dreadful and amazing Judgment, this moſt horrid and portentous Cataſtrophe, that Nature ever yet ſaw. Let us then fancy that we beheld with our Eyes the *Flood-Gates of Heaven* laid open, and every Cloud pouring out Water, like an huge Inundation; the *Bars of the Ocean* removed, and that boiſterous Element riding in Triumph over the ſubjected Land; the *Fountains of the great Deep broke open*, and Torrents from every Hill and Cavern of the Earth guſhing out upon us, and rolling faſt after us, wherever we fled: Suppoſe we heard the Roarings of the angry Surges, the Cracks of the falling Earth, and the Cries and Lamentations of thoſe, that were going to ſink; ſaw the Horror and Ghaſtlineſs that ſat on every Countenance, [o] *Mens Hearts failing them for Fear, and for looking after thoſe Things, which were coming upon the Earth*; to the Mountains, to the Tops of Trees, to the Tops of Caſtles, and of lofty Towers all flying in Haſte, but all in vain; Trees, Towers, Caſtles, Mountains, and every other Place of ſuppoſed Safety yielding to the ſwelling Tide, and giving up every Thing, Man and Beaſt together, to the mercileſs Waves: Suppoſe we ſaw, I ſay, the whole Race of Mankind floating in this immenſe Deep, and huddled all together in one promiſcuous Ruin; ſuch a Scene as this would certainly give us a right Apprehenſion of the Terrors of Almighty God, and make us very careful of offending him, who [p] *ſpared not the old World*, but condemned ſo many Myriads of his Creatures to an univerſal Overthrow, *making them an Example unto thoſe, that ſhould afterwards live ungodly.* For here we may ſee that *Numbers* are no Defence againſt the Divine Vengeance, and therefore no Security to Sinners: That Sinners, tho' they may think themſelves ſecure, can never be ſafe; [q] *but when they ſhall ſay Peace and Safety, then ſudden Deſtruction cometh upon them, as a Thief in the Night*; and that God, when he enters into Judgment with the Wicked, [r] *will not pity, nor ſpare, nor have Mercy, but deſtroy; he will daſh them one againſt another, even the Fathers and the Sons together*; and [s] *cauſe his Fury to reſt upon them, until his Anger be accompliſhed.*

WE muſt not, however, carry our Reſentment againſt the old World ſo far, as to ſuppoſe, that God's Deſign, in ſending the *Deluge* upon it, was to deſtroy, *to Eternity*, all thoſe, who were unhappily involved in that Calamity. He deſigned, no doubt, to exhibit a Spectacle of Vengeance to all future Ages; and, by a juſt Severity inflicted upon them, to demonſtrate to us his Abhorrence and Deteſtation of Sin; but it does not therefore follow, that he had no further Intention in all this, [t] *His Long-ſuffering*, we are told, *waited in the Days of* Noah, and the gradual Increaſe of the Flood, which thoſe Sinners ſaw coming upon them, and could not but know the Meaning of, muſt needs convince them of the Divine Vengeance; and [u] a ſudden Repentance upon a ſudden Conviction, might, for any Thing we know, obtain Mercy for them in the next World, tho' it did not avert their Puniſhment in this: Now, * if this was God's Deſign, (as we have great Appearance of Reaſon to believe it was) then may it well be preſumed, that ſeveral of theſe Sinners complied with it; that the Sight of his Arm, ready to avenge their Crimes, made them enter into themſelves, have Recourſe to the Clemency of their Judge, and take Advantage of all the Moments, which the Divine Mercy allowed them for Repentance, before the Deſtruction came upon them.

and thoſe, that were ſaved in the Deluge.

ON the other Hand, if we take a View of the righteous *Patriarch*, and his Family, preſerved from this Deſtruction, and riding over the raging Element in a Ship ſecured

[o] Luke xxi. 26. [p] 2 Pet. ii. 5, 6. [q] 1 Theſſ. v. 2, 3. [r] Jer. xiii. 14. [s] Ezek. v. 13.
[t] 1 Pet. iii. 20. [u] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. * *Sherlock*, of Providence.

cured by the Providence of God, and [x] directed by the Miniſtry of Angels; a Ship, whoſe Cargo was no leſs than a whole World, that carried the Fortune and Hopes of all Poſterity; and, if this periſhed, the Earth for any Thing we know, had been nothing but a great Deſert from the *Deluge* to the *Conflagration*. If we conſider this, we ſhall ſoon perceive, that [y] *the Lord careth for the Righteous*, that *he knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of Temptations*; and many Times recommends their Deliverance by ſuch endearing Circumſtances, as are almoſt equivalent to the Preſervation itſelf. For [z] let us ſuppoſe, that, inſtead of drowning the World, God had been pleaſed to deſtroy by Plague, Famine, or ſome other ſore Judgment, all Mankind, excepting *Noah* and his Sons, who were to be Eye-witneſſes of this terrible Execution; to live to ſee the Earth covered with dead Bodies, and none left to bury them, and their Cities lie waſte and deſolate without Inhabitants; who can conceive what the *Horror* of ſuch a Sight would have been? And who would have been content to live in ſuch a World, to converſe only with the Images of Death, and with noiſome Carcaſſes? But God in Mercy ſhut up *Noah* in the Ark, that he ſhould not ſee the Terror and Conſternation of Sinners, when the Flood came; and he waſhed away all the dead Bodies into the Caverns of the Earth, with all the Remains of their old Habitations; ſo that when he came out of the Ark, he ſaw nothing to diſturb his Imagination, nor any Tokens of that terrible Vengeance which had over-run the World, to offend his Sight.

Where the Ark reſted.

WHERE *Noah* came out of the Ark, after the Decreaſe of the Flood, has been a Matter of ſome Diſpute among *Geographers*, becauſe they are not well agreed what the Scriptures mean by the [a] *Mountains of Ararat*. [b] By *Ararat* indeed moſt underſtand the Country, which is called by the *Greeks*, and from them by other weſtern Nations, *Armenia*; but then [c] ſome contend, that the *Mountains of Ararat* reach a vaſt deal beyond the Country of *Armenia*; and upon this Suppoſition, they will have the Ark to have reſted upon the Top of Mount *Caucaſus*, in the Confines of *Tartary*, *Perſia*, and *India*. It may be queſtioned, however, (ſince the Ark, for many Reaſons already produced, may be ſuppoſed to have been built ſomewhere in *Eden*, or in the Parts thereabout) whether Mount *Caucaſus* be not too remote, for ſuch a Veſſel, as the Ark is repreſented to be, drawing much Water, and very unfit for ſailing, to arrive at, in the Space of the Flood's Increaſe, which was an hundred and fifty Days. The *Gordyean* Mountains in *Armenia* ſeem to be at [d] a proportionable Diſtance; and ſince they are allowed to be [e] the higheſt in the World, there is no Reaſon for receding from the commonly received Opinion, *viz.* that theſe were the Hills whereon the Ark ſtopped. For, [f] if the Waters covered the Tops of the *higheſt Hills on the Face of the Earth, fifteen Cubits*, and yet the Ark reſted the very firſt Day of the Abatement of the Waters, above two Months before the Tops of the other Mountains were ſeen; 'tis evident, that it reſted on the higheſt Hill in the World at that Time, and conſequently on the *Gordyean* Mountains, which are ſtill deſervedly ſo accounted. Here it is, that the Generality of *Geographers* place the Ark; [g] here it is, that almoſt all *Travellers* have found the Report of it; and laſtly, here it is, that the *Inhabitants* of the Country ſhew ſome Relicks of it, and call Places after its Name, to this very Day.

Noah's *Behaviour.*

BUT not to contend too earneſtly for what is not of ſo great a Moment to know, we may obſerve of *Noah*, that the firſt Thing he did, after his Eſcape from the Flood, was to offer up his Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to his great Deliverer: And, if ever a Senſe of Fear and Gratitude was capable of producing a ſincere Worſhip

[x] *Burnet*'s Theory, Vol. I. [y] 2 Pet. ii. 9. [z] *Sherlock*, of Providence. [a] Gen. viii. 4. [b] *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament. [c] Sir *Walter Raleigh*, in his Hiſtory, and *Heylin*'s Coſmog. [d] The learned *Huetius* has obſerved, conſidering the Figure of the Ark, and the great Weight it carried, that the Time the Deluge laſted, was no more than needful to carry it from the Place where it was made, to the *Gordyean* Mountains. In Armenia, eſt altior mons, quàm ſit in toto Orbe Terrarum, qui *Arath* vulgariter nuncupatur; & in Cacumine illius montis Arca *Noë* poſt Diluvium primò ſedit. Et licet, propter abundantiam Nivium, quæ ſemper in illo monte reperiuntur, nemo valet illum aſcendere; ſemper tamen apparet in ejus Cacumine quoddam nigrum, quod ab hominibus dicitur eſſe Arca. *Haitho Hiſt. Orient.* c. 9. [e] *Whiſton*'s Theory. [g] The Mount *Gordion*, called by the *Turks*, *Ardaugh*, is the higheſt in the World. The *Jews*, the *Armenians*, and the *Muſſulmans* affirm, that the Ark of *Noah* ſtopped at this Mountain, after the Deluge. *La Boulaye*'s Voyages. The *Armenians*, ſays he again, have a Tradition, that one may ſee a Part of *Noah*'s Ark upon the Top of Mount *Ararat*; but that People cannot get up to it; that one of their Travellers, a Man of an holy Life, endeavoured to do it, and advanced as far as the Middle of the Mountain; but being thirſty, and wanting Water, he put up a Prayer to God, who cauſed a Fountain to ſpring out of the Ground for him, and ſo ſaved his Life, but that he heard a Voice, ſaying, *Let none be ſo bold as to go up to the Top of this Mountain*, ibid. They tell us likewiſe, that the City of *Nakſivan*, which is about three Leagues from the Mountain *Ararat*, is the oldeſt in the World; that *Noah* dwelt therein, when he came out of the Ark; that the Word *Nakſivan* is derived from *Nak*, which ſignifies a *Ship*, and *ſivan*, which ſignifies to *ſtop* or *ſtay*; and that this Name was given to it, becauſe the Ark ſtopped at this ſame Mountain. *Tavernier*'s Travels, Tom. IV.

Worſhip and Adoration, it muſt have been on this Occaſion, when the Patriarch beheld ſo many Objects of divine Vengeance and Mercy all at once; [h] when he ſaw himſelf ſtanding, as it were, amidſt the Ruins of the *old* World, and ſurrounded with his little Family, which, by the Concurrence of wonderful Miracles, had eſcaped the ſad *Cataſtrophe*; and accordingly we may obſerve, that his *Euchariſt* was offered with that Sincerity, and animated with that Fervour of Heart, that it found a kind Acceptance, and obtained a gracious Promiſe from God, never to bring the like Deſtruction upon the Face of the Earth; [i] *Behold I ſet my Bow in the Cloud, and it ſhall be for a Token of a Covenant between me and the Earth, that the Waters ſhall no more become a Flood to deſtroy all Fleſh; and the Bow ſhall be in the Cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlaſting Covenant between God, and every living Creature of all Fleſh, that is upon the Earth.*

The Rainbow, *whether before the Flood, or no.*

THE *Rainbow* is a party-coloured Cloud, [k] whoſe fine and gay Paintings are the various *Reflexion* and *Refraction* of the Sun-beams in that watery Subſtance. Thoſe [l] who pretend that the *Antediluvian* Air had no groſs Maſſes of Vapours or *Clouds*, no large Drops of deſcending Rain or *Showers*, nor any violent Wind or Agitations in it, are of Opinion, that there was no Rainbow before the Flood; becauſe what Vapours there were, *they ſay*, either deſcended in the Night-Time, or were condenſed only into a gentle *Miſt*, or had not Wind enough to drive them together on one Side, and ſo clear the Air, on the other, for the free Admiſſion of the Rays of Light. [m] Others deny the *Pre-exiſtence* of the Rainbow upon a *religious* Account, and aſſert, that, ſince it was appointed by God to be a *Witneſs* of his Covenant with the new World, and a Meſſenger to ſecure Mankind from Deſtruction by Deluges, had it appeared before the Flood, the Sight of it afterwards would have been but a poor Comfort to *Noah* and his Poſterity, whoſe Fear of an Inundation was too great, to be taken away by any common or uſual Sign.

IT muſt be acknowledged however, that this [n] curious Mixture of Light and Shade in the Rainbow [o] ariſes naturally from the *Superficies* of thoſe Parts, that conſtitute the Cloud; and therefore there is no Doubt to be made, but that it appeared before the Deluge, though we find no Mention made of it till afterwards. For, whether we account it a [p] *natural* or *arbitrary* Sign, 'tis not at all eſſential to either, that the Matter of it ſhould not have ſubſiſted before the Flood; 'tis enough that it did not ſubſiſt as a *Sign*, or that it was never before *diſtinguiſhed* to denote ſuch and ſuch a Purpoſe. The Rainbow therefore might have appeared often before the Flood; but it then began to be a Sign of the *Covenant* between God and Man, when God had impreſſed this new Character upon it, and ſingled it out under a particular Denomination. Thus it was to the Sons of *Noah*; thus it is to the *preſent* Generation; and thus it will be to the *final* Period of all Things: And [q] therefore, as often as we view this Cloud, made ſo remarkable for the Diverſity of its Colours, and the Variety of its Tinctures, let us thence be confirmed in our Belief and Confidence in God, and look upon this delightful Spectacle, as an illuſtrious Symbol of the divine Mercy and Beneficence, or (to ſpeak in the Words of the wiſe Son of *Sirach*) [r] *look upon the Rainbow, and praiſe him that made it; very beautiful it is in the Brightneſs thereof: It compaſſeth the Heaven with a glorious Circle, and the Hands of the moſt High have bended it.*

[h] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [i] Gen. ix. 13, *&c.* [k] Philoſophers make two Sorts of Rainbows, *viz.* the *internal* and *external*; the former, they ſay, is cauſed by the Rays of the Sun, which falling upon an infinite Number of Drops in a Cloud, undergo two Refractions, and one Reflection between; the latter is produced by the like Rays falling upon an infinite Number of the like Drops, and undergoing two Refractions and two Reflections, which makes them return coloured and painted to the Eye. *Hartſocker*'s Conject. Phyſ. Lib. IV. [l] *Whiſton*'s Theory. [m] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [n] We may ſee in the mixed Colours of the Rainbow theſe two Things, *the Deſtruction of the old World by Water, and the future Conſumption of the preſent World by Fire*; whoſe flaming Brightneſs is predominant in the wateriſh Humour. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [o] *Edwards*'s Demonſtration of the Being of God. [p] Common Philoſophy teaches us, that a Rainbow is a *natural* Sign that there will not be much Rain after it appears, but that the Clouds begin to diſperſe; for it is never made in a thick Cloud, but in a thin; ſo that if it appear after Showers, which come from thick Clouds, it is a Token that now they grow thin, the God of Nature having choſe this for a Sign, that he would never thicken them again to ſuch a Degree as to bring a Deluge upon the Earth. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [q] *Edwards*, ibid. [r] Eccluſ. lxiii. 11, 12.

SECT.

SECT. I.

Of the Tower of BABEL.

THE [r] Terror of the Deluge had made ſuch Impreſſion upon *Noah*, and his Poſterity, that they choſe the higheſt Places, and ſuch as were leaſt expoſed to Inundations; and therefore continued for a conſiderable Time in the hilly Countries of *Armenia*, not far from the Place, where the Ark reſted: But after the Space of an hundred Years, as their Numbers began to increaſe, and their Fears to abate, [s] *they journied from the* [t] *Eaſt, and, finding a Plain in the Land of Shinar, there they dwelt*, and by joint Conſent entered into a Deſign *of building themſelves a City, and a Tower*, or Caſtle, *whoſe Top ſhould reach Heaven, to make themſelves a Name.* The Land of *Shinar* was all that Country, along which runs the River *Tigris*, from the Mountains of *Armenia* Northwards, to the *Perſian* Gulph, or at leaſt to the Southern Diviſion of the common Channel of the *Tigris* and *Euphrates* to the South: And the *Plain* or *Valley* of *Shinar*, where the Tower began to be built, was undoubtedly the very Place, or, at leaſt, in a very near Neighbourhood to the Place, where the City of *Babylon* afterwards ſtood, *i. e.* upon the *Original* Stream of the River *Euphrates*, and not far diſtant from its Conjunction with the *Tigris*.

Of the World. 1536, &c. *Before Chriſt.* 2468, &c.

The Land of Shinar, *what.*

HERE it was, that they began to build themſelves a City and Tower: But who theſe Builders and Projectors were, has occaſioned no ſmall Diſpute. [u] *By the Children of Men*, [x] ſome underſtand bad Men and Infidels, as they are oppoſed to *the Children of God*, which often denote the Good and Faithful; and from hence they infer, that neither *Noah*, nor *Shem*, nor *Arphaxad*, nor *Salah*, nor *Heber*, were engaged in this Work; but only ſome of the *worſe* Sort of People, who had degenerated from the Piety of their Anceſtors. [y] *Joſephus*, and ſome others, make *Nimrod* the Projector of this Deſign, and the Ringleader of thoſe who combined in it; but though the Undertaking ſeems to agree very well with the Notion, which the Scripture gives us of that *ambitious* Prince; yet [z] others, better verſed in the Antiquities of the *Jews*, even than *Joſephus* himſelf, have made it appear, that *Nimrod* was either very *young* at that Time, or even not yet born, when the Project of building this Tower and City was firſt formed; though it was certainly he, who, after the Diſperſion, coming out of *Arabia*, or ſome other neighbouring Country, ſettled at *Babel*, and there building the City of *Babylon*, made it the *Metropolis* of the *Aſſyrian* Monarchy.

Who the Builders were.

[a] OTHERS therefore are of Opinion, that though the Name of *the Children of Men* be ſometimes given to ſuch as are wicked, yet it is not ſo appropriated to that Senſe, but that it often ſignifies *Men in general*, and muſt, in this Place, be ſo underſtood, becauſe, in the *initial* Words of the Chapter, they are called *the whole Earth*: Beſides that, while *Noah* and his Sons were alive, and at ſo ſmall a Diſtance from the Flood, 'tis hard to imagine, how Mankind came to be diſtinguiſhed in this Manner. For though ſome might be more pious than the reſt, yet there appears to be no Reaſon why others, ſo ſoon, ſhould be ſtigmatized with the odious Character of *Unbelievers*: And though Mankind, after the Flood, were certainly very fruitful in the Procreation of Children; yet the Poſterity of three Women (and that within the Compaſs of an Age) can ſcarce be thought ſufficient to have laid the Foundation of even an

[r] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [s] Gen. xi. 2, &c. [t] By the *Eaſt*, moſt underſtand *Armenia*, where they ſuppoſe the Ark reſted, and *Noah* and his Sons firſt planted themſelves; but this has a great Difficulty in it, for the Mountains of *Armenia* lay North of *Shinar* or *Aſſyria*, and not Eaſt. To ſolve this, *Bochart* imagines that *Moſes*, in this Place, has followed the *Geographical* Stile of the *Aſſyrians*, who called all that lay beyond the *Tigris*, the *Eaſt-Country*, though a great Part of it, towards *Armenia*, was really *Northward*; and all, that lay on this Side, they called the *Weſt*, though ſome of it certainly lay *South*. *Vide Phaleg. Lib.* I. But there is no Need for this Solution: For though the *Gordyean* Mountains (whereon the Ark probably reſted) lie in a Manner North of *Babel*, yet ſince the *Plain* or *Valley* of *Shinar* extends itſelf quite up to the Mountains of *Armenia*; no ſooner was *Noah* and his Family deſcended from theſe *Gordyean* Mountains into the level Country on the South, but they were very full *Eaſt* of the upper, or *Northern* Parts of the Land of *Shinar*: So that it might truly, and in the moſt literal Senſe, be ſaid, that *as they journeyed from the Eaſt, they found a Plain in the Land of Shinar. Wells*'s Geography. This, however, has not hindered ſome from carrying the Ark as far as Mount *Caucaſus*, before it ſettled, that the People might be ſaid to *journey from the Eaſt* without all Controverſy: And becauſe we hear no more of *Noah* in the ſacred Story, only that he died at ſuch a Term of Years, they thence conclude, that he and his *Poſtdiluvian* Race ſettled at firſt in the *Eaſt*, and very likely in *China* itſelf; ſince the Singularity of the *Chineſe* Language, and Manner of Writing, and the Antiquity of their Hiſtory, their Polity, and Acquaintance with the learned Sciences, do plainly denote them to have been of a very ancient Extraction. Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s Hiſtory, and Mr. *Whiſton*'s Theory. [u] Gen. xi. 5. [x] *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Wells*'s Geography. [y] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. I. c. 5. and Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s Hiſtory. [z] *Bochart*'s Phaleg. Lib. I. c. 10. [a] *Le Clerc*'s and *Saurin*'s Diſſertations.

indifferent City: Much leſs can we ſuppoſe, that any of them refuſed to give their Aſſiſtance towards an Undertaking, which required ſo many Hands, and ſeemed to have no *formal* Iniquity in it, whatever it might have of Indiſcretion and Contrariety to the *ſecret* Will of God.

Their Deſign, ſeveral Opinions concerning it.

SOME indeed have imagined, that the Deſign of theſe Builders was to raiſe a Tower ſo high, that, by the Help of it, they might get up to Heaven: But this is a wild Opinion, ariſing from a Miſrepreſentation of the Words, [b] *let us build us a City and a Tower, whoſe Top may reach unto Heaven*; which is no more than [c] a common Expreſſion in Scripture for any Thing of a vaſt and prodigious Height. [d] Others have thought, that it was to preſerve themſelves from a *ſecond* Deluge, which they much dreaded, or from the general *Conflagration*, whereof they had ſome Notice: But had they been apprehenſive of another *Flood*, they would have certainly continued in the Mountains, and not made Choice of ſuch low Ground, whereon to found the Place of their Security; or had they been providing againſt the *Fire*, inſtead of a Tower, it ſeems the more rational Expedient, to have built Vaults and Caves under Ground. The Scripture-Account is, that they did it, *to procure themſelves a Name*, and prevent their Diſperſion over the Face of the Earth; and [e] therefore ſome have looked upon it in the Nature of a *Pharos*, or Watch-Tower, which might be a Signal to them to return Home, in Caſe they wandered far off, and a Means to keep them united in a Body.

[f] THERE ſeems however to be nothing *criminal*, in attempting to perpetuate their Memory; ſomething very prudent, in marking out a Place for a general *Rendezvous*, in Caſe of any Exigence or Diſaſter: But as the Sequel of the Hiſtory, and the Puniſhment inflicted upon theſe Builders, ſeem to intimate ſomething *impious* in their Deſign; [g] a learned Divine of our own Nation has thought, that this Tower of *Babel* (whoſe Form was *Pyramidal*, as *he ſays*, and ſo reſembling Fire, whoſe Flame aſcends in a *Conical* Shape) was a Monument deſigned for the Honour of the Sun, as the moſt probable Cauſe of drying up the Waters of the Flood. "For "though the Sun, *ſays he*, was not merely a God of the Hills, yet the Heathens "thought it ſuitable to his advanced Station, to worſhip him upon Aſcents, either "*natural*; or, where the Country was flat, *artificial*; that they might approach, as "near as poſſibly they could, the Deity they adored." This certainly accounts for God's Indignation againſt theſe Builders, and why he was pleaſed to defeat their Deſign: But as there is no Foundation for this Conjecture in Scripture, and the Date of this Kind of Idolatry was not ſo early perhaps, as is pretended; [h] there is a more genuine Senſe of the Place, which may be expreſſed in theſe or ſuch like Words: "Let us build us a City, that may be the Metropolis of all the World; in which "let there be but one Kind of Government, and the Seat of that Government per-"petually in this City: Here let us build a magnificent Structure, to be the *Center* "*of Unity*, at what Diſtance ſoever we are removed: And to prevent *our being* "*ſcattered all over the Earth*, according to the Fancy of every rambling Family." [i] So that the Intent of theſe Men was to build themſelves a Place of fixed Reſidence, which might be the Head and Metropolis of all Nations; to make the World, in ſhort, all one Kingdom, and *Babel* the Royal Palace thereof.

A Deſcription of the Tower.

AND indeed, if we take a ſmall Survey of its Dimenſions, we ſhall ſoon perceive, that it was a *Palace*, or *Citadel* (if we pleaſe to term it ſo), fit for the Empire of the whole World. It was the ſame Tower (as [k] a Name of great Authority tells us) that was afterwards incloſed in the Temple of *Belus*, whoſe Foundation, [l] according to *Herodotus*, was a Square of a Furlong on each Side, *i. e.* half a Mile in the whole Circumference; and whoſe Height being equal to its Baſis, was divided into eight Towers, built one above another. *The Paſſage to go up*, ſays *Herodotus*, *was by a circular or winding Way, carried round the Outſide of the Building to the higheſt Part*; from whence it ſeems moſt likely, [m] that the whole Aſcent was by the *Benching-in*, drawn in a ſloping Line from the Bottom to the Top, eight Times round it, which would make the Appearance of eight Towers one above another. [n] This Way was ſo exceeding broad, that it afforded Space for Horſes and Carts, and other Means of Carriage to meet and turn; and the Towers which look

[b] Gen. xi. 4. [c] Thus we read *Deut.* i. 28. and ix. 1. *of Cities great, and walled, or fenced up to Heaven*: Nor was the like Expreſſion uncommon among the *Greeks*, whence the Epithets ὑψαυχὴν, *reaching to*, or *as high as Heaven*, and ἡλίβατος, *reaching to the Sun*, are frequently uſed by the Poets, to denote Things of any remarkable Height. *Wells*'s Geography. [d] Ibid. [e] *Lamy*'s Introduction. [f] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [g] *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry. [h] *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations. [i] *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry. [k] *Bochart*, in his *Phaleg.* Lib. I. [l] Ibid. [m] *Prideaux*'s Connection, Lib. I. [n] *Heylin*'s Coſmography.

look like ſo many *Stories* one above another, were each of them 75 Feet high, in which were many ſtately Rooms, with arched Roofs, ſupported by Pillars, and the uppermoſt of the Towers terminated in a ſpacious Dome.

Why God thought fit to put a Stop to it.

THIS is the Subſtance of what Antiquity tells us of that goodly Building; nor can we conceive, how ſo great a Deſign could have been *offenſive* to Almighty God, had it not been contrary to his *ſecret Decree*: But therefore he oppoſed and defeated it, becauſe he was willing that all the World ſhould be inhabited; that Men ſhould not live within the Limits of one Country only, and ſo be expoſed to perpetual Contentions, while every one would pretend to make himſelf Maſter of the neareſt and moſt fertile Lands; but that, poſſeſſing themſelves of the whole, and cultivating almoſt every Place, they might enjoy a proportionable Increaſe of the Fruits of the Earth. [o] He very well foreſaw, that *abſolute Power* and univerſal Empire was not to be truſted in any *mortal* Hand; that the *firſt* Kings would be far from being the *beſt* Men, but as they acquired a Superiority by *Fraud* and *Violence*, ſo they would not be backward to maintain it by *Oppreſſion* and *Cruelty*: And therefore, to remedy ſuch *publick* Grievances, he determined with himſelf, that there ſhould be a *Diverſity* of Governments in the World, that if the Inhabitants of any particular Place chanced to live under *Tyrannical* Power, thoſe that were no longer able to endure the *Yoke*, might flee into other Countries and Dominions, (which they could not do if the *Whole* was one entire Monarchy) and there find a Shelter from Oppreſſion. And as he knew how conducive the *bad Example* of Princes would be towards a general Corruption of Manners, he therefore took Care to provide againſt this Malady, by appointing ſeveral diſtinct Kingdoms and Forms of Government at one and the ſame Time, that if the Infection of Vice got Aſcendency, and prevailed in one Place, Virtue and Godlineſs, and whatever is honourable and Praiſe-worthy, might find a ſafe Retreat, and flouriſh in another. Thus all the Miſchiefs, which might poſſibly ariſe from an univerſal Monarchy, and all the Advantages, that do daily accrue from ſeparate and diſtinct Governments, were in the Divine Foreſight and Conſideration, when he put a ſurprizing Stop to the Building of theſe aſpiring Men, and their ambitious Schemes of Empire at once, by a Confuſion of Tongues.

SECT. II.

Of the Confuſion of LANGUAGES.

The Confuſion of Languages.

BEFORE this Confuſion happened at *Babel*, the ſacred Hiſtorian expreſſly tells us, [p] *that the whole Earth was of one Lip*, or, as we tranſlate it, *of one Language, and of one Speech*, ſince it is evident, that the Word *Lip*, both here, and in ſeveral other Places, ſignifies *Speech*, becauſe it conduces as much to the Pronunciation of Speech, as the *Tongue* itſelf. 'Tis a wrong Expoſition, therefore, when [q] ſome Interpreters would have this Paſſage to relate, not to an Unity of *Language*, as if theſe Builders ſpake all one Tongue, but to the Agreement of their *Sentiments* and Inclinations, as if they lived in perfect Peace and Concord, before they began this Enterprize; and conſequently, that the Confuſion of their Tongues does not denote any Change and Variation in their *Dialect*, which made them unintelligible to one another, but only a Spirit of *Diſſenſion* ſent among them by God, or ſtirred up by themſelves, which made them quarrel and diſagree, and thereupon deſiſt from their Work. It is not to be denied, indeed, but that [r] there are ſeveral Paſſages in Scripture, where, *to be of one Lip*, or *Language*, ſignifies the ſame, as *to be of one Mind*; but how well ſoever the Phraſe may, in other Places, bear that Conſtruction, yet here it muſt be owned, that it has no Manner of Analogy to the holy Penman's Meaning; and therefore our ſafeſt Way will be (without deviating into ſuch dangerous Paths) to follow the common Opinion, conſonant to Reaſon, and confirmed by the Teſtimony of the wiſeſt Heathens, *viz. That all Mankind, in the firſt Ages of the World, ſpoke but one Language:* But what this Language was, has been a Matter of much Controverſy; ſince there are few Nations, but what have had Vanity enough to put in their ſeveral Claims for the long *Standing* and *Antiquity*, if not the *Priority*, of their particular Tongue to every one elſe.

[s] THE

[o] *Le Clerc's* Diſſertations. [p] Gen. xi. 1. [q] Caſaub. de 4 Ling. & le Clerc, *in* Gen. xi. 1. [r] Joſh. ix. 14. 1 Kings xxii. 13. Zeph. iii. 9. Pſal. lv. 9.

Which was the first.

[s] THE *Arabians*, the *Syrians*, the *Ethiopians*, the *Armenians*, and several other Nations (as well as some *Europeans*) dispute, all in their Turns, for their respective Languages; but the *Jews* are the People, who assert the Antiquity and Excellency of *theirs*, with the greatest Warmth and Vigour. They maintain, [t] that it was immediately invented by God; that he spake it himself, for which Reason it is called HOLY; [u] that it is the only Language understood by the Angels, and wherein we can pray, and be heard with Effect; *that*, wherein the Blessed in Heaven converse; [x] *that*, wherein every Nation, at the general Resurrection, shall speak; and *that*, wherein there is a certain Propriety and Elegance, not to be equalized by any other. *The Sounds, the Words, the Expressions of this Tongue*, say they, *are not only founded upon Custom and Consent, but even Reason has no small Share therein. Every Thing, in this holy Language, is the Production of profound Wisdom; every Thing is built upon secret Reasons and hidden Mysteries; insomuch that the* Hebrew *Names denote the Distinction and Property, and very Essence of Things.*

The Pretensions of the Hebrew.

NAY, [y] several *Christian* Authors (waving these fabulous Fancies of the *Jews*) have acknowledged and maintained, that the *Hebrew* Tongue was the most ancient in the World; the very same which was spoken by *Adam* and *Noah*, and preserved in the Family of *Heber*, who formed a Society distinct from these, that had suffered in the Confusion of *Babel*, and so transmitted it *pure* to their Posterity. And for the Confirmation of this, they produce the *Names* and *Etymologies* of certain Persons and Things, which have some Kind of Affinity, and which *Moses* himself derives from the *Hebrew*.

Scarce allowable.

BUT, in the first Place, to obviate this Argument, taken from the *Etymology* of Names, [z] we may observe, that those, which seem to agree best with the *Hebrew* Tongue, are not so much *proper Names*, which Children received at their Birth, to distinguish them from all other People, as they are *Sirnames*, which were bestowed upon them, for some particular Event or Accident that befel them; that by *these* they were afterwards known to Posterity, and so, in Process of Time, they came to be looked upon as *proper Names*. Thus *Adam*, for Instance, is certainly no *proper* Name, but only bestowed on the first Man, by Way of *Pre-eminence*; for which Reason our first Father might be thus called by the *Hebrews*, though his Contemporaries called him otherwise, in like Manner, as the *Romans* might call him *Homo*, because he was formed *ex humo, out of the Ground*; though no one will say, that the Luckiness of this *Paranomasia* is any Reason, why the *Latin* should be the *Primitive* Language. In short, the *Derivation* of Words is so *precarious* and *conjectural*, and [a] the Alteration of Names, even such as are called *proper*, is so frequent and obvious, that no certain Arguments, for the Antiquity of any Language, can be deduced from hence; the most, that we can infer, is this, that these Words were, very probably, *brought into* the *Hebrew* Language, but it does not therefore follow, that the whole *Hebrew* Language descended from the same *Spring*, from whence *these* were derived.

As to its Preservation.

As for what the *Jews* vainly boast, that their Language remained, without any *Change* or *Corruption*, among the Descendants of *Heber*, this is no where attested in the sacred Records; on the contrary, they sufficiently intimate, that the Posterity of *Heber*, who continued on the other Side the *Euphrates*, spake the † *Chaldee* or *Babylonian* Tongue. This is certain of *Abraham*, that after he had lived seventy Years in *Chaldea*, by the Commandment of God he went out of it, and dwelt in *Canaan*; where, doubtless, he retained, at least for some Time, his Mother-Tongue; [b] but the long *Stay*, which he made *there*, the *Possessions* he acquired, the *Alliances* he contracted, the *Covenant* he made, and the *Credit* and Conversation he had with the People of the Country, make it more than probable, that he learned the *Canaanitish* or *Phœnician* Language himself, and transmitted it to his Posterity.

'TIS

[s] F. *Simon*'s Critical History of the Old Testament. [t], [u], [x] See several Instances hereof in *Buxtorf de Ling. Hebr. Orig.* [y] Chrys. Tom. II. Homil. 30. *in* Gen. xi. Austin. de Civit. Dei. Selden de Synod. Lib. II. c. 9. and *Bochart*'s Phaleg. Lib. I. c. 15. [z] *Le Clerc*'s Dissertations. [a] The Reader may find enough of this in the learned *Grotius*'s Annotations on *Gen.* xi. 1. and in *Huetius*'s Demonstratio Evangelica, Prop. IV. c. 13.

† I am apt to fancy, that if any one should take Pains to examine strictly the two Languages, and to take from each what may reasonably be supposed to have been *Improvements* made since their *Original*, he will find the *Chaldean* and *Hebrew* Tongue to have been at first the very same. There are evidently, even still, in the *Chaldean* Tongue, great Numbers of Words the very same with the *Hebrew*; and though there are many in both, which are very different, yet is their Import and Signification such, as may occasion us to conjecture, that they were invented, either *at* or *since* the *Confusion of* Babel. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. I. Lib. II.

[b] *Saurin*'s Dissertations.

'TIS no unreaſonable Conjecture then, that the *Hebrew* Tongue, inſtead of being the *Mother* of all, was herſelf *deſcended* from that of *Canaan*: [c] For which Reaſon, we need leſs wonder, that we find the ſacred Writers telling us ſo frequently, that ſeveral neighbouring Nations were of a Language different to the *Hebrews*, and yet not the leaſt Thing like this ſaid of the *Canaanites*. The *Chaldeans* were [d] *a Nation whoſe Language they knew not*; the *Egyptians* were [e] *Barbarians to them*; and, when *Joſeph* pretended to be *one*, [f] an Interpreter was called for between him and his Brethren: But tho' the *Hebrews* maintained ſuch frequent Correſpondences with the *Canaanites*, and tranſacted ſo much Buſineſs with them, from *Abraham* down to *Joſhua*; yet we find not the leaſt Mention of any *Interpreter* paſſing between them. Nay, ſo great was the *Affinity*, or rather *Identity* of their Languages, that we find the Prophet calling the one by the other's Name; [g] *The Land of* Judah *ſhall be a Terror unto* Egypt, *becauſe of the Counſel of the Lord of Hoſts, which he hath determined againſt it: In that Day, ſhall five Cities, in the Land of* Egypt, *ſpeak* THE LANGUAGE OF CANAAN, *i. e.* the *Hebrew* Language, *and ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts.* *The* Hebrew *whence.*

THESE are ſome Reaſons why we cannot think the *Hebrew* Tongue was † that great *Original*, ſpoken by *Adam* and other *primitive* Patriarchs, the oldeſt in the World, and the beſt preſerved in *Purity* and *Perfection*; ſince it is nothing elſe, but either a *Dialect* ariſing from the general *Confuſion*, or one that ſprung from another, which aroſe from thence.

WHAT peculiar Excellencies the *Hebrew* Tongue might have in its moſt flouriſhing Condition, at this Diſtance of Time, and by what we have left of it now, we can hardly determine: But if we may be allowed to judge of it by what we find it in the holy Scriptures, it will ſcarce, in our Opinion, deſerve ſuch *exceſſive* Commendations. *As to its Excellency.*

THE two great Perfections in any Language are *Plenty* of Words, and *Perſpicuity* of Speech: But now, he that attentively reads over the holy Scriptures, and conſults the *Hebrew Lexicons*, will ſoon be convinced, that the Language we are now ſpeaking of, has but few Words, and very few Phraſes, when he ſhall meet (eſpecially in *Hiſtorical* Books) with the ſame Thread of *Narration*, [h] and the ſame Particularities of *Stile* and Expreſſion, occurring almoſt in every Page. He will ſoon perceive, that he has no great Reaſon to boaſt of its *Perſpicuity*, when he comes to examine the various Significations of *undeclinable* Particles; how the ſame Word has not only *different*, but, many Times, *contrary* Senſes; how the *Tenſes* are almoſt all confounded in the *Verbs*; and the *Declenſions* of Nouns want a ſufficient Variety of *Inflections*, to denote their *Number*, *Gender*, and *Perſon*. Theſe Things occaſion an Ambiguity, that is almoſt inſuperable: And tho' it muſt not be denied, that the ſacred Tongue wants not its *Beauties* and *Elegancies*, (as every Language has ſomething peculiar in it) yet, whoever will take the Trouble to make the Compariſon, will find it fall infinitely ſhort either of the *Greek* Copiouſneſs, or the *Latin* Purity of Diction: And tho' ſome Reverence may be juſtly paid to it, becauſe of thoſe holy Laws, which God has been pleaſed to reveal unto us therein, yet we run into a very ignorant and ſuperſtitious *Extreme*, if we therefore conclude, that it is either the *firſt*, or *fineſt* Language in the World.

SOME indeed are apt to think, that, at the Confuſion of Tongues, God utterly extirpated the Memory of the *primitive* Language out of the Minds of Men, and ſent a new one into each *Tribe* or *Family*; but the more general Opinion is, that God [i] only diſturbed their Minds to ſuch a Degree, that they retained but a very confuſed Remembrance of the *original* Language, they ſpoke before, which made them ſpeak it quite differently then; that, by the various Inflections, Terminations, and Pronunciations of divers *Dialects*, they could no more underſtand one another, than a Perſon, who has a competent Knowledge of *Latin*, can underſtand thoſe, who ſpeak *French*, *Italian*, or *Spaniſh*, tho' theſe are Tongues which are certainly derived from it. *How this Confuſion was effected.*

[c] *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations. [d] Jerem. v. 15. [e] Pſal. cxiv. 1. [f] Gen. xlii. 23. [g] Iſa. xix. 17, 18.

† There is another Tongue in the World, which ſeems to have ſome Marks of its being the firſt Original Language of Mankind, and that is the *Chineſe*. Its Words are, even now, very few, not above twelve hundred; its *Nouns* are but three hundred and twenty-ſix; and all its Words are *Monoſyllables*. *Noah* very probably ſettled in theſe Parts, and if he did ſo, it is not unlikely that he left here one *univerſal* Language of the World, or whatever the Original of the *Chineſe* Tongue might be, there are ſeveral Properties in it, which induce us to believe, that it was actually the *firſt*, which was ever in thoſe Parts. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. I. Lib. ii.

[h] *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations. [i] *Patrick*'s Commentary.

IT is not to be thought however, that there were as many ſeveral Dialects, as there were Men, ſo that none of them underſtood one another's Speech; for this would not be to *diſperſe*, but to *deſtroy* Mankind, ſince there is no living without *Society*, nor any Society, without *mutual* Intelligence: And therefore the moſt probable Opinion is, that every *Family* had its peculiar *Dialect*, or rather, that the ſame common Dialect and Manner of Expreſſion was given to thoſe Families, whereof God intended to make *Colonies*, in the future Diſperſion.

How many new Tongues.

WHAT the Number of theſe Dialects was, or how many Languages, upon this Confuſion, began to be ſpoken, is not ſo eaſy to determine. 'Tis very probable, that they were not fewer, than there were [k] *Nations*, nor more, than there were *Families*. If then there were no more Tongues, than there were *Nations*, or Heads of Nations, their Number is eaſily counted: Seven in *Japhet*, four in *Ham*, and five in *Shem*. But if there were as many, as there were *Families* at the Confuſion, their Number cannot be known; becauſe *Moſes* does not make an Enumeration of all the Families, or Heads of Families.

THE prevailing Opinion however is, that their Number was according to the Number of Families † which is commonly eſteemed to be about [l] ſeventy; tho' this is oppoſed [m] by ſome learned Men, who have endeavoured to ſhew, that, in ſeveral Places, ſo many Families concurred in the Uſe of the ſame Speech, that ſcarce *thirty* of the *ſeventy* are diſtinct.

Effected by God.

BUT ſince it is allowed, that there was but one Tongue at firſt, [n] it can hardly be ſuppoſed, that Mankind would ever of themſelves induce ſo great an Alteration, and multiply their Languages, to the certain Extinction of that mutual Society and Converſe with each other, which even Nature itſelf puts them upon. This was an Event, which muſt neceſſarily have proceeded from an *over-ruling* Power, who being minded to form the World into *diſtinct* Bodies, could not but perceive, that, [o] as the *Unity* of one common Language knit all Mankind in one Community; ſo a *Plurality* of Languages would be the beſt Means to compel them into a Plurality of Societies.

An Objection.

BUT though the Hand of God was ſo viſible in this Tranſaction, and the ſacred Hiſtory certainly relates it as a *Miracle* wrought by Divine Omnipotence; yet [p] ſome Interpreters have not been wanting to give it another Turn. They tell us, "That "the Builders of this Tower did not long proceed in their Work, before there aroſe "*Diſcord* and *Contention* among them, by their being obliged to make Uſe of "ſeveral Things, for which they had no proper Names, and which every one "calling after his own Fancy, occaſioned great Confuſion, and Clamour, and "Wrath; ſo that they abandoned their Undertaking, and being diſperſed in the "neighbouring Countries, ſhifted their Habitation from one Place to another, as "they chanced to be ſtraitened for Room; till, in Proceſs of Time, by living at "a great Diſtance, and maintaining little or no Correſpondence with one another, "their Language (which was at firſt but one) came to be changed, according to "the *Temperature* of the Air, or the *Climate* wherein they lived." So that, according to this Solution, here is no Miracle, no Interpoſition of a Divine Power; but all is done in a ſmooth and eaſy Manner, by the Agency of ſecond *Cauſes*, and the natural Influence of Time.

Anſwered.

IT is to be conſidered however, that the ſacred *Hiſtorian* gives us another Repreſentation of the Matter, and makes Uſe of the moſt expreſſive Words imaginable to induce us to attribute the Confuſion of Languages to a ſupernatural Cauſe. For, when he tells us, that [q] *the Lord came down to ſee the City and the Tower, and ſaid, Behold*

[k] For the better underſtanding the Diſtinction between *Nations* and *Families* in Scripture, we muſt obſerve, that Families are always ſubordinate to *Nations*, as *Parts* to a *Whole*, or *Specials* to a more *General*: So that *Families* are Part of a *Nation*, and a *Nation* is an Offſpring, that contains many *Families*. Again, a Nation is ſo called, either *abſolutely*, when there is no greater Offſpring, in Regard whereof it may be a *Family*; or *reſpectively*, when, tho' it be a Nation, in Regard of thoſe Families it comprehends, yet itſelf is alſo a *Family*, in Regard of a great Generation. Theſe ſubaltern Nations are called ſometimes Tribes, and the Parts of theſe Tribes, which be of many Orders, are not always called *Families*, but ſometimes *Houſholds*. *Mede*'s Diſcourſes.

† This Notion, they think, is ſupported by the expreſs Words of *Moſes*, Deut. xxxii. 8. *when the moſt High divided to their Nations their Inheritance, when he ſeparated the Sons of* Adam, *he ſet the Bounds of the People according to the Number of the Children of* Iſrael, *i. e.* ſay they, he divided them into *ſeventy* Nations, which was the Number of the Children of *Iſrael*, when they came out of *Egypt*. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. I. Lib. ii.

[l] The *Greek* Fathers make them ſeventy-two, becauſe the *Septuagint* Verſion adds two more (*Eliſa* among the Sons of *Japhet*, and *Cainan* among the Sons of *Shem*) and the *Latin* Fathers follow it. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [m] Bochart's Phaleg. Lib. i. Buxtorf's Diatr. Sec. 54. Selden de Synedr. Lib. ii. c. 9, &c. [n] *Stillingfleet*'s Origines Sacræ. [o] *Mede*'s Diſcourſes. [p] F. *Simon*'s Critical Hiſtory of the Old Teſtament, and *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations. [q] Gen. xi. 5, &c.

Behold the People is one, and they have all one Language, and this they begin to do: Come, let us go down, and there confound the Language, that they may not underſtand one another: Though his Expreſſions be ſomewhat *figurative*, and ſuch, as ought to be underſtood in a *qualified* Senſe; yet certainly they convey this Notion to us,—— That God himſelf effected this Change and Variety of Languages; [r] for he is deſcribed coming down, and taking the Buſineſs upon him, in the very ſame *Solemnity*, as when he created the World, and brought the Deluge upon the Earth; which would be very *trifling* in the holy Penman, if a Quarrel or Difference among the Workmen had been all the Matter. Such a common Occaſion as this would never have drawn Words, of all this Weight and Energy, from any *judicious* Author; and therefore we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, that *Moſes* intended them for a proper Repreſentation of a miraculous Effect; as indeed, [s] without a Miracle, it could hardly come to paſs, that Men, who underſtood one another in forming a Project of ſo vaſt an Extent, ceaſed to do ſo, when they came to put it in Execution.

A LONG *Tract* of Time, and *Diverſity* of Cuſtoms, may contribute ſomething towards the *Alteration* of Languages: [t] They may introduce new *Words*, or enrich the old Stock with ſome particular *Phraſes*, which the Wit or Neceſſity of Man may invent; but it will be difficult to find out any Place, where mere Length of Time has turned a Language out of Uſe, and placed another in its Room. Theſe great Revolutions are not effected but by *Colonies* of Men, of different Languages, gaining a Prevalency in the Place, where they are planted; but where there is not that Diverſity of Language ſuppoſed, this interfering of a People brings little or no Alteration along with it: Nor can [u] the *Change of* Air, or *Difference* of Climates amount to any more, than a ſmall Variation in ſome Letters and Syllables, and that in the Pronunciation, rather than any Diverſity of Language. In a Word, [x] if we conſider the Time, ſince the Building of the Tower of *Babel*, not yet four thouſand Years, and the great Variety of Languages, that are at preſent in the World; if we obſerve how entirely different ſome are to others, ſo that no Art of *Etymology* can reduce them to the leaſt Likeneſs or Conformity; and yet in thoſe early Days, when the World was leſs peopled, and Navigation and Commerce not near ſo much minded, there could not be that quick Progreſſion of Languages; and if we examine the *Alterations* which ſuch Languages, as we are acquainted with, have made in two or three thouſand Years paſt, where Colonies of different People have not been imported; we ſhall find the Difference between Language and Language to be ſo very great, and the Alteration of the ſame Language, in a conſiderable Tract of Time, to be ſo very ſmall, that we ſhall be at a Loſs to conceive, whence ſo many, and ſo various Languages could have proceeded, unleſs we take in the Account of *Moſes*, which *unriddles* the whole Difficulty, and juſtly imputes them to the ſame Almighty Power, which taught our firſt Parents to ſpeak *one* Tongue in the Beginning, and, in After-ages, inſpired the Apoſtles of Jeſus Chriſt with the Gift of *many*. The very Way, in which this Multiplication of Languages was performed, (ſays [y] the learned *Bochart*) i. e. *immediately*, and without Delay, proves it the immediate Work of God, who alone can *inſtantly* effect the greateſt Purpoſes and Deſigns.

THE Confuſion of Languages was ſoon followed by a general *Diſperſion*. *Noah*, as ſome think, had, before this Diſaſter happened, divided the Land, as far as he knew it, among his three Sons; either by *Lot*, as ſome imagine, or according to the Order of their *Birth-right*, as is more probable. And now was the Time (when they could no longer continue together to any Purpoſe) for them and their Poſterity to take Poſſeſſion of it. The Deſcendants of *Japhet* (who was the eldeſt) planted themſelves in [z] the Leſſer *Aſia*, and *Europe*: The Deſcendants of *Shem* ſpread themſelves *The Diſperſion of Nations.*

[r] *Vid.* Wotton's Differt. de Confuſ. Ling. Babyl. [s] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [t] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [u] Thus *Bodin* obſerves, that the Sharpneſs of the Air is the Reaſon why the Northern People uſe Conſonants and Aſpirates ſo much, eſpecially the *Saxons*, and thoſe who live near the *Baltick* Sea. *Meth. Hiſt.* c. 9. As *R. D. Kimchi* obſerves of the *Ephraimites*, (*Judges* xii. 6.) that it was the ſame Cauſe which occaſioned their Liſping. *Stillingfleet, ibid.* [x] This is a Summary of Dr *Wotton*'s Argument; but the Reader that is minded to have farther Information in this Matter, is deſired to peruſe the whole Treatiſe, which is wrote (as he did every Thing) with a great deal of Judgment, and copious Reading. *Hoc cineri debeo.* [y] Geogr. Sacræ, Part I. Lib. I. [z] *Moſes* particularly ſets down (*Gen.* x. 12.) the Nations deſcended from the Sons, the Grandſons, and Great-Grandchildren of *Noah*. The Names of moſt of thoſe Nations being changed, many of them cannot certainly be known, but there are ſome ſtill remaining. The Names of the Sons of *Shem*, as *Elam*, *Aſſur*, *Arphaxad*, *Lud*, and *Aram*, are known in Hiſtory, where we find the *Elamites*, the *Aſſyrians*, the *Arphaxadites*, the *Lydians*, and the *Aramites*: The Sons of *Ham* gave Denominations to ſeveral Provinces; the Name of *Chus* is given in Scripture to the *Egyptians* and *Arabs*; of *Miſraim* to *Egypt*; and of *Canaan*, to the *Canaanites*: And ſeveral Nations have been called after the Sons of *Japhet*, *Madai* was the Father of the *Medes*, *Javan*

themſelves in *Syria*, *Armenia*, *Meſopotamia*, *Aſſyria*, *Media*, *Perſia*, and *India*. And to the Deſcendants of *Ham* were *Africa*, *Egypt*, *Ethiopia*, *Canaan*, and *Arabia*, aſſigned. But ſince the Number of Mankind was, at this Time, but comparatively ſmall, 'tis hardly to be imagined, that they took all the *Quarters* of the World into the firſt Diviſion; nor is it neceſſary to believe, that this *Separation* was made all at once, and at the Moment of the Confuſion of Tongues. They might depart as they thought fit; and, after having repleniſhed ſome Countries, might by Degrees ſtock others, that were contiguous, with Inhabitants from *Colonies* of their reſpective Nations.

The Wiſdom of God herein.

THUS was Mankind divided into ſeveral little *Monarchies*, under the Government of the Heads of their ſeveral Families, which obliged them to a ſtricter Diſcipline, than if the whole World had been one great Empire. For when ſo many diſtinct Societies were formed, this gave them ſeparate Intereſts, and made the Laws and Cuſtoms, the very Humour and Genius of the People ſo different from each other, as would keep them *diſtinct*. This would neceſſarily occaſion mutual Emulation and Jealouſies, to rival their Neighbours in Riches and Power; which cannot be done, without wiſe Laws, a ſtrict Diſcipline, and the Encouragement of Labour and Induſtry, of *Liberal Arts*, and all *ſocial* Virtues, and the Suppreſſion of ſuch Vices, as *weaken* Government, and *emaſculate* Mens Spirits. In a Word, the Diſperſion of Mankind, by the Confuſion of Languages, which divided them into diſtinct Societies, Kingdoms, and Commonwealths, opened a new Scene of Providence, with all the Variety of divine Wiſdom, in the Government of the World. The Judgment itſelf was miraculous, and as plain an Evidence of the divine Power, as the Deluge was; for to new-form a Mind, to eraſe all it's old Ideas of Words and Sounds, and to imprint new ones in it in an Inſtant, ſhews ſuch a ſuperior Controul over Nature, as none but the Author of Nature has. And as it ſhewed the Power of God, ſo it occaſionally made Way for the Exerciſe of many *moral*, *civil*, and *military* Virtues, neceſſary for the Proſperity and Preſervation of Mankind. It put a Stop to licentious Rule, and exorbitant Oppreſſion: It prevented an univerſal Corruption to Mens Manners; and had this good Effect in all Ages, that the World never wanted Examples of *States* and Nations, which increaſed and grew mighty, under a prudent and virtuous Government; nor of flouriſhing Kingdoms, which were ruined by Idleneſs, Luxury, and Oppreſſion, weakening and dividing them at Home, and making them an eaſy Prey to their provoked, or to their ambitious Neighbours Abroad.

SECT. III.

Of the Riſe of EMPIRES, *and State of* RELIGION.

Of the World, 1771, &c. Before Chriſt, 2233, &c.

AFTER the Diſperſion of Nations, the only Form of Government, that was in Uſe for ſome Time, was *Paternal*, [b] when Fathers of Nations were as *Kings*, and the eldeſt of Families as *Princes*; but as Mankind increaſed, and their Ambition grew higher, the Dominion, which was founded in Nature, gave Place to that which was *acquired* and eſtabliſhed by Power. *Nimrod* was the firſt, who reigned as *Sovereign* after the Flood; and by what Means he raiſed himſelf above his Brethren, (for he is ſuppoſed to be the youngeſt of all) the ſacred Hiſtorian ſeems to intimate, when he tells us, that [c] *he was a mighty Hunter before the Lord*, i. e. he was really very well ſkilled in Hunting, inſomuch that it became a Proverb, or common Way of commending a Man for his Valour and Strength, to ſay, that *he was like Nimrod, the mighty Hunter before the Lord.*

Nimrod, *the firſt King.*

How he advanced himſelf.

[d] THE Occaſion of *Nimrod*'s applying himſelf to *Hunting*, is probably conjectured to be, in order to deſtroy the wild Beaſts, which began to grow very numerous, and to infeſt very much the Coaſts, adjoining to the Nation of *Cuſh*, where the *Deſerts* of

Javan of the *Javians*, *Thiras* of the *Thracians*; his Son *Tarſis* gave his Name to the City ſo called, and *Cechim* and *Rhodanim* were the Inhabitants of *Cyprus* and *Rhodes*; which is enough to ſhew that *Moſes* did not invent what he ſaid, of the Original of Nations. *Du Pin*'s Hiſtory of the Old Teſtament. [a] *Sherlock*, of Providence. [b] Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s Hiſtory. [c] Gen. x. 9. [d] *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament.

of *Arabia* were very convenient for them to harbour in. Hereupon, having got together a Body of ſtout young Men, like himſelf, he began, by Degrees, to be a great Maſter in the Art of Hunting, and very ſucceſsful in deſtroying the Beaſts of Prey; by which Means he not only *ingratiated* himſelf with the Inhabitants of the adjoining Countries, but alſo *inured* himſelf and his Companions to undergo Fatigue and Hardſhip, and withal to manage dextrouſly ſeveral Sorts of *offenſive* Weapons.

BEING thus occaſionally [e] trained up in the Art of War, and perceiving, at length, his Skill and Strength ſufficient to act *offenſively* even againſt Men; he invaded the neighbouring Parts of the Nation of *Shem*, which fell to the Lot of the Family of *Arphaxad*; and tempted, very probably, with the extraordinary Riches and Pleaſantneſs of the Country, made himſelf Maſter of the lower Part of the Land of *Shinar*; and, in the very Place (as is ſuppoſed) where the Tower and City of *Babel* was begun, built the *Capital* City of his Kingdom. This City, which the *Greeks* and *Latins* called *Babylon*, ſtood on each Side the *Euphrates*, having Streets running from North to South, parallel with the River, and others from Eaſt to Weſt. [f] The Compaſs of the Wall, which was ſurrounded with a vaſt Ditch filled with Water, was four hundred and eighty Furlongs, that is, about ſixty Miles; the Height of it three hundred and fifty Feet, and the Breadth ſo vaſtly great, that Carts or Carriages might meet on the Top of it, and paſs by one another without Danger. Over the *Euphrates* there was a ſtately Bridge, and, at each End of the Bridge, [g] a magnificent Palace, the one of *four*, and the other of *eight* Miles Circumference; and belonging to this larger Palace were thoſe *hanging* Gardens, which had ſo celebrated a Name among the *Greeks*. They were made in the Form of a Square, of four hundred Feet on every Side, and were carried up aloft into the Air, in the Manner of ſeveral large Terraſſes, one above another, till they came up to the Height of the Walls of the City: They were ſuſtained by vaſt Arches built upon Arches, one above another, and ſtrengthen'd by a Wall on every Side, that was twenty-two Feet thick; and as they wanted no Plants or *Flowers* fit for a Garden of Pleaſure, ſo there are ſaid to have grown in them Trees, which were no leſs than eight Cubits thick in the Body, and fifty Feet in Height. But this, among other pompous Things appertaining to the City, was the Work of After-Ages, and built by *Nebuchadnezzar* to gratify his Wife *Amyitis*; who, being the Daughter of *Aſtyages*, King of *Media*, and much taken with the Mountains and woody Parts of her own Country, was deſirous of having ſomething like it in *Babylon*.

Babylon *his Capital City.*

A Deſcription of it.

† NIMROD, being thus ſettled in *Babylon*, ſoon enlarged his Dominions, and carried his Conqueſts into *Aſſyria*, where he built four Cities, whereof *Nineveh* was one, which he called after his Son, and (as ſome ſay) his Succeſſor *Ninus*, and there laid the Foundation of the *Aſſyrian* Monarchy, which governed *Aſia* for above thirteen hundred Years; until, it being diſſolved by the Death of *Sardanapalus*, (an effeminate Prince, but who, in his Deſpair, had Courage to deſtroy himſelf in a Funeral Pile at *Nineveh*) there aroſe up two Empires in its Stead, the one founded by *Arbaces*, in Scripture called *Tiglath-Pileſer*, Governor of *Media*; and the other by *Beleſis*, in Scripture called *Baladan*, Governor of *Babylon*, who were the two principal Commanders that headed the Conſpiracy, whereby the former Empire was brought to an End. They had each a diſtinct Empire; *Arbaces* fixing his Seat at *Nineveh*, and *Beleſis* at *Babylon*: And, in this Condition, Succeſſions went on, until, the Blood-Royal failing at *Babylon*, *Eſarhaddud*, then King of *Aſſyria*, and reigning at *Nineveh*, obtained *Babylon* too, and united it to the ancient *Aſſyrian* Monarchy: And thus it continued united, till *Cyrus*, having invaded *Chaldea*, taken *Babylon*, and ſlain *Belſhazzar*, (as the Scripture informs us) tranſlated this Empire, which had

The Aſſyrian *Monarchy.*

[e] *Hunting* was, in all Ages, looked upon as the *Rudiment* of War; nor is it without ſome ſuch Reaſon, that noble Families carry in their Coat of Arms (as Enſigns of their valorous Atchievements) Lions, Bears, Tygers, &c. from their killing ſuch-like fierce Creatures. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [f] *Prideaux*'s Connection. It muſt be obſerved, however, that this Compaſs of Ground was not near built; that the Houſes ſtood at a conſiderable Diſtance from each other, with Gardens and Fields interſperſed, and that *Babylon*, indeed, was a large City, rather in Scheme, than in Reality, *ibid.* [g] The *old* Palace (which was, probably, built by *Nimrod*) ſtood on the Eaſt Side of the River, and the new one (which was built by *Nebuchadnezzar*) exactly over-againſt it, on the other Side, *ibid.*

† Others are of Opinion, that, ſome Time in *Nimrod*'s Reign, *Aſſur*, one of the Deſcendants of *Shem*, led a Number of Men from *Babel*, who, under his Conduct, travelled up the *Tigris*, and, ſettling in *Aſſyria*, laid the Foundations of *Nineveh*. He governed them, as *Nimrod* did in *Babylonia*; but, after *Aſſur*'s Death, *Ninus* was the ſecond King of *Aſſyria*; who, being of an ambitious and enterprizing Spirit, engaged in the firſt War, and, having conquered *Babylonia*, in a few Years over-ran many of the Infant States of *Aſia*, and ſo, by uniting Kingdom to Kingdom, laid the Foundations of the *Aſſyrian Monarchy*. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. I. Lib. IV.

now almoſt continued ſeventeen hundred Years (either in a *larger* or *ſmaller* Extent) to the *Perſians*.

The State of Religion.

THE Succeſs which *Nimrod* met with gave Encouragement to others to attempt the ſame Thing; inſomuch that, in the Reign of *Ninus*, who was the ſecond, if not the immediate Succeſſor of *Nimrod* [h], we find *Mizraim* in *Egypt*, *Aricus* in *Arabia*, *Barzanes* in *Armenia*, *Pharnus* in *Media*, *Zoroaſter* in *Bactria*, and, almoſt in every Country of the Eaſt, Kings regularly ſettled, and poſſeſſed of their ſeveral Dominions. But this Inſtitution of *Regal Power*, how much ſoever it might tend to the Advancement of *Civil* Order and Government, had a fatal Influence upon Religion. It ſubjected the World to the Will and Pleaſure of a *few*; and as theſe *few* came to be vicious, and corrupt themſelves, it gave them an Opportunity of *eſtabliſhing Iniquity by a Law*. Mens Minds too became either *debaſed* by a Courſe of Servitude, or *elated* by Empire and Succeſs: And as they had no Religion, but what was handed down by Tradition, and the Period of their Lives was now grown comparatively ſhort; the Inſtructions of their Anceſtors began to be forgot, their Notions of an *inviſible* God became obſcure, and thereupon Wickedneſs and Idolatry (as we ſhall ſhew hereafter) made large Advances.

AMONG the ſeven Precepts, that were given to *Noah* and his Sons, there was an expreſs Prohibition of *ſtrange Worſhip*, or the worſhipping of Idols; [i] and yet we find *Belus* (the ſame, as ſome think, with *Nimrod*) cauſing himſelf, in his Lifetime, to be called a *God*, and his Son *Ninus* (if the Succeſſion was ſo) commanding the Exerciſe of *Idolatry*, very probably, in Honour of his departed Father: So that, what through the *Ignorance* of Mens Minds, the *Slavery* of their Paſſions, the *Defect of Tradition*, and the *bad Example* of ſuch, as had Power in their Hands, the Knowledge and Worſhip of the one Supreme God was in Danger of being utterly loſt, when they came to [k] *change the Truth of God into a Lye*, (as the Apoſtle expreſſes it) *and worſhipped and ſerved the Creature, more than the Creator, who is bleſſed for ever. Amen.*

DURING this Period, however, God did not leave himſelf without a Witneſs. Immediately after the Flood, the Covenant, which he made with our firſt Parents, he renewed to *Noah*: The Law of *Grace*, which had been given to them, was now confirmed to this eminent Perſon, and in him to the reſt of Mankind. The *Jews* are poſitive, as to the *ſeven* Precepts above-mentioned, which they call a compleat *Compendium* of the Moral Law, that they were both enjoined, and left upon Record for *Noah*'s Poſterity to obſerve; and [l] the *Chriſtians* imagine, that a farther Diſcovery of the *Meſſias* was certainly made to the *Patriarch*, and by him to his Deſcendants, though the ſacred Hiſtory ſays nothing of it. What it teaches us of Certainty is, that there were two poſitive Inſtitutions at this Time; a *Permiſſion* to eat Fleſh, and a *Prohibition* to eat the Blood thereof, appointed by God, which we come now, with their Reaſons and Obligations, to conſider.

Fleſh allowed to be eat;

I. THE former of theſe Inſtitutions is introduced with this Preface, [m] *And God bleſſed Noah, and his Sons, and ſaid unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and repleniſh the Earth, and behold every moving Thing, that liveth, ſhall be Meat for you, even as the green Herb, have I given you all Things, and into your Hand are they delivered.* Here plainly the Diſcrimination of Meats is taken away, and Fleſh is granted to be eaten, with the ſame Freedom, that the Fruits of the Earth were eat before; and there was a Neceſſity for it, becauſe the Fruits of the Earth were, at this Time, deſtroyed by the Flood: But whether Fleſh was permitted to be eaten before the Flood, has been a Queſtion [n] among the Learned, though not ſo very difficult to determine. That our firſt Parents, in their State of Integrity, had not the Liberty of eating Fleſh, is very evident, becauſe they were limited by that Injunction, which appoints Herbs and Fruits for their Meats; [o] *Behold I have given you every Herb, bearing Seed, which is upon the Face of the Earth, and every Tree, in the which is the Fruit of a Tree yielding Seed, to you it ſhall be for Meat.* Nay, ſo far was Mankind from being indulged the Liberty of eating Fleſh, at that Time, that we find *the Beaſts of the Field*, Creatures, that in their own Natures are ravenous, *and the Fowl of*

but not before the Flood.

[h] *Raleigh*'s Hiſtory. [i] Ibid. [k] Rom. i. 25. [l] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I.
[m] Gen. ix. 1, &c. [n] The *Jews* generally ſay, that People, before the Deluge, fed only upon what the Earth produced, and moſt of the Chriſtian Fathers hold this to be a Divine Inſtitution; but *Chryſoſtom* and *Theodoret* ſeem to be of another Judgment. The Moderns are divided; *Luther*, *Peter Martyr*, *Fr. Junius*, and *Muſculus* hold, that Fleſh was not eaten, till after the Flood. *Calvin*, *Rivet*, *Paræus*, and other Reformed Divines are of Opinion, that the eating of Fleſh, as well as Herbs, was free from the very Creation; but in this they ſeem to be miſtaken. *Edwards*, ibid. [o] Gen. i. 29, 30.

of the Air, and every Thing that creeped upon the Earth, under the ſame Reſtraint and Limitation; having nothing allowed them for their Food, but the *Herbage* of the Ground; becauſe it was the *Almighty*'s Will, [p] that, in the State of Innocence, no Violence ſhould be committed, nor any one's Life maintained, at the Loſs and Forfeiture of another's.

THIS was the *Original* Order and Appointment; and ſo it continued after the Fall: For we can hardly ſuppoſe, that God would allow a greater Privilege to Man, after his Tranſgreſſion, than he did before. On the contrary we find him [q] *curſing the Ground* for Man's Sake, and telling him expreſsly, *that in Sorrow he ſhould eat of it all the Days of his Life*; and tho' it ſhould bring forth Thorns and Thiſtles to him, yet here the *Reſtriction* is ſtill continued, *of the Herb of the Field thou ſhalt eat.* Now this is far from implying a *Permiſſion* to make Uſe of living Creatures for that Purpoſe; nor can we conceive how a Permiſſion of this Nature had been inconſiſtent with God's Intention of puniſhing him, by impoveriſhing the Earth: For had he allowed Man free Liberty to make Uſe of what he pleaſed, he might eaſily have made himſelf an Amends for the *Unfruitfulneſs* of the Earth, by the many Things which Nature had provided for him. The firſt Permiſſion therefore of this Kind was given to *Noah* and his Poſterity; and very likely for this Reaſon, [r] becauſe the Earth was corrupted by the Deluge and Saltneſs of the Seas, inſomuch that the Plants and Herbs, and all the Fruits thereof were much endamaged. The natural Virtue of Vegetables was impaired, and therefore they could not yield ſo wholeſome and ſolid a Nouriſhment, as they did before. But this Part of the Reaſon has been rejected by ſome, who have made it a Queſtion, whether the eating of Fleſh be not ſtill *injurious*, and a total Abſtinence from it, and living on Herbs, conducive to the Health of human Bodies; ſince thoſe who have abſtained, have been obſerved to ſurpaſs other People in the Length of their Lives: And therefore they rather imagine, that God indulged *Noah* and his Sons in this Particular, not ſo much out of Kindneſs, as [s] *becauſe of the Hardneſs of their Hearts*; in the ſame Manner, as he is ſaid to have granted the Children of *Iſrael* a Toleration of *Divorcement*, viz. becauſe he ſaw that their Appetites were ſo eagerly ſet upon eating of Fleſh, (which, very likely, they were accuſtomed to, during their Stay in the Ark) that they would not be ſatisfied without it. And therefore he gave them a free Licence to eat it, but, at the ſame Time, took Occaſion from thence, to accompliſh his Will and Determination of having the *Period* of human Life made much *ſhorter.*

The Reaſon hereof.

2. THE other Inſtitution, which *Noah* received, is delivered in theſe Words, [t] *but the Fleſh, with the Life thereof, which is the Blood thereof, ſhall ye not eat.* This is a *poſitive* Precept againſt eating of Blood, and [u] what is extenſive to all Mankind, ſince it was given to *Noah* and his Children, from whence all Mankind have ever ſince derived their *Original:* But then the Queſtion is, in what Senſe it is to be underſtood.

Blood *prohibited.*

SOME are of Opinion, that this Prohibition relates only to Things *ſtrangled*, and *ſuch as died of themſelves*, and ſo is the ſame with what [x] was enacted in the *Moſaick* Law, and confirmed afterwards [y] by the Determination of the Council at *Jeruſalem*, under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation. This Interpretation indeed, (if we take it ſeparately) agrees pretty well with the Senſe of the Text: But becauſe the Law, which relates to things that *died of themſelves*, (and the Reaſon is the ſame as to Things ſtrangled) permitted Strangers, tho' it inhibited *Iſraelites* themſelves, to eat them; [z] *Ye ſhall not eat of any Thing, that dieth of itſelf, thou ſhalt give it to the Stranger, that is in thy Gates, or ſell it to an Alien, that he may eat it*; it is manifeſt, that this

Some Opinions concerning it.

[p] This Notion the *Pagan* Poets and Philoſophers had received: For *Ovid*, in his Deſcription of thoſe Times, lets us know, that they fed on no Fleſh, but lived altogether on Herbs, when he introduces *Pythagoras*, a great Enquirer into the ancient and primitive Practices of the World, expreſſing himſelf in this Manner:

At vetus illa ætas, cui fecimus AUREA nomen,
Fœtibus arboreis, &, quas humus educat, herbis
Fortunata fuit; nec polluit ora cruore.
Tunc & aves tutæ movêre per aëra pennas,
Et lepus impavidus mediis erravit in arvis,
Nec ſua credulitas piſcem ſuſpenderat hamo.
Cuncta ſine inſidiis nullamque timentia fraudem,
Plenaque pacis erant. ——— OVID. Metam. Lib. xv.

[q] Gen. iii. 17, 18. [r] Curcellæi Diatriba. [s] *Edward*'s Survey, Vol. I. [t] Lev. xvii. 14. [u] Matth. xix. 8. [x] Acts xv. 20. [y] Gen. ix. 4. [z] Deut. xiv. 21.

this Precept given to *Noah* does not relate to Things ſtrangled, nor is it a Prohibition of Blood in that Senſe; ſince we cannot ſuppoſe, that the Divine Laws, in Contradiction to themſelves, can permit and forbid the ſame Things to the ſame Perſons. *Strangers*, we ſee, might freely, and without any Scruple, eat Things that were *ſtrangled, or torn, or that died of themſelves*; but had theſe been comprehended under the Law given by God to *Noah*, they, no more than the *Iſraelites*, could have eat them; becauſe they, as well as the *Iſraelites*, were obliged to the Obſervation of whatever Precepts *Noah* delivered to his Poſterity. Nay, the very *Iſraelites* themſelves would not allow any Strangers to continue in their Coaſts, unleſs they bound themſelves to the Obſervation of the ſeven Precepts delivered to *Noah*, (whereof Abſtinence from Blood was one) and therefore this Abſtinence *from Blood*, which was a *moral* Precept, could, in no Senſe, be the ſame with that Abſtinence from *Things ſtrangled*, &c. to which the *Iſraelites* alone were obliged, as being no more than a *Ceremonial* Law.

[a] OTHERS imagine, that this Injunction, given to *Noah*, did not prohibit the eating of Blood, but only the eating of raw Fleſh, while it was yet *warm*, and had the Blood and Life in it: And to ſtrengthen this Interpretation, they pretend that it was a common Practice, among the old *Giants* before the Flood, to tear Creatures in pieces, and eat them alive; and that, in Oppoſition to this Practice, this Prohibition was given. But, beſides that we have no Notice of any ſuch barbarous Cuſtom, nor any Prohibition of the like Nature and Import ocurring in the whole Book of God; it will be no eaſy Matter to conceive, why, among the few Precepts, which God gave to *Noah*, any Thing ſhould be found, that ſeems vain and ſuperfluous, as the Prohibition of a Thing abhorrent to human Nature, ſuch as eating the Fleſh of Creatures reeking in Blood, or their Limbs cut off, while they themſelves were yet alive, moſt certainly is.

The right Meaning of it.

AND therefore the vulgar Interpretation is certainly the trueſt, which refers the Command to *mere Blood*, ſeparate from the Fleſh, and dreſſed into Food, as it ſeems to agree beſt with the Reaſons, God gives for his Prohibition of it; [b] *The Blood, which is the Life of the Creature, you ſhall not eat, and ſurely your Blood of your Lives will I require at the Hand of every one that ſpilleth it:* As much as if he had ſaid, "I will not allow you to eat the Blood of Beaſts, leſt it make you ſavage and, "cruel; leſt you learn thereby to delight in human Blood, and come in Time to "murther one another, which is a Crime that my Soul abhors, and what I will not "fail ſeverely to puniſh: And therefore you muſt totally abſtain from Blood, [c] which, "being the *Vehicle*, or chief Inſtrument of Life, is properly and ſignificantly uſed "for making Atonement for *Souls*. It was wholly deſigned for the Purpoſe of "*Expiation*; it was appointed and appropriated to the ſacred Uſe of the Altar; and, "for this Reaſon, ought not to be employed in any common Way." This is a plain Senſe of the Words: And that it is their true Senſe, we have this farther Preſumption to believe, that, [d] in thoſe very Places of the *Moſaic* Law, where the eating of Blood is, without all Controverſy, forbidden, there is the ſame Reaſon, expreſſed in the very ſame Words, given for it, that there is for this Precept given to *Noah*, viz. *becauſe the Soul of the Fleſh is in the Blood*; which we perſuade ourſelves would hardly have been done, had not the Scope and Deſign of all theſe Places been one and the ſame. In this Senſe [e] moſt of the *beſt* Expounders of the Law, and [f] all the *Primitive* Fathers of the Church, have underſtood this Precept; nor has it any Way loſt its Force, becauſe ſome *later* Ages have brought it into Diſuſe. Human Laws may be vacated indeed by contrary Cuſtoms, but it is not ſo with the Laws of God: They, when once made, are of eternal Obligation, unleſs ſome plain Declaration of his Will come and ſet us free: But ſo far are we from having any Relaxation in this Caſe, that, in the Law, which he gave to his *Choſen People*, not many Years after, he ſtrictly enjoins this Abſtinence from Blood; and, in the laſt Revelation of his Will,

[a] *Maimonides*, and *Selden*, de Jure Nat. & Gentium. [b] Gen. ix. 4, 5. [c] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I.
[d] Lev. xvii. 11, 14. [e] *Arias Montanus vertit*, tantum Carnem in animâ ejus, ſanguine ipſius, non comedetis. *Vulgata*, excepto, quod carnem cum ſanguine non comedetis. *LXX Interpreters*, Πλὴν Κρέας ἐν αἵματι ψυχῆς οὐ φάγεσθε. *Joſephus*. Χωρὶς αἵματος, ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή. *Eodem modo tranſtulerunt recentiores, unde conſtat ex Idiomatis Hebraici peritiſſimorum Interpretum mente, hic ſanguinis eſum prohiberi.* Curcellæus, de Eſu Sanguinis.
[f] Idem *profert univerſæ Eccleſiæ Chriſtianæ de improbando Eſu ſanguinis conſenſum*, pag. 975, *ubi Concilii Conſtantinopolitani Decretum hoc occurrit*, Sacra Scriptura nobis præcipit, ut abſtineamus à ſanguine, à ſuffocato, & fornicatione: Meritò igitur damnamus eos, qui cujuſcunque animalis ſanguinem arte aliquâ condiunt, & ſic comedunt. Qui hoc fecerit Clericus, deponatur, Laicus, excommunicetur. Idem *putat, conſuetudinem illam edendi ſanguinem irrepſiſſe paulatim in Eccleſiam Latinam, cùm Populi ſeptentrionales, ſanguinis Eſu aſſueti, Chriſtianam Religionem amplexi ſunt*, pag. 976.

Will, which he made by Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, he recommends it, as a Thing neceſſary, to the whole Church of Believers.

An Objection.

WE readily acknowledge, that [g] *the Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt*; that [h] *Meat commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat, are we the better, neither if we eat not, are we the worſe*; that, [i] *what goeth into the Mouth defileth not the Man*, and therefore we are ordered, [k] *whatever is ſold in the Shambles, that to eat, aſking no Queſtion for Conſcience-ſake.* [l] *To the pure, all Things are pure*; and therefore [m] *to command us to abſtain from Meats, which God has created to be received with Thankſgiving*, is beguiling us of our Chriſtian Liberty, and *impoſing upon us the Doctrine of Devils.*

Anſwered.

THIS is the full Force of all the Objections, that ariſe from Scripture; and to give them a proper Solution, we muſt conſider, that theſe and ſuch like Expreſſions are not to be taken ſo *univerſally*, as to admit of no Exception; nor can any ſuch general Declarations diſannul a particular Law, that was made before: On the contrary, *general* Rules are to be expounded according to the Reſtriction, that is laid upon them by *particular* Precepts, rather than that theſe *Particulars* ſhould loſe their Obligation.

WHEN therefore our bleſſed Saviour tells his Diſciples, that *not that which goeth into the Mouth defileth the Man*, he has no Reſpect to the Meats, which the Law accounts clean or unclean, nor any Deſign to give them a Permiſſion to eat Blood, or any other Thing prohibited by the Law; but only to inſtruct them in this, (as [n] the Occaſion of his Diſcourſe plainly ſhews) that there was not all that Religion, or Profanation of Religion, (as the *Phariſees* pretended) in obſerving, or not obſerving the *Traditions of the Elders*, by eating with *waſhed* or *unwaſhed* Hands; becauſe theſe Traditions were *Innovations* in Religion, and ſuch as were of Man's Inſtitution, and not of God's.

St *PAUL* himſelf was one of the Council of *Jeruſalem*, when the Prohibition of Blood was ratified by the [o] *Spirit of God*, and impoſed upon the *Gentiles*, that were converted to the Faith of Chriſt; and therefore we can hardly think, that, in his Epiſtles, which were written not many Years after, he ſhould go about to aboliſh the Obſervation of any of thoſe Precepts, which, after mature Deliberation, were enacted by a *General Aſſembly* of the Church. When therefore he tells us, that *the Kingdom of God*, i. e. the Chriſtian Religion, conſiſteth *not in Meat and Drink*, and that *Meat commendeth us not to God*, he muſt be underſtood in a *Comparative* Senſe, *viz.* that it neither conſiſts in, nor commendeth us, ſo much as Holineſs and Purity of Life; when he gives us Permiſſion *to eat whatever is ſold in the Shambles*, becauſe *to the pure all Things are pure*, there muſt be this reſtraining Clauſe, *in Caſe there be no particular Statute to the contrary*; for where there is, all the Sanctity in the World will not give a Man a *Toleration* to break it: And laſtly, when he complains of ſome Mens *commanding us to abſtain from certain Meats*, as an Infringement upon our Chriſtian Liberty, and a Branch *of the Doctrine of Devils*; the Meats, which they forbad, muſt be ſuppoſed lawful in their Kind, and under no divine Prohibition; otherwiſe, we bring the Apoſtles, who inhibited the Uſe of Blood, under the Imputation of defrauding us of our *Liberty*, and being guilty of the ſame *Diabolical Doctrine.*

The Concluſion of the Queſtion.

THE Truth is, when we find St *Paul* talking of *Meats* at any Time, we muſt remember, that there are two Sorts of People he has a more eſpecial Regard to. [p] The one he calls *weaker Brethren*, who, being newly converted from *Judaiſm*, were not ſo far become *Chriſtians*, but that they thought themſelves bound by the *Ceremonial* Law, which enjoins a Diſtinction of Meats: The other were *ſtronger*, and, being grown up in the Knowledge of their Chriſtian Liberty, were fully perſuaded, that the Ceremonies of the Law, and conſequently the Difference of Meats, was aboliſhed and taken away: But, becauſe the *ſtronger* gave Offence to the *weaker*, by eating ſuch Things *publickly*, as the other thought forbidden, the Apoſtle addreſſes himſelf to both, in order to cure the *Prejudice* of the one, and the *Indiſcretion* of the other: This, however, is an Argument quite different to the Diſpute now before us; only if it be ſuppoſed to have any Relation to it, it certainly makes againſt thoſe, who plead for the *Uſe of Blood.* For, put the Caſe that the Thing is indifferent in itſelf, yet ſince there are many Chriſtians, who look upon it as a manifeſt Violation of an

[g] Rom. xiv. 17. [h] 1 Cor. viii. 8. [i] Matth. xv. 11. [k] 1 Cor. x. 25. [l] Tit. i. 15. [m] 1 Tim. iv. 1, 3. [n] Matth. xv. 2. [o] Acts xv. 28. [p] *South's* Sermons, Vol. III.

Apoſtolick Command, thoſe, [q] *who deſire to walk charitably*, ſhould take *great Heed how they grieve their Brethren with their Meat.* The Abſtainers from this Kind of Food, 'tis certain, give no Offence to any Body: At the moſt, if the Thing be lawful, they do but abridge themſelves a little in their Chriſtian Liberty, and 'tis the Apoſtle's Injunction, [r] *to take Heed, leſt by any Means this Liberty of ours become a Stumbling-block to them that are weak.* But thoſe, that allow themſelves in the Practice of eating it, have very great Reaſon to fear, leſt, [s] beſides the Miſchiefs of a very *pernicious* Diet, they run the Danger of offending their *weaker Brother*, [t] *for whom Chriſt died*; and therefore in this, (if this be a Caſe of an indifferent Nature) the Law of Charity and *Chriſtian* Compaſſion muſt take Place, and that noble Reſolution of the Apoſtle is to be our Pattern; [u] *Wherefore if Meat make my Brother to offend, I will eat no Fleſh* (much more no Blood) *while the World ſtandeth, leſt I make my Brother to offend.*

[q] Rom. xiv. 15. [r] 1 Cor. viii. 9. [s] Si medicis credimus, omnis ſanguis pravum ſuppeditat alimentum: Difficilis eſt concoctu, ideòque obſtructiones parit, quæ maximæ partis morborum, quibus laboramus, ſunt cauſæ: Unde *Galenus* ſuadet eum vitandum in cibo. Speciatim de ſanguine Taurino ſeu bubulo perhibent, eum, ſi calidus aliquâ copiâ potetur, eſſe mortiferum: Cujus rei Exempla aliquot nobis ſuppeditant Hiſtoriæ. *Pſammenitus, Egypti* Rex, *à Cambyſe* captus, epoto Tauri Sanguine, confeſtim obiit, *Herod.* Lib. III. c. 15. & de *Themiſtocle Athenienſi* ſcribit *Plutarchus*, in ejus vitâ, ipſum, ut celebris erat Fama, ſacris operatum, hauſto ſanguine Taurino, vitam cum morte commutâſſe. Non parit quidem tam pernicioſos effectus, cum coctus comedatur; veruntamen, quod venenatæ eſt Naturæ nunquam poteſt, ſine aliquâ Noxâ, aſſumi; Et fortè hæc Inſalubritas eſt Cauſa, cur Deus, hominum valetudini cavere volens, omnem eis Sanguinem Eſum prohibuerit. *Curcellæus, de Eſu Sanguinis.* [t] 1 Cor. viii. 11. [u] Ver. 13.

CHAP. III.

The moſt memorable Tranſactions from the Call of ABRAHAM, *to the Giving of the* LAW.

Of the World, 2083, &c. Before Chriſt, 1921, &c.

IT may ſeem a little ſtrange to us at firſt, why God, who is the common Father of all, ſhould chuſe but one Family out of the World *to place his Name among them*, and, at the ſame Time, ſeem to reject, or at leaſt but very little to regard, the reſt of Mankind. [a] But, when it is conſidered, that this was the only competent Means to ſtop the ſpreading of Idolatry, and to reſtore the Worſhip of the True God, we ſhall ſoon be induced to confeſs, that it was a glorious Inſtance of Divine Wiſdom and Providence.

Why God ſelected one Family.

NOW Experience had proved before, that neither the *Creation* of the World, nor the univerſal *Deluge*, nor the *Confuſion* of Tongues, could preſerve the Belief of the one Supreme God, the Maker and Governor of all Things; that the *New* World was as univerſally over-run with *Polytheiſm* and *Idolatry*, as the *Old* one was with *Violence*; and that the very Diſperſion of Mankind, and their Diviſion into diſtinct Kingdoms and Societies, (which might be a Remedy againſt ſome Inconveniencies) had probably occaſioned a *Multiplicity* of Gods, while every Nation deſired a God, as well as a King, of their own, to protect and defend them. There was therefore a Neceſſity for the Divine Wiſdom to find out ſome other Means, to convince the World of the Power and Providence of one Supreme God: And this we can hardly imagine could have been done in a more effectual Manner, than by ſelecting a *Family*, leaſt of all infected with Idolatry, and therefore moſt of all deſerving his Favour, and making of them a *peculiar* People, by planting them in a particular Country, and that with ſuch a *Series* of Miracles, as were an undeniable Evidence of a Divine Power; by giving them ſuch a Body of Laws, both for Worſhip, Polity, and Converſation, as were a plain Teſtimony of a Divine Wiſdom; governing them by Men appointed by God; directing them, in all their Affairs, by Divine *Oracles* and Prophets; bleſſing them with remarkable Succeſſes, when they adhered to the Worſhip of God; and purſuing them with as remarkable Judgments, when they forſook him, and went aſtray after other Gods, the Gods of the Countries, wherein they

[a] *Sherlock*, of Providence.

they lived. This was a proper Means to put a Stop to the Growth of Idolatry, as it was a visible Proof of a *divine Being*, excelling all those *fictitious* Deities, which other Nations adored; and gave sufficient Notice to the World of the Power of the God of *Israel*, since none could save or deliver, none could punish or afflict in a Manner any Way comparable to him. This, in some Measure, was God's Design in selecting the Family of *Abraham*; and with this *Epocha* the History of the *Jews*, as a *distinct* Nation, properly begins.

ABRAHAM, [b] according to the best Computation, was born in the forty-third Year of the Reign of *Ninus*, about 292 Years after the Deluge; at a Time, when the World was over-run with *Idolatry*, and in a Place [c], which was, as it were, the *Center* of it; [d] where Fire was worshipped as a God, or rather as a Sign and Symbol of the Sun, which, in those Days, when the Knowledge of the True God came to be obliterated, was their first and most renowned *Deity*. Whether *Abraham* was infected with the same Impiety, has been a Question among the Learned: There is a Passage, in *Joshua*'s Speech to the People, which may bear but a bad Construction; [e] *Your Fathers dwelt on the other Side of the Flood*, i. e. of the River *Euphrates*, *in old Time, even Terah the Father of Abraham, and the Father of Nachor, and they served other Gods:* But as *Abraham* is not excepted in the Text, so neither is he necessarily included; and therefore God's commanding him to leave his Country, and his Kindred, and his Father's House, and his ready Compliance with that Command, is no mean Reason to make us believe, that he was *one*, (though perhaps the only one in the Family) who had preserved himself from all idolatrous Worship. And to this Purpose the *Jewish* Doctors give us a long Account, how he not only preserved his own Integrity, but endeavoured to make others *Proselytes* to the true Faith; that he warmly maintained the *Unity* of the Godhead, and declaimed with Vigour against Idolatry and *Polytheism*; that he he wrote a *Book* against the Worship of false Gods, and left it as a Legacy to his Son *Isaac*; that he employed his Hospitality for the Advancement of true Religion, and made it his *Aphorism* to those that he entertained, *that there is but one God in the World*. Hereupon, he being accused to the King, as an Enemy to the *Guardian God* of the Country, was cast into the Fire, in order to be a Victim to the *Idol*, he refused to adore; [f] but God delivered him by a Miracle from the Heat of the Flames, and gave him the *Honour* of a *Martyrdom*, without suffering the *Torments* of it.

Abraham's Birth and Character.

No Idolater.

HOWEVER this be, we cannot but suppose, that he was either a Person of extraordinary Piety and Virtue, or, if he were an *Idolater*, not very hard to be cured; since God thought him the fittest Person to reveal himself to, and to enter into Covenant with; [g] *I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generation, for an everlasting Covenant*. And in this Covenant, as God engages, not only to be an Almighty Helper and Assistant to him in all his Undertakings, but [h] to give him (*i. e.* his Posterity) the Land of *Canaan* in due Time; to multiply his Race exceedingly, *even as the Stars in Heaven*; and to *bless all Nations of the Earth in his Seed*, which (as [i] the Apostle expounds it) *is Christ:* So *Abraham* and his Race were obliged to renounce Idolatry, and to behave themselves answerably to such bountiful Promises. For, as God had promised *to be their God*; so they, by Virtue of this Covenant, undertook to be *his People*, to deport themselves, as such, in all the Actions of their Lives, and to do nothing unworthy this singular Honour and Favour conferred on them. This is summed up in these Words; [k] *Walk before me*,

God's Covenant with him.

[b] *Vid.* Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s Reasons for it, in his History of the World. [c] *Ur*, in the *Hebrew* Language, signifies *Fire* or *Light*, and was very probably so called, for the same Reason that a City, afterwards consecrated to the Sun, was called *Heliopolis*. *Saurin*'s Dissertations. It was situated in the Eastern Part of *Mesopotamia*, which was some Time (as appears from *Acts* vii. 2, 4.) included under the Name of *Chaldea*; and perhaps the Country round about *Ur* was the first of all called, *The Land of the Chaldees*. *Wells*'s Geography. [d] The *Chaldeans* formerly used to carry about Fire, which was their God, to fight with the Divinities of other Countries, to the End that those, who got the better in the Conflict, might be esteemed the *true* God. The Gods of Gold, Silver, Wood, and Stone, were easily consumed by the Fire; but, at last, a Priest of *Canope* found out this Stratagem. The *Egyptians* have large earthen Vessels, full of little Holes on every Side, wherein they strain off, and purify the Waters of the *Nile*; he therefore took one of these Vessels, stopped up the Holes with Wax, and so filling it with Water, and setting an Head upon it, he pretended it to be their God. The *Chaldeans* kindled a Fire about the Vessel, that these two Deities might combat together: But, the Wax immediately melting, the Water issued out and extinguished the Fire, and so the Priest of *Canope* obtained the Victory. *Ruffin. Hist. Eccles.* Lib. II. c. 26. [e] Josh. xxiv. 2. [f] *Josephus* says much the same Thing, with the *Rabbins*, concerning the miraculous Deliverance of *Abraham*. Antiq. Lib. I. c. 8. The Author of the *Vulgate* makes the *Levites*, when solemnly assembled, and speaking to God, say, *Thou art the Lord, that chose Abraham, and delivered him from the Fire of the Chaldeans*. *Vid. Vulgate* in 2 Esdras ix. 7. And, to this very Day, 'tis a Prayer, which the *Latin* Church makes to God for dying Persons, *that he would deliver them from Hell-fire, as he delivered Abraham from that of the Chaldeans*, Cornel. à Lapid. xi. 13.

[g] Gen. xvii. 7. [h] Ibid. *ver.* 8. [i] Gal. iii. 16. [k] Gen. xvii. 1.

me, and be thou perfect; for *to walk before God* implies, that thoſe, who do ſo, conſider that they are in God's *Preſence*, and therefore do nothing, but what is pleaſing to him; which is the higheſt *Perfection* Man is capable of attaining in this Life.

Circumciſion firſt among the Jews.

THUS was God graciouſly pleaſed to enter into Covenant with *Abraham*; and, for the *Seal* and *Confirmation* thereof, he appointed the Rite of *Circumciſion*. Circumciſion was the cutting off the Foreſkin of the Member, which is the Inſtrument of Generation, of every Male, that was the Offſpring of *Abraham*: But here a Queſtion will ariſe, whether God *originally* appointed this Rite, or only made it a Sign of his Covenant, when it was in Uſe in other Nations before; ſince ſome learned Men of late have maintained, that the *Jews* borrowed it from the *Egyptians*, and not the *Egyptians* from the *Jews*. There is a Paſſage indeed [l] in *Herodotus*, that ſeems to give ſome Countenance to this Opinion, where he tells us, "That the People of "*Colchis* and the *Egyptians* were the only Nations, that were circumciſed *from the* "*Beginning*; and that the *Syrians* and *Phœnicians*, who lived in *Paleſtine*, acknow-"ledged, they borrowed this Rite from them." But here the Hiſtorian is leſs to be blamed, for having run into an Error; [m] ſince the *Egyptians* were a People naturally ſo vain, and conceited of their Antiquity, that they choſe rather to impoſe upon him by a falſe *Information*, than confeſs that they received Circumciſion from any other People: As they manifeſtly did deceive him in the other Part of the Account, when they told him, that the Inhabitants of *Paleſtine* (whom he calls *Syrians* and *Phœnicians*) confeſſed they received Circumciſion from the *Egyptians*; whereas there were no Inhabitants in *Paleſtine* circumciſed, but the *Jews*, and theſe always profeſſed they received it directly from *Abraham*.

Inſtituted by God.

AND indeed, if we once ſet ourſelves to conſider, [n] of what a ſingular Nature this *Ceremony* is, *painful*, if not *indecent*, in thoſe of Maturity; and to ſuch as live in hot Countries, extremely *inconvenient*, if not *dangerous*; a *Ceremony*, wherein we can perceive no Footſteps of human *Invention*, as having no viſible Profit attending it; we cannot but conclude, that Mankind would never have put ſuch a *Severity* upon themſelves, unleſs they had been directed by a Divine Command. And for this Reaſon ſome have ſuppoſed, that this Ordinance of Circumciſion (as well as the Command of ſacrificing his Son) was impoſed upon *Abraham*, as a Trial of his Faith and Obedience; and that, to magnify his Triumph in this Particular, the Holy Ghoſt calls upon us to take Notice, that [o] *Abraham was ninety Years old and nine, when he was circumciſed in the Fleſh of his Foreſkin.*

When, and how, derived to other Nations.

AT what Time the Rite of Circumciſion came firſt among the *Egyptians*, 'tis not ſo eaſy to determine: But there is a Paſſage in the Prophet, which, if taken in a *literal* Senſe, is far from encouraging any high Pretenſions to Antiquity; [p] *Behold the Days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will puniſh all them which are circumciſed, with the uncircumciſed, Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the Children of Ammon, and Moab,* &c. *for all theſe Nations are uncircumciſed, and all the Houſe of Iſrael are circumciſed in the Heart.* The plain Senſe of which Words is this,—that God would viſit the Houſe of *Iſrael*, like the ſtrange Nations, becauſe, as the latter were uncircumciſed *in the Fleſh*, ſo the former were *in the Heart*. Not but that, in the Time of *Jeremiah*, the Rite of Circumciſion was known and practiſed among the *Egyptians*, as well as among other People; but then it was not ſo common and general, nor was it at all uſed any where, till long after *Abraham*'s Days: And therefore, to do all poſſible Juſtice to theſe immoderate Lovers of Antiquity, the moſt rational Conjecture is, [q] that the *Iſhmaelites* received it from the Deſcendants of *Abraham*; the *Arabians* received it from the *Iſhmaelites*; the *Egyptians* received it from the *Arabians*, or perhaps from *Abraham*'s Children by *Keturah*; and from the *Egyptians* the People of *Colchis*, knowing themſelves to be of *Egyptian* Extract, embraced it, in Imitation of their famous Anceſtors. But, whenever it came among theſe Nations, [r] the Reaſon of the *Jewiſh* Circumciſion was not the ſame with that of the *Egyptians*, and therefore the Circumciſion itſelf muſt not be accounted the ſame.

The Reaſons of Circumciſion.

IT cannot well be queſtioned, but that the *primary* Reaſon of God's inſtituting this Rite of Circumciſion, [s] was, with Relation to *Abraham*'s particular Perſon, *viz.* becauſe *Abraham* believed in God, even when he was aged, and unfit for Generation, and when his Wife was decrepid and barren; he then believed, I ſay, that he ſhould be

[l] Lib. II. [m] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [n] *Saurin*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations.
[o] Gen. xvii. 24. [p] Jer. ix. 25, 26. [q] *Patrick*, ibid. [r] Origen contra Celſ. Lib. V.
[s] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I.

be a Father of a Child, and for that Reaſon God gave him a Sign of this Nature, *viz.* the Circumciſion of the Foreſkin of that Part of the Body, which then, *through Age*, was uſeleſs as to Procreation, but, *through Faith*, became otherwiſe: And 'twas to preſerve the Remembrance of the Power of God, who had given a Son to a Man of an hundred Years old, as alſo the Remembrance of the Faith of that Man, who waited and hoped for the ſame Son in Spite of his advanced Age, that God preſcribed to all ſucceeding *Jews* the *Sacrament* of Circumciſion; to the Intent that this Token ſhould bring back to their Minds, at one and the ſame Time, the Faith of their Father, [t] *who againſt Hope believed in Hope*, and the Fidelity of their God, who, from one Man only, and him very old, raiſed up a People, as numerous *as the Stars of Heaven, and the Sands upon the Sea-ſhore.*

2. A FARTHER Deſign of this Inſtitution, was to be a Seal and Token, as we ſaid, of God's Covenant made with *Abraham*, and, in him, with his Poſterity; and to remind them, not only of God's rich Promiſes, but of their Obligations to Obedience, purſuant thereupon. And, accordingly, [u] it was uſed and interpreted afterwards for an *initiating* Ceremony into the Obedience of the whole *Levitical* Inſtitution; for which Reaſon the Apoſtles complain of it, [x] *as a Yoke, which neither they, nor their Fathers were able to bear.* Not that Circumciſion was, or could be ſuch, ſingly by itſelf, but only upon the Account of its Conſequences, the long Train and heavy Burthen of *Ceremonies* it drew after it, and [y] the Rigour of that Sentence, which this one Act concluded them under. So that Circumciſion was, not only a *Mark* to diſtinguiſh the Seed of *Abraham* from other Nations, but a *Form* of Admiſſion into the *Covenant*; and to the *Jews* then of the very ſame Importance, that Baptiſm is now to *Chriſtians*, *viz.* a Sacrament of *Initiation* to the Service of God, and an holy Engagement to believe and do, as he had revealed and commanded.

3. AND as it was the *Token* of their Obedience, [z] ſo was it likewiſe a *Note* of Commemoration, to put thoſe, who bore it, continually in Mind, whoſe Offspring they were, and what Advantages entitled to upon that Account, provided they took Care not to *degenerate* from the Glories of that Stock, from whence they ſprang. And, indeed, conſidering that *Abraham* was the firſt we read of, whom God reſcued from thoſe general Corruptions of Faith and Manners, which the World had now, a ſecond Time, ſunk into, by relapſing ſince the Flood; and withal conſidering, that this Perſon and his Iſſue were ſingled out for a *Repoſitory* of Truth, a *choſen Generation*, a *Receptacle* of God upon Earth, and the *Source* of his Son after the Fleſh; there was Reaſon, in Abundance, why this Remembrance ſhould be very grateful to them: And apt enough, 'tis plain, upon all Occaſions, they were, to value themſelves, and deſpiſe others, upon the Account of ſo particular an Honour. But the Misfortune was the moſt uſeful Part of the Reflection, *viz.* the eminent Faith, and ready Obedience of ſo renowned an Anceſtor, and the noble Emulation of his Virtues, which ſuch a Pattern ought to have inſpired, this they were too apt to overlook, though any conſidering Man (as the Apoſtle [b] excellently argues) could not but perceive, that the only valuable Relation to *Abraham*, is, not that of Conſanguinity and natural Deſcent, but the Reſemblance of his Virtues, and claiming under him as *the Father of the Faithful.*

4. THIS ſuggeſts another, and indeed none of the leaſt conſiderable *Ends*, for which Circumciſion was inſtituted, *viz.* to be a *Sign* of inward Virtue, and to figure ſome particular Diſpoſitions of the Mind, which bore Reſemblance to the outward Ceremony, and were required to render it *effectual.* For this Reaſon we read ſo much, in the *Old Law* [c], of *circumciſing the Foreſkin of the Heart*, and hear the Apoſtle ſo frequently telling us, in *the New* [d], of the *Circumciſion of the Heart in the Spirit*, and [e] of *putting off the Body of the Sins of the Fleſh, by the Circumciſion of Chriſt.* To reduce the Metaphor then to ſome certain Virtues: *The Circumciſion of the Heart* implies [f] a Readineſs and willing Diſpoſition to know the Mind of God, and to ſubmit to it, when known; and the *Foreſkin*, in this Senſe, to *be taken away*, is all that Prejudice and Self-conceit, all that carnal and worldly Reaſoning, which obſtructs the Efficacy of Truth upon our Hearts and Lives. It imports the weaning ourſelves from the World, and ſettling our Affections upon God and Goodneſs;

[t] Rom. iv. 18. [u] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I. [x] Acts xv. 10. [y] *Curſed is every one, that continueth not in all the Things, which are written in the Book of the Law, to do them*, Gal. iii. 10. *and all the People ſhall ſay*, Amen. Deut. xxvii. 26. [z] *Stanhope*, ibid. [b] Rom. iv. 11, &c. [c] Deut. x. 16. *and* Jer. iv. 4, &c. [d] Rom. ii. 29. [e] Col. ii. 11. [f] *Vide* Deut. x. 16. *compared with* Acts vii. 51.

and ſo the Things to be *cut off from us* are Covetouſneſs and Injuſtice, Worldly-mindedneſs and Vanity, Luxury and Love of Pleaſure, which deſtroy the Love of God, and of our Neighbour, in our Breaſts: Laſtly, it denotes [g] a ſtrict Guard and Watchfulneſs over ourſelves, a Curb upon our bodily Appetites, and the Reduction of our Paſſions to the Government of right Reaſon; and ſo the Things to be *laid apart*, are all Rioting and Wantonneſs, all Lewdneſs and Debauchery in Converſation, [h] *all Fornication* (as the Apoſtle words it) *and Uncleanneſs, and Filthineſs, and fooliſh Talking and Jeſting, which are not convenient*, becauſe *Incentives* to that Luſt and Laſciviouſneſs, which we are bound to reſtrain.

Of the World, 2092, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 1912, &c.

Abraham's *Victory over the four Kings.*

THESE are ſome of the moſt [i] material Reaſons, for which God appointed unto *Abraham* the Rite of Circumciſion: And, to purſue the Patriarch thro' ſome other Paſſages of his Life, we muſt obſerve, that, during his Stay [k] in the Plain of *Mamre*, there happened a memorable Battle of four Kings againſt five, and that the Occaſion of it was this:—— [l] *Chedorlaomer*, King of [m] *Elam*, had, for ſome Years, held five petty Princes under *tributary* Subjection, whereof *Bera*, King of *Sodom*, was one: But they, willing to ſhake of his Yoke, confederated againſt him, and, being come to a *deciſive* Battle, were unhappily defeated, and fell a Prey to the Conqueror, who plundered their Cities, and led away the Inhabitants Captive; among whom was *Lot*, the Nephew of *Abraham*, who chanced, at this Time, to dwell in *Sodom*. As ſoon as the News of this Defeat was brought to *Abraham*, he immediately † muſters up what Force he had, to reſcue his Kinſman; and, accordingly, coming upon the Enemy by Night, loaded with Spoils, and not expecting any freſh Aſſault, he obtained an eaſy and compleat Victory; he routed the whole Army, and ſlew *Chedorlaomer*, and the other three Kings, that came to his Aſſiſtance; and ſo returning home in Triumph, was firſt congratulated by the King of *Sodom*, who gratefully acknowledged the Deliverance he had received from his Courage and Aſſiſtance; and then by *Melchizedeck*, King of *Salem*, who met him with a Preſent of Bread and Wine, to refreſh him and his Men upon their March; and both bleſſed him and God too, that had given him ſo good Succeſs; whereupon the *Patriarch*, in Requital of his Kindneſs, made him a Preſent of the *Tenth Part* of the Spoils, which he had taken in that Expedition.

Melchizedeck, *who.*

WHO this King of *Sodom* was, it concerns us not ſo much to know; but of *Melchizedeck*, King of *Salem*, ſo many great Things are recorded, both in the Old and New Teſtament, that it may well excite our Curioſity to look a little into the various Opinions concerning him. The Author to the *Hebrews*, indeed, has given us a Deſcription of him, that *he was the King of* Salem, *and Prieſt of the Moſt High God, without Father, without Mother, without Deſcent, having neither Beginning of Days, nor End of Life, but made like to the Son of God, abideth a Prieſt continually*: But this Deſcription

[g] *Vide* Deut. xxx. 6. [h] *Vide* Jer. v. 7, &c. *Philo.* and ſome others, aſſign the ſame Reaſon for it: *Becauſe, among the great Variety of Pleaſures*, ſay they, *that of Carnal Copulation is ſaid to exceed the reſt; our Law-givers thought fit to circumciſe the Inſtrument of Coition, obſcurely intimating thereby a Circumciſion of all ſuperfluous and immoderate Pleaſures, and not of one alone; for this, being the greateſt, and that to which Mankind expreſſes the ſtrongeſt Inclination, is ſuppoſed to comprehend the reſt.* [i] The ancient *Jews* aſſign two other Reaſons; the one is, the Prevention of a troubleſome Diſeaſe, and hard to be cured, which they call a *Carbuncle*, becauſe it is apt to be inflamed; and the other, the Procreation of a numerous Iſſue, for which they think *Circumciſion* a natural Means, and therefore pretend, that ſuch Nations as uſe it, are infinitely more populous than others: But neither of theſe Reaſons have any Weight, or Foundation of Truth. *Edward's* Survey, Vol. I. The Time, the Manner, and other Circumſtances relating to the Performance of this Rite, the Reader, that is curious of knowing, may find ſet down in Mr *Lewis's* Antiquities of the *Hebrew* Republick, Vol. II. [k] The Plain of *Mamre* was, doubtleſs, the ſame with the *Vale of Hebron*, mentioned in *Gen.* xxxvii. 14. a very pleaſant and fruitful Valley, near two Miles from *Hebron* Southward. Here ſtood that *Oak of Mamre*, ſo remarkable in ſacred Hiſtory for *Abraham's* entertaining three Angels under it, and ſo famous in After-Ages for *Pilgrimages*, and an *Anniverſary Feaſt*, which was ſolemnized hard by it. Some will have it, that this *Tree* was not an Oak, but a Turpentine-Tree; but *Bochart* aſſures us, that he himſelf had ſeen it, and that the Leaves of it were ſomewhat larger than thoſe of a *Maſtick-Tree*, but its Fruit reſembled an Acorn, *Wells's* Geography, and *Howell's* Hiſtory of the Bible. [l] Gen. xiv. [m] The Kingdom of *Elam* is a Southern Tract of Ground, which lies beyond the *Tigris* and *Euphrates*, when ſtrictly taken; but, when in a larger Senſe, it includes *Suſiana*, and the other adjacent Provinces, *Wells's* Geography It is generally, *in this Place*, ſuppoſed to be the Kingdom of *Aſſyria*, but our learned Hiſtorian, Sir *Walter Raleigh*, contends, with ſome plauſible Arguments, for its being *Perſia*.

† The Force, which *Abraham* could raiſe, was but ſmall: Three hundred and eighteen *trained* Servants were his whole Retinue; and therefore we can hardly ſuppoſe, that he attacked the whole *Aſſyrian* Army, but that rather dividing his Attendants into two Companies, with one he fell upon thoſe, who were appointed to guard the Captives and the Spoil; and with the other made the Appearance of a Force ready to attempt the whole Body of the Enemy: That the *Aſſyrians*, ſurprized to find a freſh Enemy, fatigued in the late Battle, and not knowing the Strength that was coming upon them, retired, and fled before them. That *Abraham* purſued them for ſome Time, until he made himſelf Maſter of the Priſoners and the Spoils; but, upon the Approach of Day-light, (which might have diſcovered the Weakneſs of his Forces) he thought fit to return, having reſcued his Nephew *Lot, and his Goods, and the Women, and all the People that were taken Captive*, Gen. xiv. 16. And this accounts for the ſeeming Impoſſibility of the Action. *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. II. Lib. VI.

2

Deſcription is ſo far from giving us any Light, that it has, in a great Meaſure, been the Occaſion of leading ſome [n] into a Perſuaſion, that what is here called *Melchizedeck*, was an Angel; [o] others, that it was the Son of God; and [p] others, the Holy Ghoſt, in the Shape and Appearance of a Man; becauſe they cannot conceive, how the Qualities, aſcribed to this excellent *Perſonage*, can comport with any human Creature. The Phraſe, however, made Uſe of in the Text, ἀγενεαλόγητος, *without Deſcent*, or without Genealogy, [q] explains what the Apoſtle means by *without Father, and without Mother*, i. e. [r] without any Father or Mother mentioned in the *Genealogies* of *Moſes*, where the Parents of all pious Worthies are generally ſet down with great Exactneſs. So that there being no Genealogy at all of *Melchizedeck*, recorded in Scripture, he is introduced at once, even like a Man *dropped down from Heaven*; for ſo the Deſcription goes on, *having neither Beginning of Days, nor End of Life*, i. e. in the Hiſtory of *Moſes*, which (contrary to its common Uſage, when it makes Mention of great Men) takes no Notice at all of the Time either of his *Birth* or *Death*; and herein he is *made like unto the Son of God*, i. e. by the Hiſtory of *Moſes*, which mentions him *appearing* and *acting* upon the *Stage*, without either *Entrance* or *Exit*, as if, like the Son of God, he had *abode a Prieſt continually*. This is the common and beſt approved Interpretation of the Apoſtle's Words; but then the Queſtion returns upon us, to whom does the *Character*, even with this *Comment*, belong? *The Apoſtle's Character of him explained.*

THE *Jews* are generally of Opinion, (and herein are followed by [s] ſome Chriſtians) that *Melchizedeck* was the ſame with *Shem*, one of the Sons of *Noah*; whom they ſuppoſe alive in the Days of *Abraham*; the only Perſon upon Earth, *ſay they*, who could with Juſtneſs be called his Superior, and whom the Deſcription of the Apoſtle could any Way befit: as being a Perſon of many *Singularities*, born before the Deluge, having no Anceſtors then alive, and whoſe Life had been of an immenſe Duration, in Compariſon of thoſe that came after him. But not to diſpute the Fact, whether *Shem* was, at this Time, alive or no: [t] It ſeems very incongruous to think, that *Moſes* who all along mentions him in his *proper* Name, ſhould, upon this Occaſion, diſguiſe his Senſe with a *fictitious* one; and very incompatible it is with what we know of *Shem*, that he ſhould be ſaid to be *without Father and without Mother*, when his Family is ſo plainly recorded in Scripture, and all his Progenitors may, in a Moment, be traced to their Fountain-head in *Adam*. Beſides, had *Melchizedeck* and *Shem* been the ſame Perſon, the Apoſtle would hardly have made him [u] of a Family different to *Abraham*, much leſs would he have ſet him, in ſuch an Eminence, above the Patriarch, or made this ſuperlative Exclamation concerning him, * *Conſider how great this Man was, unto whom even the Patriarch* Abraham *gave the Tenth of the Spoils!* *Different Conjectures concerning him.*

THESE Arguments ſeem to evince, that *Melchizedeck* and *Shem* were different Perſons; and much more Reaſon have we to ſuppoſe, that he, and *Ham*, the other Son of *Noah*, were ſo: For who, upon deliberate Thoughts, can believe, that this curſed Perſon was the *Prieſt of the moſt High God*, from whom *Abraham* ſo joyfully received the *Sacerdotal* Benediction, that he returned it with the Payment of his Tythes? And much leſs can we believe, that one of his ill Character was the Type of the *bleſſed* Jeſus. *Jeſus* indeed himſelf, if he be taken for *Melchizedeck*, appearing to *Abraham* in human Shape, (as he is often ſuppoſed to do in Scripture) will anſwer all the Character, which the Apoſtle gives of this extraordinary Perſon: [x] But then the Wonder is, that the Hiſtorian ſhould never give us the leaſt Intimation of this; that *Abraham* ſhould expreſs no Manner of Surprize upon ſuch an Interview; and (what is more) how the *Type* and the *Ante-Type* can poſſibly be repreſented the *ſame*. [y] For this is the Caſe: Here *Melchiſedeck* was a Repreſentative of our Saviour, according to that of the Apoſtle, [z] *Jeſus was a Prieſt, after the Order of* Melchizedeck; which he explains in another Place, [a] *after the Similitude of* Melchizedeck *there ariſeth another Prieſt*; as much as to ſay, *Melchizedeck* and Chriſt were like one another in ſeveral Things, and thereupon one was deſigned to be a fit *Type* of the other: But as it is unreaſonable and abſurd to ſay, that a Perſon is like himſelf, ſo we cannot rationally imagine, that Chriſt, who (as St *Paul*

[n] Vid. Auguſt. Quæſt. ſuper Gen. Lib. I. Quæſt. 72. [o] Vid. Epiphan. Hæreſ. 55. [p] Ibid. [q] *Scott's* Chriſtian Life, Part II. c. 7. [r] The *Syriack* Verſion renders it thus directly, and in this Senſe are the Words ἀπάτωρ and ἀμήτωρ ſometimes uſed in the Heathen Poets. [s] Vid. Quæſt. Hebr. in Gen. & Willet Hexapla in Gen. [t] *Bochart's* Phaleg. Lib. II. c. 1. [u] Heb. vii. 6. * Ibid. ver. 4. [x] *Saurin's* Diſſertations. [y] *Edwards's* Survey, Vol. I. [z] Heb. vi. 20. [a] Ibid. vii. 15.

St *Paul* says) was *after the Similitude of* Melchizedeck, was, in Reality, the same Person with him.

The true Account at last.

THUS we have looked into the several *Conjectures* concerning this great Man, that seem to have any *Plausibility* in them; and, after all, must be forced to content ourselves with what the Scripture nakedly reports of him, *viz.* that this *Melchizedeck* was really a King and a Priest (for these two Offices were anciently united in one Person) in [b] the Land of *Canaan*; descended, very probably, from wicked and idolatrous Parents, but himself a Person of singular Virtue and Sanctity; *the Priest of the most High God*, but perhaps the first and the last of his Race that was so; which might give Occasion to the Apostle to describe him under such *ambiguous Characters:* The whole of which (according to the Judgment [c] of a learned Author) may not improbably be reduced to this single Proposition, that *Melchizedeck was the most illustrious of his Family, and had neither Predecessor nor Successor in his Employ.*

Of the World, 2133, &c. Before Christ, 1871, &c.

Abraham's *Sacrifice.*

BUT to proceed with our Patriarch *Abraham:* There is one remarkable Instance of his Life, which shewed him to be a greater Man, than any Triumph over an Enemy, and that is, the Victory gained over himself, in his ready Compliance to sacrifice his Son. The Language of the Scripture calls it a *Temptation*; but we must be careful to leave out of the Expression every Thing odious in the Sense of it, when we apply it to God. To *tempt*, in the common Acceptation of the Word, signifies to lead into a Crime; in this Sense, [d] *God cannot be tempted with Evil, neither tempteth he any Man:* But to *tempt*, signifies likewise to *try* a Man; and, in this [e] Sense, God *tempts* Men sometimes in his *Wrath*, and sometimes in his *Love*. When, by an Effect of his Justice, he leaves Men to themselves; when he suffers them to fall into such Snares as are laid for them on every Side; when, for the Punishment of their Neglect of good Counsel and Instruction, he gives them up to the Deceitfulness of Sin, and the Deceptions of Error; 'tis then that he *tempts them in his Wrath:* But when he permits his Children to fall into any Danger, that he may deliver them with Honour; when, in order to display, perfect, and crown their Virtues, he suffers those Virtues to be assaulted; when he exposes them, in short, to Conflicts, in order to gain the Victory; 'tis then that he *tempts Men in Love*. 'Twas in this Sense that he tempted *Abraham*; and to shew the Excellency of the Patriarch's Conduct under such Trial and Conflict, we must observe,

1. † THE Firmness and Stedfastness of his Faith, notwithstanding the Objections against it: And,

2. THE Constancy of his Resolution, notwithstanding the Difficulty of effecting it.

1. [f] TAKE

[b] For so *Josephus* says, that he was Χαναάιων δυνάστης, *a Potentate of the* Canaanites. [c] *Outram*, de Sacrificiis.
[d] Jam. i. 13. [e] *Saurin*'s Dissertations.

† The learned Author of the *Divine Legation of* Moses, (Vol. II. Lib. vi.) from our Saviour's Words, *Abraham rejoiced to see my Day, and he saw it, and was glad*, John viii. 56. meaning, by the Word *Day*, the Work of Man's Redemption, has made God's ordering of *Abraham* to sacrifice his Son, not so much a *Command*, as a *Revelation* of that great *Mystery*, which, as *Abraham* most ardently desired to know, so God was graciously pleased to make manifest to him, not by Words, but by the significant Action of his Offering up his own Son, even as God, in his good appointed Time, had decreed to make *his* a Sacrifice for Sin, *and to deliver him up for us all*. So that God's *primary* Intent (according to him) was, by this Sign to convey to *Abraham* the Knowledge of Man's Redemption, his *secondary* only, to make Trial of the Patriarch's Faith and Obedience. —— But to have a more perfect Knowledge of this Author's Sentiments, and Method of arguing, the Reader should consult him with some Care and Attention. Other Writers affirm, that, in Case *Abraham* had really sacrificed his Son, there was no great Matter in it, no great Merit in his Obedience, since it was a customary Thing in those Times, for private Persons, Kings and Heads of Nations, to offer such Sacrifices, (Lord *Shaftesbury*'s Charact. Vol. III. Misc. 2. Sir *John Marsham*'s Can. Chron. p. 76. and *Philo Judæus, Lib. de Abrahamo.*) But after all their Researches, they have been able to produce but a single Instance, and that is of one *Chronus*, King of *Phœnicia*, who, as *Philo Biblius*, from *Sanconiathon*, tells us, upon the raging of a of a Famine and Pestilence, offered his only Son for a Burnt-Offering to his Father *Ouranus*. But, upon Examination, it will appear, that this Story is only an Imitation of *Abraham*'s intended Sacrifice of *Isaac*, with some few Additions and Mistakes, such as *Heathen* Writers frequently incurred; and that *Abraham* and *Chronus*, in short, were one and the same Person: For, 1. *Chronus* was the Son of a Father who had three Children, (*Euseb. Præp. Evang.* Lib. i. c. 10.) and so was *Abraham:* 2. *Chronus* had one only Son by his Wife, and so had *Abraham:* 3. *Chronus* had another Son by another Person, and so had *Abraham:* 4. *Chronus* circumcised himself and Family, and so did *Abraham:* 5. *Chronus* sacrificed his only Son, and so is *Abraham* by some *Heathen* Historians reported to have done: 6. *Chronus*'s Son was named *Jehud*, and so is *Isaac* called by *Moses*; for *God said to* Abraham, *take now thy Son*, Jehud-ka, *i. e. thine only Son*, Gen. xxii. 2. From these, and many more Particulars, that might be mentioned, it seems evident, that this Account of *Sanconiathon's Chronus* is only the History of *Moses's Abraham*, with some small Alterations revived. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. II. Lib. vi.

1. [f] TAKE *now thy Son, thine only Son,* Iſaac, *whom thou loveſt,* (what a dreadful Gradation is this) *and get thee into the Land of* Moriah, *and offer him there for a Burnt-Offering, upon one of the Mountains, which I will tell thee of.* The very Manner, wherein the Command is delivered, is enough, even at firſt Hearing, to ſhock human Nature. For, as God has implanted in us no Affection more natural and ſtrong, than what we bear to our Children; ſo no Act ſeems ſo horrid and barbarous, as for a Father to kill his own Son. And, as the Fact was ſhocking enough of itſelf, ſo there were theſe two Circumſtances, which mightily increaſed the Horror of it, *viz.* that the Son was innocent, and that the Father was to ſlay him with his own Hand. *The Firmneſs of his Faith.*

THOSE, that have felt the Pangs, and tender Relentings of Nature, muſt confeſs, that to give up a Son to Death, even tho' he were never ſo *undutiful* and *diſobedient*, muſt be a great Grief to a Parent's Heart; and the Caſe of *David*, who wiſhed himſelf *to have died for his Son* Abſalom, tho' he died in the Act of *Rebellion*, tho' the Preſervation of his Life had been inconſiſtent with the Peace of his Government, is the common Caſe of moſt good-natured Parents, who ſee, or (if abſent) who paint in their Imaginations, the Diſtreſs of their expiring Children, and feel the Strugglings of Nature within them. How deep then muſt it ſink into the Heart of any Parent, not only to give up his innocent Son to Death, but to ſlay him with his own Hand; not only to be the *Spectator*, but the *Actor* in this bloody *Tragedy?* What Father would not ſhrink and ſtart back at ſuch a Command? What good Man (eſpecially in ſuch a Caſe, and where Nature was ſo hard preſſed) would not have been apt to have looked on ſuch a *Revelation* as this, rather as the Suggeſtion and Illuſion of an evil Spirit, than any Command of God? Eſpecially when it ſeemed to claſh with former Revelations, and to make void the Promiſe, which God had made to *Abraham*, [g] *that in his Seed all the Nations of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed*; which Promiſe was expreſsly limited to *Iſaac* and his Poſterity, who had then no Son.

HOW then can we ſufficiently admire the ſtedfaſt Faith of *Abraham*, *who, againſt Hope, believed in Hope*, and with-held not his Son, the neareſt and deareſt Pledge of his Love and Obedience, that he had to give; *that Son*, whom he had received from God, after many Promiſes and long Expectances, in the Wain of Life; *that Son*, who was the only one, he was ever to look for, ſince the Strength of Nature was decayed, and the Power of Generation departed from him; *that Son*, whoſe Company had endeared him ſo long, and from whoſe Life he had promiſed himſelf the Support and Comfort of his old Age; and, what is more than all, *that Son*, in whom all the Promiſes of God were centered; from whom he expected a numerous Offſpring, Kings and Princes to be born, and the *Joy of all Nations*, the Saviour of Mankind, to proceed.

HE might have argued otherwiſe; and, from the ſeeming *Contradiction* between the *Promiſe* and *Command*, have ſtarted Objections, and furniſhed himſelf with this Excuſe; [h] "How can this Command be taken in a *literal* Senſe? How can I recon-"cile the *Horror* of the Fact with the *Attributes* of God? How can I perſuade my-"ſelf, that his *Promiſes* are faithful, when I my ſelf am ordered to cancel them? "How can I believe that my *Iſaac* will be the Comfort of my grey Hairs, when I "am going to make him the Subject of my perpetual Grief; or that his Seed will "ſpring up, and be *as numerous as the Stars*, when I am commanded to ſtifle *that* "*Seed*, and, with him, to *ſacrifice*, as it were, on the ſame Altar, all thoſe Na-"tions, that are in his Loins?" This might have been the Reaſoning of a *carnal* Mind; but the Patriarch had other Sentiments of the Matter: [i] He believed that God, who gave him *Iſaac* at firſt, in ſo miraculous a Manner, was able, by another Miracle, to reſtore him to Life again after he was dead, and to make him the Father of many Nations. In ſhort, rather than diſobey the Command, or ſuppoſe the Promiſe of God could be fruſtrated, he would believe any Thing that was credible and poſſible, how improbable ſoever it might ſeem; and, for this Reaſon, the Apoſtle tells us, [k] *that our Father* Abraham *was juſtified by Faith, and that it was counted unto him for Righteouſneſs.*

2. BUT to raiſe the Merit of *Abraham*'s Obedience, let us conſider farther, the *Conſtancy* of his Reſolution, notwithſtanding the Harſhneſs and Difficulty of the Thing. Had *Abraham* been firmly perſuaded, that this Command to kill his Son *The Conſtancy of his Reſolution.*

[f] Gen. xxii. 2. [g] Gen. xviii. 18. [h] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [i] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [k] Rom. iv. 3.

was really from God, yet it is no eaſy Matter for a Man to bring himſelf to Compliance in ſo difficult a Caſe, and, out of mere Reverence to the Divine Authority, to diveſt himſelf of his Nature, and, thwart the ſtrongeſt Propenſions of it. Let any Man, who knows what it is to be a *Father*, lay his Hand upon his Heart, and conſider his own Bowels, and he muſt needs be aſtoniſhed at *Abraham*'s Obedience, as well as *Faith*.

HAD *Abraham* indeed, upon his firſt receiving the Command, taken his Knife and ſlain his Son immediately, his Compliance might have been imputed to ſome ſudden Tranſport of *Zeal*, more than any *deliberate* Purpoſe. But, that his Obedience might be more glorious, and have all the Circumſtances of Advantage attending it, God would have it done upon *full Conſideration*, and therefore appointed him to go to a Mountain, (three-Days Journey from the Place where he was) and there to offer up his Son. It is in Acts of Virtue and Obedience, as it is in Acts of Sin and Vice: The more deliberate the Sin is, and the more calm and ſedate Temper the Man is in, when he commits it, the greater is his Fault; and ſo it is in the Acts of Virtue and Obedience, (eſpecially if they be attended with conſiderable Difficulty) the more *deliberately* they are done the more *virtuous* they are, and the more Praiſe they merit.

The Land of Moriah.

[l] *MORIAH*, to which *Abraham* was ordered to go, was not any particular Mountain, but that Tract of Land, whereon *Jeruſalem* was built in following Ages, and the adjacent Country, where, among many other Hills was the *Mount of Olives*, and *Mount Cavalry*, on which our Saviour did, afterwards, offer himſelf to God for the Redemption of Mankind; it ſeeming good to the Divine Wiſdom, to aſſign the ſame Place for the *Typical* Sacrifice of *Iſaac*, where, in the Fulneſs of Time, the great *Anti-type* was to be offered. [m] This Country is not much above One-Day's Journey from *Beerſheba*, the Place where *Abraham*, at this Time, dwelt; but he, and his Company, travelling on Foot, and the Aſs being laden with Wood, and not able to go far in a Day, they made it three: So that, [n] by putting this Space between the Command and the Performance of it, God gave him time to cool upon it, to weigh the Injunction, and to look on every Side of this difficult Duty: He gave him Scope, I ſay, for his Reaſon to argue and debate the Caſe, and an Opportunity for natural Affection to play its Part, and for Fleſh and Blood to raiſe all its *Batteries* againſt the Reſolution, which he had taken up. And now we may eaſily imagine, what Conflict this good Man had within himſelf, during thoſe three Days, that he was travelling to the appointed Place, and how his Heart was ready to be rent in Pieces, betwixt his Duty to God, and his Affection to his Child; ſo that, in every Step of this unwelcome and weariſome Journey, he did, as it were, lay violent Hands upon himſelf.

THE *Jews* have a Tradition, [o] that the *Devil* followed *Abraham*, and uſed his utmoſt Endeavours to *diſſuade* him from the Purpoſe of ſacrificing his Son: But if any Thing could have induced the Patriarch to break his Reſolution, it muſt have been thoſe innocent and indearing Words that proceeded from *Iſaac* in his Journey. [p] *Joſephus*, upon this Occaſion, has uſed all the Softneſs of Thought and Delicacy of Stile, that he was Maſter of, to repreſent this Circumſtance of Diſtreſs; and yet, after all, he is a Bungler, in Compariſon of this great Author of the Book of *Geneſis*. *Abraham* was juſt going to ſacrifice his Son; the Altar, the Wood, the Fire, the Knife, and all were ready, when he finds himſelf called upon by him in ſo tender a Manner, as was enough to pierce his Heart, and to arreſt his Arm, already lift up to wound the innocent Victim; *Iſaac ſpake unto* Abraham *his Father, and ſaid, My Father, and he ſaid, here am I, my Son.* Nature, which was confined and limited by the Divine Command, here makes a *Bound*, and paſſes to the utmoſt Verge of what was allowed her. *Iſaac ſpake to* Abraham *his Father, and ſaid, my Father*; Abraham *anſwered, here am I, my Son:* And what ſaid this innocent Child to his melting Father? *Behold the Fire and the Wood, but where is the Lamb for the Burnt-Offering? And* Abraham *ſaid, My Son, God will provide himſelf a Lamb for a Burnt-Offering.* [q] Nothing but the Heart can be a *Comment* upon theſe Words: A Man muſt be a Father, he muſt be a tender Father, he muſt have an only Son. he muſt ſuppoſe himſelf juſt going to ſlay that Son, in order to be truly ſenſible of the *Energy* of this Queſtion, and of the Effect, which it had upon *Abraham*.

In

[l] *Wells*'s Geography. More Nev. Part II. [m] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [n] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [o] Maimonides [p] Antiq. Lib. I. c. 14. [q] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations.

IF all this be not enough to ſhew the Stedfaſtneſs of his Reſolution, there is one Circumſtance more, which, though but *conjectural*, has no ſmall Probability of being true, and, if ſo, a great Tendency to advance the Patriarch's Praiſe. The greateſt Part of [t] the *Jewiſh* Doctors are of Opinion, that *Iſaac*, at this Time, was arrived at Man's Eſtate; and upon this Suppoſition, the Words will fairly enough, and without ſtraining, admit of this Senſe, that *Abraham* did not *bind his Son*, but perſuaded him to lay himſelf upon the Altar. Without all Doubt, as the Patriarch drew near to the Mount, (which [u] was probably diſtinguiſhed by ſome bright and *glorious* Appearance) he began to prepare *Iſaac* to ſubmit to be ſacrificed; he diſpoſed him to obey the Commandments of Heaven; he explained the Commiſſion he had received from thence; he repreſented to him the Sovereignty of God over his Creatures; he made him ſenſible, that nothing ſhould ſet Bounds to our Obedience, when God ſignifies his Will; he convinced him, that he, who had wrought one Miracle for his Birth, might likewiſe redeem him from the Jaws of Death by another; he took a moſt tender and affectionate Leave of him, for the Command he had received to ſacrifice him, did not forbid him to vent his Grief in Lamentations for his Loſs: And having thus ſatisfied the Laws of Nature, * he ſet himſelf now to execute the fatal Order, and that very Moment had done it, had not the Lord from on high (who ſaw to what Length his Obedience would go, and was ſatisfied) ſtopped his Hand, juſt as it was going to his Son's Throat: *Lay not thine Hand upon the Lad, neither do thou any Thing unto him; for now I know that thou feareſt God, ſeeing that thou haſt not with-held thy Son, thine only Son from him.*

Inferences from the Whole.

TO come to a Concluſion with this great Example of *Faith* and *Obedience*. This Story of *Abraham* (as [x] a very judicious Expounder of the Law tells us) eſtabliſhes two fundamental Points; the one is, to ſhew us how far the Love and Fear of God ſhould extend itſelf, and the other, to convince us of the Certainty of *divine* Revelation. Here then we ſee a Command to do that, whereunto the Loſs of Money, or the Loſs of Life itſelf, is not comparable; nay that, which Nature abhorred, *viz.* that a Man, very rich, and in good Authority, who earneſtly deſired an Heir, who was born to him when he had no Hopes of one, in his old Age, ſhould ſo overcome his natural Affection to him, (which doubtleſs was very great) as to forego all the Expectations he had from him, and, after a Journey of three Days, conſent to ſlay him with his own Hands. How then ſhould this Example of the *Father of the Faithful* encourage us all in a chearful Submiſſion to the ſeverer Duties of our holy Profeſſion; to deſpiſe the *Shame*, to *endure the Croſs*, to face the ſevereſt Puniſhments, to reſiſt the ſofteſt Inclinations, to *deny ourſelves*, and to [u] *mortify our Members, which are upon the Earth*, which, how painful ſoever they be in the Operation, offer not half that Violence to Nature, *as to kill an only Son*; beſides, the Conſideration of the extraordinary Comfort and Support, and of a glorious Reward promiſed to our Obedience in ſuch Particulars; Encouragement enough to make a very difficult Duty eaſy.

The Extent of our Obedience.

The Certainty of Revelations.

THE other Thing we are taught by this Hiſtory is, that the Prophets were fully aſſured of the Truth of thoſe Things, which God ſpake to them, either in Dreams, or in Viſions, or any other Way. For if *Abraham* had, in the leaſt, doubted whether this Sacrifice of his Son were the Will of God or no, he would never have ſo readily conſented

[t] *Joſephus* ſays, he was but five and twenty Years old; *David Ganis*, in his *Chronology*, makes him twenty-ſix; and *Eliezer* thirty-ſeven. [u] This Conjecture is confirmed by *R. Eliezer*, who ſays, that when God bad *Abraham* go to the Place *he would tell him of*, Ver. 2. *and there offer his Son*, he aſked, *how he ſhould know it?* And the Anſwer was, *Whereſoever thou ſeeſt my Glory, there will I ſtay, and wait for thee*, &c. and accordingly *he beheld a Pillar of Fire, reaching from Heaven to the Earth*, and thereby knew, that this was the Place. *Patrick's* Commentary.

* It may not, in this Place, be amiſs to obſerve, that the Heathen World was not altogether ignorant of this Sacrifice of *Abraham*. The Story of *Iphigenia* very much reſembles it; for there all Things were ready for her Immolation; the Prieſt was come, and his Arm lift up to give the fatal Stroke; when, on a ſudden, a ſtrange and preternatural Voice iſſues out from the Woods, telling them, that *Diana*, for whom ſhe was to bleed, did not approve of the Sacrifice; and, while the People were deliberating how to find a more acceptable one, a very beautiful Fawn comes voluntarily up to the Altar, and there was ſacrificed in the ſtead of *Agamemnon*'s Daughter. *Datis Cret. de Bell. Troj. Lib.* I. There is another Story, much of the ſame Nature, related by *Plutarch*, (*Tom.* II. *Parall.*) when the Plague reigned in *Lacedemonia*, the Oracle told them, that it would not ceaſe, until they conſented annually to ſacrifice a Virgin of noble Birth. The Lot fell upon *Helena*, who was led to the Temple, dreſſed for a Sacrifice, and juſt going to be offered up; when an Eagle came ſuddenly down, and ſnatching away the Sword that was to pierce her Breaſt, carried it into the Field, where ſome Herds were feeding, and there dropped it upon an Heifer. Theſe, and many more Stories of the like Nature, are manifeſtly founded on the Sacrifice of *Iſaac*. *Iſaac* was certainly the firſt intended Sacrifice of this Kind; and though both *ſacred* and *prophane* Hiſtory abound with Examples of Men's ſacrificing their Children to Idols, yet nothing of this Nature could be a Motive to *Abraham*, ſince this Cuſtom was neither in *Babylon*, nor *Meſopotamia*, nor *Chaldea*, where he had lived a long Time; no, nor in *Beerſheba*, where he abode at that Time; *but he* (as *Philo* tells us) *was, by God's Order, to be the Beginner of a perfectly new and unuſual Example*, *Patrick*'s Commentary. [x] Maimonides More Nevoch. *Part.* III. *cap.* 24. [u] Col. iii. 5.

conſented to a Thing, which Nature ſo ſtrongly abhorred. Nothing indeed is more reaſonable than to believe, that thoſe Perſons, to whom God is pleaſed to make immediate *Revelations* of his Will, are ſome Way or other aſſured, that they are *divine*; otherwiſe, they would be in vain and to no Purpoſe: But how Men are aſſured of this, is not ſo eaſy to determine, becauſe the Scripture has no where informed us.

Iſaac, a Type of Chriſt.

THIS farther Improvement however we may be allowed to make of the Hiſtory that is now before us, *viz.* that, as *Iſaac* is acknowledged to be a Type of the *Meſſiah*, we ought, in all Juſtice, to ſanctify the Notions of the *Jews*, and to apply *that* to the *ſpiritual Iſaac*, which they affirm of the *carnal*. They tell us, "That "*Iſaac* was a perfect Sacrifice; that God took Pleaſure in him; that they were all "offered up in his Perſon; that, whenever they are afflicted, God remembers that "*Iſaac* was bound; that, by this Sacrifice, his Anger is appeaſed, and the Works of "*Satan* are defeated." Theſe are their own Words; and this is their Prayer to the ſame Purpoſe, *O God, our Lord, let this be thy Will, as often as the Poſterity of Iſaac ſhall ſin, as often as it ſhall rebel againſt thee, remember the Sacrifice of Iſaac; for his Sake be merciful to us; look upon this only Son, and vouchſafe to be favourable to us, for his Sake, who was bound as a Lamb.* All this is literally applicable to Jeſus Chriſt only. "He was preſented as a perfect Sacrifice; in him we are all offered up; in "our Afflictions God remembers this Oblation, and, by this Atonement, is appeaſed; "the Merits of our Saviour procure us the Mercy of God; he looks upon this only "Son, and is favourable to us, for the Sake of him, who was bound like a Lamb." And we may ſay to him, but in a Senſe different to theſe deluded People, *O God, our Lord, let this be thy Will, as oft as the Poſterity of Iſaac ſhall ſin againſt thee, to remember Iſaac's Sacrifice; ſhew Mercy to us for his Merits; look upon thine only Son, and vouchſafe thy Favour to us for the Sake of him, who was bound like a Lamb,* [x] *and gave himſelf for us, an Offering and a Sacrifice to thee, for a ſweet-ſmelling Savour.* Amen.

SECT. I.

Of the Deſtruction of SODOM, *and Metamorphoſis of* LOT'S *Wife.*

Of the World, 2107, &c. Before Chriſt, 1897, &c.

DURING the Life of the Patriarch *Abraham*, there happened an Inſtance of divine Vengeance upon a wicked People, the ſevereſt we read of, ſince the general *Deluge*, in the ſudden Deſtruction of ſome Cities in the Plain of *Jordan*. *Moſes* indeed, in the Account he gives us of it, makes Mention but of two, *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*: But, in another Place, he enumerates four, and gives this Deſcription of their dreadful Puniſhment; [y] *When the Generations to come ſhall ſee the Plagues of that Land, and the Sickneſſes, which the Lord hath laid upon it, and that the whole Land thereof is Brimſtone, and Salt, and Burning, (like the Overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his Anger, and in his Wrath) even all the Nations ſhall ſay, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this Land?* Nay, if we will believe [z] *Strabo*, a Man of great Reading and Sagacity, and who, perhaps, might have an Account of the Thing from ſome Writer of the *Phœnician* Hiſtory; the Number of the Cities, that were deſtroyed at this Time, were *thirteen*; and to this there is a Paſſage in the Prophet, that ſeems to give ſome Countenance, tho' not as to the preciſe Number of them; [a] *As I live, ſaith the Lord God*, to Jeruſalem, *Sodom thy Siſter has not done, ſhe nor her Daughters (i. e.* the Cities, which were built round it, and were tributary to it) *have not done, as thou and thy Daughters have done.* But whatever the Number of the Cities might be, it will be proper for us, before we come to conſider in what Manner they were deſtroyed, to give ſome Account of their Situation.

How many Cities deſtroyed.

Where ſituated.

[b] THE *Plain of Jordan* includes the greateſt Part of the flat Country, through which the River *Jordan* runs, from its coming out of the *Sea of Galilee*, to its falling into

[x] Eph. v. 3.
[y] Deut. xxix. 22, &c.
[z] Lib. XVI.
[a] Ezek. xvi. 48.
[b] *Wells's* Geography.

into the *Aſphaltite Lake*, or *Salt-ſea*. But we are not to imagine, that this *Plain* was one continued Level, without any Riſings and Deſcents; the greateſt Part of it, indeed, was an open Champain Country, (and for this Reaſon it was commonly called μεγαπέδιον, or the great Field) but therein we read of the [c] *Valley of Jericho*, and [d] of *the Vale of Siddim*, [e] in the latter of which were the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, &c. ſituate, once a pleaſant and moſt fruitful Country, but now a noiſome, poiſonous, and dead Sea.

THE Deſcription, which the holy Scripture gives us of this Country, deſerves our Obſervation, the rather, becauſe it may be of Uſe to teach us, in what Manner this Lake or Dead-Sea came to be formed: [f] *And Lot lifted up his Eyes, and beheld all the Plain of Jordan, that it was well watered, every where, before the Lord deſtroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the Garden of the Lord, like the Land of Egypt, as thou comeſt unto Zoar.* The only Difficulty in theſe Words lies in the laſt Clauſe, *as thou comeſt unto Zoar*, which ſome Commentators have referred to the Words immediately preceding, *like the Land of Egypt*; [g] whereas if what is ſaid in Compariſon of the *Plain of Jordan* to the *Garden of the Lord*, (*i. e.* the Garden of *Eden*) and *to the Land of Egypt*, be underſtood by Way of *Parentheſis*, (as it ſeems moſt natural and obvious ſo to do) the Difficulty will be removed, and the Import of the laſt Clauſe (leaving out the *Parentheſis*) will become plain and eaſy, *viz. that, before the Lord deſtroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, the Plain of Jordan was well watered every where, as thou comeſt unto Zoar, i. e.* in the Vale of *Siddim*, where *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the other Cities, that were conſumed with them, once ſtood. This, I think, is a very eaſy and proper Explanation of the laſt Clauſe of the Verſe, if we read it *Zoar*, as it is in the preſent *Hebrew*, and moſt of the Tranſlations: But then if, inſtead of *Zoar*, we read it *Zoan*, (as we may eaſily do, conſidering that the Variation is but in one Letter, and that the *Syriac* Tranſlation actually reads it ſo) [h] nothing can agree better with what goes before, in relation to *Egypt*; for *Zoan* was a famous, and (at this Time, very probably) the *capital* City of *Egypt*, lying on the lower Part of the *Nile*, not far from the Sea-Coaſts, and where that River is divided into ſeveral Branches: So that the Senſe of the Paſſage, according to this Reading, will be, *That the Plain of Jordan, about Sodom and Gomorrah, was ſo well watered every where, that it reſembled the Garden of Eden, or the Land of Egypt*, and particularly, *as thou comeſt unto Zoan, i. e.* in the Parts about *Zoan*, where the *Nile* is divided into ſeveral Branches, and where the Country is more watered, than in other Parts.

Well watered.

[i] BUT 'tis wholly indifferent to our Purpoſe, whether *Lection*, *viz.* that of the common Bibles, or that of the *Syriac* Interpreter, the Reader will be pleaſed to follow, provided he does but remember, that the Part of the Plain of *Jordan*, where theſe Cities ſtood, is compared to the Garden of Paradiſe, and the Land of *Egypt*, upon the Account of its being well watered: And well it might, ſeeing it had (as the *Lacus Aſphaltites* has to this Day) not only the Streams of the River *Jordan*, running quite through it, but the [k] River *Arnon* from the *Eaſt*, [l] the Brook *Zared*, and the famous [m] Fountain *Callirrhoë*, from the *South*, falling into it. Now, ſince all this Water had no direct Paſſage into the Sea, it muſt neceſſarily follow, [n] either that it was conveyed away by ſome *ſubterraneous* Paſſage, or ſwallowed up in the Sands, which every Way encompaſſed it; and this might the more eaſily be done, becauſe the Inhabitants of thoſe hot Countries uſed to divide their Rivers into ſeveral ſmall Branches, for the Benefit of watering their Fields.

AND as this Plenty of Water gave great Richneſs to the Soil, and Fertility to the Country; [o] ſo the Wealth and Abundance of all Things (as Mankind is too apt to abuſe God's Gifts) made *Sodom*, and the neighbouring Cities, very infamous for their Wickedneſs and Impiety. The Prophet *Ezekiel* gives us this Deſcription of them: [p] *Behold, this was the Iniquity of thy Siſter Sodom, Pride, Fulneſs of Bread, and Abundance of Idleneſs was in her, and in her Daughters, neither did ſhe ſtrengthen the Hand of the Poor and Needy, but was haughty, and committed Abomination before me*; which [q] *Joſephus* might have in his Eye, when he gave us this Account of them. "The "*Sodomites, ſays he*, waxing proud, by reaſon of their Riches and Wealth, grew "contumelious

[c] Deut. xxxiv. 3. [d] Gen. xiv. 3. [e] Ibid. [f] Ibid. xiii. 10.
[g] *Wells*'s Geography. [h] Ibid. [i] *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations. [k] Joſeph.
Antiq. Lib. IV. Cap. 4. [l] Numb. xxi. 12. [m] *Pliny*, Lib. V. Cap. 16. [n] *Wells*, ibid.
[o] *Le Clerc*, ibid. [p] Chap. xvi. 49, 50. [q] Antiq.

" contumelious towards Men, and impious towards God; ſo that they were wholly " unmindful of the Favours they received from him: They hated Strangers, and " burnt in mutual Luſt with one another." And certainly the Debauchery of the Place could admit of no new Acceſſion, but was arrived at its utmoſt Height, when they could think of abuſing Strangers, after ſo abominable a Manner; to which the Prophet, with all Modeſty, ſeems to allude, when (to reprove the Profligate of his Age) he tells them, [r] *That they declare their Sin, as Sodom, and hide it not.*

How deſtroyed.

THESE horrid and execrable Enormities provoked the Divine Juſtice to deſtroy thoſe Cities, [s] *whoſe Cry was grown great* for Vengeance; and the Manner, wherein it was effected, *Moſes* has recorded in theſe Words: [t] *Then the Lord rained upon Sodom, and upon Gomorrah, Brimſtone and Fire from the Lord out of Heaven, and he overthrew thoſe Cities, and all the Plain, and all the Inhabitants of the Cities, and that which grew upon the Ground.* For the better underſtanding of which Words,

Moſes's Words explained.

we muſt obſerve, that, in the *Vale of Siddim*, the Tract of Ground which was now deſtroyed, there were a great many Pits of *Bitumen*, which our Tranſlation calls [u] *Slime-Pits, into which the Kings of Sodom and Gomorrah*, when purſued by their Enemy, *fell*, and that [x] this Bitumen, which is a very *combuſtible* Matter, is in ſome Places *liquid*, in others *firm*; and not only found near the Surface of the Earth, but lies ſometimes very deep, and is dug from the Bowels of it. 2. We muſt obſerve, that *Brimſtone and Fire*, which the Lord is ſaid to *rain upon Sodom and Gomorrah*, [y] means *Brimſtone inflamed*; that, in the *Hebrew* Stile, Brimſtone inflamed ſignifies *Lightning*, and the Reaſon why Lightning is thus deſcribed, no one can be ignorant of, that has either ſmelt the Places, which have been ſtruck with Thunder, or read what learned Men have wrote upon the Subject. 3. We muſt obſerve farther, that God is not only ſaid to have rained down *Brimſtone and Fire*, but *Brimſtone and Fire* FROM THE LORD; where the Addition of, *from the Lord*, which, at firſt Sight, may appear to be ſuperfluous, or to denote a *Plurality* of Perſons in the Deity (as ſeveral Chriſtian Interpreters will have it) does more particularly deſcribe the *Thunderbolt*, which, by the [z] *Hebrews*, and other Nations, is frequently called the *Fire of God*, or *Fire from God*, &c. and the Reaſon is, becauſe Men having no Power over theſe Kind of Meteors, and it being impoſſible for them, by any Kind of Contrivance, to aſcend up to the Clouds, God is therefore ſuppoſed to dwell there, and to caſt down his *Bolts* from thence.

[a] NOW, theſe Obſervations being put together, we may, in ſome Meaſure, form a Notion to ourſelves, how this Deſtruction came to be effected. For, though *Moſes* does not inform us, after what Manner the *Lightning* and *Thunderbolts*, from above, ſubverted theſe unhappy Cities, and the adjoining Territory; yet, ſince he plainly makes Mention of them, we cannot comprehend how it could happen any otherwiſe, than that, the Lightning and Thunderbolts falling in great Abundance upon ſome Pits of *Bitumen*, the Veins of that combuſtible Matter took Fire immediately, and, as the Fire penetrated into the lowermoſt Bowels of the bituminous Soil, thoſe wicked Cities were ſubverted (as the Tradition of the Heathen was) by a dreadful Earthquake, and the Subſiding of the Ground; and that as ſoon as the Ground was ſunk it would unavoidably fall out, that the Waters running to this Place in ſo great an Abundance, and mixing with the *Bitumen*, which they found in ſuch Plenty, would make a *Lake* of what was a *Valley* before, and a Lake of the ſame *Quality*,

The different Names of the Dead-Sea.

with what the Scripture calls the *Salt-Sea*, not only becauſe its Waters are *ſalt* to a very great Degree, but to diſtinguiſh it likewiſe from [b] two other Lakes, through which the River *Jordan* runs, which are *freſh Water*; and what, in ſucceeding Times, came to be called the *Dead-Sea*, [c] not only becauſe its Waters are immoveable, and more like a Sea of liquid Pitch, than of Water, but becauſe no living Creature can abide in it, nor any Plant or Tree grow near it, by Reaſon of thoſe bituminous Steams which it ſends forth; and, from the Abundance of which Matter, it moſt frequently occurs in Heathen Authors, under the Name of *Lacus Aſphaltites.*

THIS

[r] Iſa. iij. 9. [s] Gen. xviii. 20. [t] Ibid. xix. 24, 25. [u] Ibid. xiv. 10. [x] *Vid.* Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXV. c. 15. [y] *Saurin's* Diſſertations. [z] Thus, in the ſecond Book of *Kings*, THE FIRE OF GOD *came down from Heaven, and devoured them*, Ch. i. 12. And *Iſaiah* uſes the ſame Expreſſion, *he ſhall be puniſhed with* THE FIRE OF THE LORD, Ch. lxvi. 16. and ſo the *Latin* Poet ſpeaks,

Illicet igne Jovis, lapſiſque citatior aſtris,
Triſtibus exiluit Ripis ——— ——— *Stat. Theb.* Lib. I.

[a] *Le Clerc's* Diſſertations. [b] That of *Samachon*, and that of *Genneſareth*. [c] *Heylin's* Coſmography.

THIS Lake, [d] according to the Accounts we read of it, is incloſed on the *Eaſt* and *Weſt* with exceeding high Mountains; on the *North* it is bounded with the Plain of *Jericho*, on which Side it receives the Waters of *Jordan*; on the *South*, it is open, and extends beyond the Reach of the Eye, being twenty-four Leagues long, and ſix or ſeven broad. Its Water is extremely deep and heavy, of a *nauſeous* Taſte, and a very *noiſome* Smell; it is never agitated with the Wind, nor does it harbour either Fiſh or Fowl unaccuſtomed to the Water. It is full of Bitumen, which, at uncertain Seaſons, boils up from the Bottom in Bubbles, like hot Water; at which Time, the Superficies of the Lake ſwells, and reſembles the Riſing of an Hill. Adjoining to the Lake, are Fields, which, they report, were extremely fruitful in former Times, and inhabited by populous Cities, but are now ſo parched and burnt up, that they have loſt their Fertility, inſomuch, that every Thing, whether it grows ſpontaneouſly, or is planted by Man, whether it be Herb, Fruit, or Flower, as ſoon as it is compreſſed, [e] moulders away immediately into Aſhes: And to this the Author of the Book of *Wiſdom* certainly alludes, when he tells us, that [f] *of the Wickedneſs of thoſe Cities, the waſte Land, that ſmoaketh to this Day, is a Teſtimony, and the Plants bearing Fruit, that never come to Ripeneſs.*

It's Situation, Qualities, and adjacent Countries.

[g] THE Cinders, Brimſtone, and Smoke, ſays *Philo*, and a certain obſcure Flame, as it were, of a Fire burning, ſtill appearing about *Syria*, are Memorials of the perpetual *Evil* which happened to them; and, as *Joſephus* [h] adds, the Things that are ſaid of *Sodom*, are confirmed by ocular Inſpection, there being ſome Relics of the Fire which came down from Heaven, and ſome Reſemblance of the five Cities, ſtill to be ſeen. [i] And 'tis the Duration of theſe Monuments of Divine Wrath perhaps, which gave occaſion to St *Jude* to ſay, that the wicked Inhabitants of theſe Cities [k] *were ſet forth for an Example, ſuffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire*, i. e. of a Fire whoſe Marks were to be perpetuated unto the End of the World; [l] for it is no uncommon Thing in Scripture, to repreſent a great and irreparable Vaſtation, whoſe Effects and Signs ſhall be permanent to the lateſt Ages, by the Word αἰώνιος, which we here render *eternal*.

The Remains of their Deſtruction.

THUS, in all Probability, were the Cities in the Plain of *Jordan* overthrown: But if it ſhould be demanded, whether this was done by a Miracle, or by the common Methods of Nature, our Anſwer [m] is that in a Soil, impregnated with Bitumen, the Cities, which are built thereon, may be ſhaken by an Earthquake and ſwallowed by a ſudden *Hiatus*; that Thunder-Bolts too may fall, and ſet the Veins of Sulphur and Bitumen on Fire, which afterwards breaking out, and mingling with the Water, may, in a low Valley, eaſily cauſe a Lake full of *Aſphaltus*; all this is no more than what might be expected, as not exceeding the ordinary Power of Nature. But if theſe Things were done, before the *natural* Cauſes were in a Diſpoſition to produce them; if they had not come to paſs that Inſtant, unleſs it had been for ſome extraordinary Interpoſition of God, or his bleſſed Angels; it ought to be reputed no leſs a *Miracle*, than if every Particular in the Tranſaction plainly ſurpaſſed the uſual Operations of Nature. And, that the Judgment now before us happened in this Manner, [n] the two Angels diſpatched by Almighty God, upon this important Occaſion, [o] God's foretelling *Abraham* his Deſign, [p] the Angels acquainting *Lot* with the Errand, upon which they came, and their urging and inſtigating him to be gone, [q] *to make haſte and eſcape to* Zoar, *becauſe they could do nothing, until he was come thither*, are Arguments ſufficiently convincing, that the Thunder and Lightning, I ſay, or (as [r] others will have it) the Showers of liquid Fire; [s] or, rather Storms of Nitre, Sulphur or Bitumen, mingled with Fire, which fell upon theſe wicked Places, were immediately ſent down by the Appointment of God, and by the Miniſtry of his

How far all this was miraculous.

[d] See *Strabo*, Lib. XVI. and *Tacitus*, Lib. V. c. 6. [e] Whether there be any Truth in this Part of the Account of *Tacitus*, 'tis hard to tell; as for the Apples of *Sodom*, (to which he ſeems to allude) Mr *Maundrell* tells us, that he neither ſaw nor heard of any thereabouts; nor was there any Tree to be ſeen, near the Lake, from which one might expect ſuch Kind of Fruit: And therefore he ſuppoſes the *Being* as well as the *Beauty* of that Fruit is a mere Fiction, and only kept up, becauſe it ſerves for a good Alluſion, and help'd Poets to a pat Similitude. *Journey from* Aleppo *to* Jeruſalem. [f] Wiſd. x. 7. [g] De Vitâ Moſis, Lib. II. [h] De Bello Jud. Lib. V. c. 27. [i] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [k] Jude ver. 7. [l] *Whitby*'s Annot. in *Jud.* ver. 7. Thus God threatens to make the People of *Iſrael* ἐρημίαν αἰώνιον, a perpetual Deſolation, *Ezek.* xxxv. 9. σύριγμα αἰώνιον, a perpetual Hiſſing, *Jer.* xviii. 16. and ὀνειδισμὸν αἰώνιον, an everlaſting Reproach, *Jer.* xxiii. 40. And this more eſpecially is threatened, where the Deſtruction of a Nation is compared to the Overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; thus, *Babylon ſhall be, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,* ὐ κατοικηθήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνου, *it ſhall never be inhabited*, Iſa. xiii. 19, 20. and, to name no more, *Surely Moab ſhall be as Sodom, and the Children of Ammon as Gomorrah,* ἀφανισμὸν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, a perpetual Deſolation, *Zeph.* ii. 9. [m] *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations. [n] Gen. xviii. 22. [o] Ibid. ver. 17. [p] Ibid. xix. 13. [q] Ibid. ver. 22. [r] *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [s] *Patrick*'s Commentary.

his Angels, who knowing all the *Meteors* of the Air, and their repugnant Qualities, can collect, commix, and employ them, as they please, in the Execution of God's just Judgments, upon a People devoted to Destruction.

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WITH what Expedition and Alacrity these Ministers of Heaven do the Will of God, in the Punishment of the Wicked, as well as the Preservation of the Just, is apparent from this Instance of their forcing, as it were, *Lot* and his Family, *while they lingered*, out of the House; *their laying hold upon his Hand*, and hurrying him out of the Town; and then giving him this hasty Order; *Escape for thy Life, look not behind thee, stay not in all the Plain, escape to the Mountain, lest thou be consumed*; as if they had been impatient to have their Charge safely disposed of, that they might the sooner set about the Work, which God had appointed them to do.

THE Destruction of one's Native Place, and of all one's Kindred and Acquaintance together, is certainly a very affecting Consideration, even to those that escape the Calamity themselves: But our Concern, in such a Case, is to be proportioned, not according to the Ties of Affinity, but according to the Quality of the People, that undergo the Punishment; and this was the Thing which made the Disobedience of *Lot*'s Wife so great a Provocation to God. She, [u] in all Likelihood, was a Native of *Sodom*; and having heard what the Angels were ordered to do, and seeing the Heavens grow angry, and all their Bolts pointed towards it, she turned about, and stood still, to see the Fate of her Father's House, or to bewail the Loss of those she had left behind: For which Contempt of the Divine Command, in expressing a Concern for a People, that deserved no Consideration at all, the sacred Historian tells us, that [x] *she became a Pillar of Salt*; but whether in a *literal* or *figurative* Sense, is a matter of Debate among learned Commentators.

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2. THE Word which we render *Salt*, besides its obvious Signification, sometimes denotes [d] a *dry* and *barren Soil*, (such as is found about the *Asphaltite Lake*) and in this Sense the Word, applied to *Lot*'s Wife, intimates, that the Place of her Death was a barren Country, or the *Land of Salt*. At other Times, it signifies a *long Space and Continuance of Time*; hence we find an everlasting Covenant called [e] *a Covenant of Salt*, (*Salt* being therefore an Emblem of Eternity, because the Things that are seasoned therewith continue uncorrupt for many Years) and, in this Sense, *Lot*'s Wife may be said to become an *Everlasting Monument* of the Divine Displeasure, without any Consideration of the *Matter*, whereinto she was changed.

THESE are the Interpretations, which arise from the various Significations of the Words; and, in order to know which Sense we are to embrace, our Business must be to consider, whose Arguments and Testimony, in this Case, are of greatest Weight.

Arguments for the figurative.

THOSE, [f] that prefer the *figurative* Sense of the Words, do it, *they say*, for this Reason, because they are loth to multiply Miracles, where they see no Occasion. "It was enough for the Justice of God, and all indeed that the Angel seems to intimate, that this indiscreet Woman should suffer Death for her Dilatoriness; but "there needed no Miracle to accomplish this. Instead of being turned into a *Pillar* "*of Salt*, she might as well have been *stupified* with Fear, or *suffocated* by some "*bituminous*

[t] Gen. xix. 16, 17. [u] So says the *Targum* of *Jerusalem*. [x] Gen. xix. 26, *&c.* and some have given her the Name of *Adith*. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [y] *Le Clerc*'s Dissertations. [z] Gen. xxxi. 46, *&c.* [a] *Inter alios*, Sulpitius Severus. [b] So the Seventy Interpreters render it. [c] So St *Jerome* and *Onkelos*. [d] *Le Clerc*, ibid [e] Numb. xviii. 19. [f] *Vatablus*, *Bodinus*, *Le Clerc*, and *Richard Simon*, under the Name of *Sanjere*, *Bibl. Crit.* Tom. IV. Let. 44.

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" *bituminous* and *ſulphureous* Vapour. When ſhe ſaw her Native Country deſtroyed " by Fire from Heaven, heard the Clouds roar, and felt the Ground tremble under " her Feet; and, at the ſame Time, recollected in her Mind the ſad Deſtiny, that " befel all her Friends and Relations, except her Huſband and two Daughters; what " Wonder is it, if Grief and Fear ſo poſſeſſed her Spirits, that ſhe immediately ex- " pired, or at leaſt fainted away, and, having none to aſſiſt her in that *Deliquium*, " died upon the Spot. Or if we ſuppoſe, that the Woman did not only ſtop, and " turn her Eyes to her Native Country, but (as ſoon as the Angels were gone) went " back to behold the burning of it nearer, and ſo was *ſuffocated* by ſome poiſonous " Vapour, (as *Pliny the Elder* was, when his Curioſity led him too near the Mountain " *Veſuvius*) this is a Conjecture, that the Words of our bleſſed Saviour ſeem not to " diſcountenance; who, in the Deſcription of the Suddenneſs of the Deſtruction of " *Jeruſalem*, giving his Diſciples this Advice, [h] *be that is in the Field let him not* " *return back*, immediately ſubjoins, by Way of Example, *Remember Lot's Wife*; " whereby he ſeems to intimate, that ſhe returned back, and approaching too near " the deſecrated Place, periſhed in the common *Conflagration*. Thus, whether we " ſuppoſe that the Woman was ſtupified by Fear, or ſuffocated by Vapours, her " Death ſeems more *natural*, and anſwers the Divine Purpoſe of puniſhing her as " well, as if we ſhould deviſe the prodigious Event of her being turned into a *Pillar* " *of Salt*, which hardly any Reaſon can be given for; which we cannot ſay with " Certainty ever yet was ſeen; and which could not, without a Miracle, have been " preſerved ſo long,"

and for the literal *Senſe.*

THOSE, that adhere to the *literal* Senſe of the Words, argue in this Manner: That the Vale of *Siddim*, [i] where *Sodom* and the other Cities ſtood, was *originally* a very fruitful Soil, (as moſt *bituminous* Countries are) which induced *Lot* to make Choice of it for the Paſturage of his Cattle, but is at preſent the very Reverſe, a poor barren Land, full of Sulphur [k] and Salt-Pits; and hence they infer, that all the *ſulphureous* and ſaline Matter, which is found in this Tract of Ground now, was the Effect of Divine Vengeance, and ſhowered down upon it, in that Day, when God deſtroyed *Sodom* and the neighbouring Cities. They ſuppoſe therefore, [l] that this Woman, ſtanding ſtill too long to behold the Deſtruction of her Country, [m] ſome of that dreadful Shower, in the Manner of great Fleaks of Snow, fell upon her, and, clinging to her Body, wrapped it all over, as it were, in a Sheet of *Nitro-ſulphureous* Matter, which congealed into a Cruſt, as hard as a Stone, and made her appear like a Statue, or Pillar of [n] *Metallick* Salt, having her Body incloſed, and, as it were, *candied* all over with it.

IN this Manner they ſuppoſe this miraculous Event might have come to paſs; and, for the Truth and Reality of the Thing, they produce the Teſtimony of the Author of the *Book of Wiſdom*, who makes Mention [o] *of a ſtanding Pillar of Salt, as a Monument of an unbelieving Soul*, and the Authority of the Seventy Interpreters, who expreſsly render it ſo. Among *Jewiſh* Authors, they produce the Words of [p] *Joſephus*, who tells us, *that Lot's Wife, in her Flight, caſting her Eyes perpetually back upon the City, and being too much concerned about it, tho' God had forbid her ſo to do, was turned into a Pillar of Salt: I have beheld it myſelf, and it continues to this Day:* And, among *Chriſtian*, thoſe of *Clemens*, in his Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, where he tells us, that *his Wife went out along with him, but being of a different Opinion, and not perſiſting in Concord with him, ſhe was therefore placed for a Sign, and continues a Statue of Salt to this very Day.*

THE Accounts which modern Hiſtorians and Travellers give us of this Matter are ſo very different and uncertain, that we cannot ſo well tell where to fix our Belief. *Brocardus*, in his Deſcription of the Holy Land, tells us, that he gave himſelf the Fatigue of a very troubleſome Journey, to behold this Statue, but was not ſo happy as to ſatisfy his Curioſity; for the Inhabitants aſſured him, that the Place was inacceſſible, or could not be viſited without apparent Danger of Death,

[h] Luke xvii. 31, 32. [i] *Wells*'s Geography. [k] The whole Land of *Jewry* is furniſhed with Salt from hence. *Heylin*'s Coſmography. [l] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [m] *Aben Ezra* is of Opinion, that *Lot*'s Wife was burnt with Fire, which had ſome Salt mixed with it; ſo that ſhe was, as it were, ſeaſoned by that Salt: For he endeavours to prove, that Salt fell down from Heaven with the Fire; which was likewiſe the Sentiment of *H. Grotius*, from *Deut.* xxix. 23. [n] Interpreters have obſerved to us, that we muſt not take the *Salt*, here mentioned, for common Salt, which Water ſoon diſſolves, and could not poſſibly continue ſo long, being expoſed to the Wind and Rain; but for *Metallick* Salt, which was hewn out of the Rock, like Marble, and made Uſe of in building Houſes, according to the Teſtimony of ſeveral Authors. *Watſii Miſcell.* Tom. II. and *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [o] Wiſd. x. 7. [p] Antiq. Lib. I. c. 12.

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1. THE Word, which we render *Pillar*, [y] does properly signify two Things; 1. An Heap of any mighty Bulk, raised in Memory of some remarkable Event, such [z] as *Laban* and *Jacob* erected, in Remembrance of the Covenant made between them on Mount *Gilead*; and from this Signification of the Word, [a] some have imagined, that *Lot*'s Wife was turned into a *Heap of Stones*: Or, 2. It signifies either a *Statue*, or *Pillar*, from which Ambiguity of the Word, some would have *Lot*'s Wife turned [b] into a Pillar, without any Resemblance of a *Feminine* Shape; while others understand it to be [c] the Statue of a Woman, wherein all the Lineaments of her Sex are plainly to be seen. But, besides these *proper* Significations, the Word may, in a *Metaphorical* Sense, be applied to denote any Thing that is *immoveable* and *hard*, like a Pillar or Stone, and, according to this Acceptation, they suppose, that *Moses* might intend no more, than that *Lot*'s Wife was struck dead with Fear, or Surprize, or any other Cause, and so remained motionless, like a Stone.

2. THE Word which we render *Salt*, besides its obvious Signification, sometimes denotes [d] a *dry* and *barren Soil*, (such as is found about the *Asphaltite Lake*) and in this Sense the Word, applied to *Lot*'s Wife, intimates, that the Place of her Death was a barren Country, or the *Land of Salt*. At other Times, it signifies a *long Space and Continuance of Time*; hence we find an everlasting Covenant called [e] *a Covenant of Salt*, (*Salt* being therefore an Emblem of Eternity, because the Things that are seasoned therewith continue uncorrupt for many Years) and, in this Sense, *Lot*'s Wife may be said to become an *Everlasting Monument* of the Divine Displeasure, without any Consideration of the *Matter*, whereinto she was changed.

THESE are the Interpretations, which arise from the various Significations of the Words; and, in order to know which Sense we are to embrace, our Business must be to consider, whose Arguments and Testimony, in this Case, are of greatest Weight.

Arguments for the figurative.

THOSE, [f] that prefer the *figurative* Sense of the Words, do it, *they say*, for this Reason, because they are loth to multiply Miracles, where they see no Occasion. "It was enough for the Justice of God, and all indeed that the Angel seems to in-"timate, that this indiscreet Woman should suffer Death for her Dilatoriness; but "there needed no Miracle to accomplish this. Instead of being turned into a *Pillar* "*of Salt*, she might as well have been *stupified* with Fear, or *suffocated* by some "*bituminous*

[t] Gen. xix. 16, 17. [u] So says the *Targum of Jerusalem*. [x] Gen. xix. 26, &c. and some have given her the Name of *Adith*. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [y] *Le Clerc*'s Dissertations. [z] Gen. xxxi. 46, &c. [a] *Inter alios*, Sulpitius Severus. [b] So the Seventy Interpreters render it. [c] So St *Jerome* and *Onkelos*. [d] *Le Clerc*, ibid [e] Numb. xviii. 19. [f] *Vatablus*, *Bodinus*, *Le Clerc*, and *Richard Simon*, under the Name of *Sanjore*, *Bibl. Crit.* Tom. IV. Let. 44.

" *bituminous* and *ſulphureous* Vapour. When ſhe ſaw her Native Country deſtroyed " by Fire from Heaven, heard the Clouds roar, and felt the Ground tremble under " her Feet; and, at the ſame Time, recollected in her Mind the ſad Deſtiny, that " befel all her Friends and Relations, except her Huſband and two Daughters; what " Wonder is it, if Grief and Fear ſo poſſeſſed her Spirits, that ſhe immediately ex- " pired, or at leaſt fainted away, and, having none to aſſiſt her in that *Deliquium*, " died upon the Spot. Or if we ſuppoſe, that the Woman did not only ſtop, and " turn her Eyes to her Native Country, but (as ſoon as the Angels were gone) went " back to behold the burning of it nearer, and ſo was *ſuffocated* by ſome poiſonous " Vapour, (as *Pliny the Elder* was, when his Curioſity led him too near the Mountain " *Veſuvius*) this is a Conjecture, that the Words of our bleſſed Saviour ſeem not to " diſcountenance; who, in the Deſcription of the Suddenneſs of the Deſtruction of " *Jeruſalem*, giving his Diſciples this Advice, [h] *he that is in the Field let him not* " *return back*, immediately ſubjoins, by Way of Example, *Remember Lot's Wife*; " whereby he ſeems to intimate, that ſhe returned back, and approaching too near " the deſecrated Place, periſhed in the common *Conflagration*. Thus, whether we " ſuppoſe that the Woman was ſtupified by Fear, or ſuffocated by Vapours, her " Death ſeems more *natural*, and anſwers the Divine Purpoſe of puniſhing her as " well, as if we ſhould deviſe the prodigious Event of her being turned into a *Pillar* " *of Salt*, which hardly any Reaſon can be given for; which we cannot ſay with " Certainty ever yet was ſeen; and which could not, without a Miracle, have been " preſerved ſo long,"

THOSE, that adhere to the *literal* Senſe of the Words, argue in this Manner: That the Vale of *Siddim*, [i] where *Sodom* and the other Cities ſtood, was *originally* a very fruitful Soil, (as moſt *bituminous* Countries are) which induced *Lot* to make Choice of it for the Paſturage of his Cattle, but is at preſent the very Reverſe, a poor barren Land, full of Sulphur [k] and Salt-Pits; and hence they infer, that all the *ſulphureous* and ſaline Matter, which is found in this Tract of Ground now, was the Effect of Divine Vengeance, and ſhowered down upon it, in that Day, when God deſtroyed *Sodom* and the neighbouring Cities. They ſuppoſe therefore, [l] that this Woman, ſtanding ſtill too long to behold the Deſtruction of her Country, [m] ſome of that dreadful Shower, in the Manner of great Fleaks of Snow, fell upon her, and, clinging to her Body, wrapped it all over, as it were, in a Sheet of *Nitro-ſulphureous* Matter, which congealed into a Cruſt, as hard as a Stone, and made her appear like a Statue, or Pillar of [n] *Metallick* Salt, having her Body incloſed, and, as it were, *candied* all over with it. *and for the literal Senſe.*

IN this Manner they ſuppoſe this miraculous Event might have come to paſs; and, for the Truth and Reality of the Thing, they produce the Teſtimony of the Author of the *Book of Wiſdom*, who makes Mention [o] *of a ſtanding Pillar of Salt, as a Monument of an unbelieving Soul*, and the Authority of the Seventy Interpreters, who expreſsly render it ſo. Among *Jewiſh* Authors, they produce the Words of [p] *Joſephus*, who tells us, *that Lot's Wife, in her Flight, caſting her Eyes perpetually back upon the City, and being too much concerned about it, tho' God had forbid her ſo to do, was turned into a Pillar of Salt: I have beheld it myſelf, and it continues to this Day:* And, among *Chriſtian*, thoſe of *Clemens*, in his Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, where he tells us, that *his Wife went out along with him, but being of a different Opinion, and not perſiſting in Concord with him, ſhe was therefore placed for a Sign, and continues a Statue of Salt to this very Day.*

THE Accounts which modern Hiſtorians and Travellers give us of this Matter are ſo very different and uncertain, that we cannot ſo well tell where to fix our Belief. *Brocardus*, in his Deſcription of the Holy Land, tells us, that he gave himſelf the Fatigue of a very troubleſome Journey, to behold this Statue, but was not ſo happy as to ſatisfy his Curioſity; for the Inhabitants aſſured him, that the Place was inacceſſible, or could not be viſited without apparent Danger of Death,

[h] Luke xvii. 31, 32. [i] *Wells*'s Geography. [k] The whole Land of *Jewry* is furniſhed with Salt from hence. *Heylin*'s Coſmography. [l] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [m] *Aben Ezra* is of Opinion, that *Lot*'s Wife was burnt with Fire, which had ſome Salt mixed with it; ſo that ſhe was, as it were, ſeaſoned by that Salt: For he endeavours to prove, that Salt fell down from Heaven with the Fire; which was likewiſe the Sentiment of *H. Grotius*, from *Deut.* xxix. 23. [n] Interpreters have obſerved to us, that we muſt not take the *Salt*, here mentioned, for common Salt, which Water ſoon diſſolves, and could not poſſibly continue ſo long, being expoſed to the Wind and Rain; but for *Metallick* Salt, which was hewn out of the Rock, like Marble, and made Uſe of in building Houſes, according to the Teſtimony of ſeveral Authors. *Watſii Miſcell.* Tom. II. and *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [o] Wiſd. x. 7. [p] Antiq. Lib. I. c. 12.

because of the prodigious Beasts and Serpents that abounded there; but, more especially, because of the *Biduini*, who dwell near the Place, and were a very savage and inhumane Sort of People: And yet, if we will believe [q] other Writers of this Kind, they tell us expresly, that there is still some Part of it extant and plain to be seen, between *Mount Engaddi* and the *Dead-Sea*. We will suppose however for once, (among [r] many other fabulous Things) that the long Duration of this Monument is an Imposition of the Inhabitants upon the Credulity of Strangers, yet it will not therefore follow, that there was never any such Thing in Being, unless we can think it inconsistent with the Nature of God to work a Miracle for the Punishment of that Woman. Miracles indeed are not to be multiplied, unless there be Occasion for it: But where the plain Sense of the Words leads us to such a Construction, 'tis a Niceness, I think, no Way commendable, to endeavour to find out another, merely for the Sake of avoiding the Miraculousness of the Fact; as if the Scripture were more valuable for containing nothing but obvious Things, or the Majesty of God any Way magnified, by seeming to exert as little of its omnipotent Power as possible. The short of the Matter is this, we have a clear Account in a Book, full of Wonders, [s] of a Woman, confusedly guilty of Disobedience and Ingratitude, struck dead by the Hand of God, and turned into a *Statue of Salt*, for a Monument of Terror to future Generations: And is there any Thing in this so repugnant to Reason, or incongruous for God to do, that we must immediately flee to another Interpretation, and, to make the Matter easy, resolutely maintain that the whole Purport of the Thing is only this, that the poor Woman either suddenly died in a Fright, or indiscreetly fell into the Fire? May not God alter the Course of Nature, and work a Miracle when he pleases? May not he punish those, that have offended him, in what Manner he thinks fit? Is there any more Wonderfulness in *metamorphosing* of *Lot*'s Wife, than there was in changing the Rod of *Moses* into a Serpent? The same Power might do both; and since the same History has recorded both, there is the same Reason for the Credibility of both. Nay, of the two, the Transformation of *Lot*'s Wife seems more familiar to our Conceptions, since we want not Instances, in History, of Persons struck with Lightning, or killed with cold Vapours, that have immediately been hardened, like a Piece of Marble. Instead of disputing the Fact therefore, our best Way will be, to make a wise Improvement of it, and so to *remember Lot's Wife*, as to withdraw ourselves, as speedily as we can, from the Danger and Infection of evil Company; and, when we have made our Escape, never to return again, so much as in our Heart and Affections, lest we be involved in the Punishment of their Crimes.

Its Reality allowed.

[q] On the West Side of the Sea is a small Promontory, near which (as our Guide told us) stood the Monument of *Lot*'s metamorphosed Wife; Part of which (if they may be credited) is visible at this Day. Mr *Maundrell*'s Journey from *Aleppo* to *Jerusalem*.

[r] Whether it was *Tertullian*, or St *Cyprian*, that was the Author of these Verses, but the Poet has run together several portentous Things:

In fragilem mutata salem stetit illa, Sepulchrum
Ipsaque Imago sui, formam sine Corpore servans.
Durant adhuc etenim nudâ statione sub Æthram,
Nec Pluviis dilapsa situ, nec diruta ventis.
Quin etiam siquis mutilaverit advena Formam,
Protinus ex sese suggestu vulnera complet.
Dicitur & vivens alio sub corpore sexus
Munificos solito dispungere sanguine Menses.——— *Watsii Miscell. Sacra, Tom. II.*

[s] *Watsius*, ibid. *Bisselius*, in his *Argonaut. Americ.* Lib. XIV. c. 2. has a very remarkable Story to this Purpose; he tells us, that *Badicrus Almagrus*, who was the first Man that ever march'd an Army over the Mountains between *Peru* and *Chili*, by the Extremity of the Cold, and Unwholsomeness of the Air, lost, in that Expedition, a great many Men: Being obliged however, some five Months after, to return the same Way, what the Historian tells us, upon this Occasion, is almost incredible: *Stabant adhuc Equites peditesque, qui quinto ante mense obriguerant; immoti, inconsumpti, situ, formâ, habitu, quo repentina pestis quemque alligaverat. Alius pronus, humi stratus; alius rectus; non nemo videbatur inserta manibus frena quassare. Ad summam, invenit eos tales, quales reliquerat: Odore nullo tetro, colore non solito Funeribus; ac, nisi quod Anima dudum intercidisset, cætera spirantibus quàm extinctis similiores.* Which is enough to convince us, that there is nothing so extraordinary in what the History tells us of *Lot*'s Wife, as to make us have Recourse to a forc'd Interpretation.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of ISAAC *and* JACOB.

Of the World, 2192, &c. Before Christ, 1812, &c.

AFTER the Death of *Abraham*, which happened in the 175th Year of his Age, *Moſes* proceeds to the Hiſtory of *Iſaac*; but of him the moſt material Thing that he has to ſay, is, that he married a Wife [t] out of his Father's Kindred and Country, by whom he had two Sons, that were *Twins*; *Eſau*, whoſe Poſterity, called *Edomites*, dwelt in the *South* Border of *Canaan*, viz. *Idumea*; and *Jacob*, who, though younger, was deſigned by God to inherit the *Promiſe*; and was therefore permitted to get the *Birth-right* from his elder Brother, and the *Bleſſing* from his Father; and the Manner in which he accompliſhed both, is thus related by the holy Penman: [u] *Eſau* and *Jacob* being now grown to Man's Eſtate, it happened, one Day, that *Eſau*, having fatigued himſelf extremely in the Field, came fainting to *Jacob*, who, at that very Time, had juſt made ſome Pottage of *Lentils*, [x] which happened to be of a *reddiſh* Colour. *Eſau* ſeeing the Pottage, and being very hungry, deſired his Brother to let him eat with him, and, in order to move his Compaſſion, told him, *he was ready to faint*: But *Jacob* knew how to take Advantage of his Brother's Neceſſity; and therefore, to inflame his Deſire, and make him more fond of the Bargain by Delays, he propoſed to him to ſell his Birth-right. *Eſau*, through Eagerneſs of Appetite, not conſidering the *Advantage* of the Thing, but only conſulting his preſent Neceſſity, careleſſly anſwered, [y] *Behold I am ready to die, and what Profit ſhall this Birth-right do me?* Whereupon *Jacob*, finding him ſo diſpoſed, was not content with his *Word*, but, to make the Bargain ſure, would not part with his Pottage, till he had obliged his Brother to confirm it with an *Oath*; which *Eſau* never ſcrupled, and ſo parted with his Birth-right, together with all the excellent Privileges belonging to it, for a *Meſs of Pottage*; for which he is accounted, [z] by the Apoſtle, a *profane Perſon*; as well he might, if the Advantages he parted with, were ſuch as theſe, *viz.* that the Firſt-born of the Family [a] was called to the *Prieſthood*, and conſecrated to God; during his Parents Life, [b] was next in Honour and Dignity to them; and, at their Deceaſe, [c] had a double Proportion of the Inheritance; [d] ſucceeded to the Government of the Family or Kingdom; and was [e] intitled to the Promiſe of the Meſſiah, to be born of his Race.

Jacob purchaſes the Birth-right of his Brother.

IF theſe were the Rights of *Primogeniture*, *Eſau* was certainly culpable, for parting with them upon any Conſideration whatever; but then neither is *Jacob* to be excuſed, who, taking the Advantage of his Brother's Hunger, over-reached him in the Bargain, and got that for a Trifle, which he knew to be of inеſtimable Value. There is ſomething ſo inhumane in denying an hungry Perſon a little Victuals; ſomething ſo ſelfiſh in expecting a Price, and an *exorbitant* Price too, from one's own Brother, for a *Meſs of Pottage*, that (to give you the Senſe [f] of a great Commentator upon the Text) the one's covetous Method of attaining is not much better, than the other's ſupine Negligence in relinquiſhing this Benefit. The only Thing that can be ſaid in Favour of *Jacob*, (tho' it be ſaid without any poſitive or direct Proof) is, [g] that he acted by ſpecial Direction from God, who, as ſole *Lord* and Proprietor of all Things, can transfer human Rights as he pleaſes; and that *Eſau*, who had no ſuch Direction, acted, in this Particular, without *Authority*, and againſt the Order of Nature, which had inveſted him with the *Birth-right*. The Whole therefore is to be reſolved into the ſole Will and Appointment of God; but neither could *that* be ſo well pleaded, [h] but that we have Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that *Moſes*, who is ſo very conciſe in his Account of Things, has left out many Circumſtances, which might be of Uſe to clear up the Patriarch's Conduct, and to give us a different Notion of this, as well as of another Action of the like Nature.

Both cenſured for it.

HIS

[t] Gen. xxiv. [u] *Howell's* Hiſtory of the Bible. [x] The Original ſeems to imply, that *Eſau* aſked greedily for *ſome Red*, ſome *Red*, and for this Reaſon, as ſome imagine, he was called *Edom*, which ſignifies *Red*. Whence the City which he built, and the whole Country, his Poſterity inhabited, was called by the ſame Name. *Patrick's* Commentary. St *Auſtin* upon *Pſalm* lxx. ſays, that they were *Egyptian Lentils*, which were in great Eſteem, and much commended by *Athenæus* and *A. Gellius*; and which gave the Pottage, very probably, a *red* Tincture, *ibid.* [y] Gen. xxv. 32. [z] Heb. xii. 16. [a] Exod. xxii. 29. [b] Gen. xlix. 3. [c] Deut. xxi. 17. [d] 2 Chron. xxi. 3. [e] *Vid.* Jurieu, Hiſt. des Dogmes, Part I. c. 9. [f] *Le Clerc's* Commentary. [g] *Fiddes's* Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [h] *Saurin's* Diſſertations.

Of the World, 2245, &c. Before Christ, 1759, &c.

Supplants him in his Father's Bleſſing.

HIS Father *Iſaac*, [i] being now grown old, and, by the Decay of Nature, deprived of his Eye-ſight, was deſirous to beſtow his *Paternal* Bleſſing upon his Family, before he died; and, to this Purpoſe, [k] ordered his Son *Eſau* to go out into the Field, and kill him ſome *Veniſon*, and thereof to make him a *ſavoury* Diſh, ſuch as might raiſe his feeble Spirits, and enable him to deliver his laſt and ſolemn Benediction with a ſuitable *Pathos*. The laſt Benedictions of theſe extraordinary Men of Old (beſides [l] being *Forms* of conveying their Eſtates, and making thoſe their Heirs, upon whom they beſtow'd ſuch Bleſſings) were likewiſe *prophetical Oracles*, ſuch as denoted infallible Events, and extended to the moſt remote Periods of Time: And therefore we need leſs wonder, that we find *Rebekah*, who always loved *Jacob* beſt, endeavouring to divert this important Boon to the Profit and Intereſt of her favourite Son, though we cannot ſo much admire the Method, ſhe made uſe of, to attain her End. The moſt candid Conſtruction is, [m] that *Iſaac* had forgot, though *Rebekah* remembered, the Prophecies, which were made concerning their two Sons, (that [n] *the Elder ſhould ſerve the Younger*) even before they were born; and therefore ſhe only endeavoured to bring her Huſband to do that *unwittingly*, which God had pre-ordained was to be done, but what ſhe knew her Huſband would not do *knowingly*, without much Uneaſineſs: And to this Purpoſe ſhe adviſed *Jacob*, by all Means, to get the Start of his Brother, and to preſent his Father with ſuch *ſavoury Meat*, as ſhe could make out of the tendereſt Part of a Kid, and prepare it in ſuch a Manner, as would paſs upon the good old Man for *Veniſon*. The only Impediment to this her Contrivance was, the different Complexion of theſe two Brothers, [o] *the one being very hairy, the other a ſmooth Man*; and therefore, to obviate this Inconvenience, ſhe covered *Jacob*'s Hands with the Skins of Kids (which [p] in Eaſtern Countries have Hair, not unlike what grows on human Bodies) and ſo ſent him in, to deceive his Father, and intercept the Bleſſing from his Brother.

Jacob and Rebekah cenſured.

THE Plot ſucceeded; but we muſt own ingenuouſly, that *Rebekah* was guilty of a Crime, in ſuggeſting ſuch wicked Advice to her Son; and that *Jacob* committed another, in permitting himſelf to be ſeduced by ſo bad a Monitor; that both of them preſumed to limit the Power of God, by thinking that a Complication of *Frauds* was neceſſary for the fulfilling a Divine *Prophecy*; and that tho' he was pleaſed to ratify a Bleſſing, which, by being extorted after ſuch a Manner, made him, who received it, unworthy of it; yet this he did *for his own Name's ſake*, (as he ſays upon ſundry like Occaſions) and to confirm his Purpoſe and Decree, that in the Line of *Jacob all the Families of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed*. In ſhort, [q] how excuſable ſoever *Jacob* may be ſuppoſed upon the Right of *Primogeniture*, which was fairly tranſferred to him by Bargain; yet, when he tells a *poſitive* Lye, in averring himſelf to be the Man he really was not, there is no Apology to be made for him; and tho' he obtained the Bleſſing by ſuch Ways and Means, as if they may be excuſed in him, or he in uſing them, on Account that God had appointed the Bleſſing to him; yet are they not to be imitated, or drawn into Example by any other. Which they would do well to conſider, who propoſe the *whole* Scripture, and every Part thereof, without Diſtinction, for a ſtanding Rule both of Faith and Manners to all Believers, in all Ages.

Iſaac's *Bleſſing to* Jacob.

BUT to continue our Story. Deceived by theſe Stratagems, and perſuaded by the many falſe Aſſurances, that *Jacob* had given him, the Patriarch proceeds to pronounce over his *younger* Son the Bleſſing, which he had reſerved for the *Elder*. He wiſhes, or rather prophetically promiſes *Jacob*, 1. Abundance of Wealth; [r] *God give thee of the Dew of Heaven, and the Fatneſs of the Earth, and Plenty of Corn and Wine.* 2. Dominion and Empire; *Let People ſerve thee, and Nations bow down before thee.* 3. A Superiority over the reſt of his Family; *Let thy Mother's Son bow down to thee.* And, 4. Proſperity to his Friends, and Confuſion to his Foes; *Curſed be every one, that curſeth thee, and bleſſed be every one, that bleſſeth thee.*

SCARCE had the good Patriarch made an End of his good Wiſhes, when *Eſau*, returning from Hunting, brought him ſome Veniſon, and aſking his Father to riſe and eat thereof, put him in a great Diſorder and Surprize, when he found that his younger Brother had been there, and deceived him. It might reaſonably be expected, that the Patriarch, under ſuch Provocation, might have recalled his Bleſſing, and beſtowed it upon *Eſau*, where he firſt intended it: But the [s] *Jews* have a Tradition, that Hell

[i] An hundred thirty and ſeven Years old, as many have demonſtrated. [k] Gen. xvii. [l] *Patrick's* Commentary. [m] *Saurin's* Diſſertations, and *Howell's* Hiſtory of the Bible. [n] Gen. xxv. 23. [o] Ibid. xxvii. 11. [p] *Patrick*, ibid. [q] *Howell*, ibid. [r] Gen. xxvii. 28, 29. [s] *Jarchi*, in Gen. xxvii.

Hell opened its Mouth before his Eyes, and, by the Dreadfulneſs of the Proſpect, hindered him from pronouncing Predictions, contrary to the Will of Heaven. The more rational Conjecture is, that ſome ſupernatural Inſpiration over-ruled the Intentions of *Iſaac*, and therefore ſome Interpreters have thought, that by [t] *Iſaac's trembling very exceedingly*, we are to underſtand, [u] that he fell into a Trance, and therein received Inſtructions what to do.

To make *Eſau* however ſome Amends for what his Brother had beguiled him of, *and to* Eſau. he likewiſe gives him a Bleſſing; but, [x] according to the *Vulgar Tranſlation)* the firſt Clauſe of it eſpecially ſeems to have too great an Affinity with what he had given *Jacob* before, and therefore, (conſidering *Iſaac*'s Apology, [y] *What ſhall I do for thee, my Son? Thy Brother I have made thy Lord, and with Corn and Wine have I ſuſtained him)* it may more conſiſtently be rendered, I think, [z] *thy Dwelling ſhall be* WITHOUT *the Fatneſs of the Earth, and the Dew of Heaven*; for this certainly connects better with what follows, *by the Sword thou ſhalt live, and ſerve thy Brother*; *but*, in Time, *ſhalt thyſelf obtain Dominion, and ſhake his Yoke from off thy Neck.* The whole indeed is a *Prediction*, rather than a *Bleſſing*; and was exactly verified in the Poſterity of *Eſau*. *Idumea*, [a] the Place where they dwelt, was a barren and mountainous Country; the Inhabitants, a bold and warlike People; [b] in the Reign of King *David*, they were ſubjected to the *Jews*; [c] but, in *Jehoram*'s Time, they began to ſhake off the Yoke: For the Space of eight hundred Years they lived in a Kind of Independency, [d] till *Hircanus* again ſubdued them; but, in the Reign of [e] King *Herod*, (who himſelf was an *Edomite*, and whoſe Poſterity poſſeſſed the Throne for a Century and an half) they regained their *Liberty*, if not a *Superiority* over the *Jews*.

ESAU had conceived ſuch Hatred againſt his Brother for ſupplanting him theſe two Times, both in the *Birth-right* and in the *Benediction*, that he reſolved to be revenged; and, ſuppoſing that his Father would not live long, intended, as ſoon as he was dead, to murther him. But his Mother *Rebekah*, being apprized of his Deſign, acquainted *Jacob* with it, adviſing him to make the beſt of his Way to his Uncle *Laban* at *Haran*; and (to cover the Thing) ſhe pretended to her Huſband a mighty Uneaſineſs, for Fear leſt *Jacob* ſhould marry into an *unbelieving* Family, as *Eſau* had done already. The Contrivance, in ſhort, was ſo managed, that the Patriarch willingly parted with his Son, after he had renewed and confirmed the Bleſſing, he had given him before; and his Mother took Care to ſend him away *privately* for Fear of ſome Miſchief from his Brother's Malice.

Jacob's *Ladder, and the Reaſon of the Viſion.*

To form a right Notion of *Jacob*'s Condition at this Time, and the Protection of Heaven extended to him, we muſt imagine, that we ſaw the *Heir* of a powerful Family, taking his Leave of his aged Parents, and, for Fear of his angry Brother, departing from his Father's Houſe; beginning a Journey of four hundred and fifty Miles, into a ſtrange Country, all alone, on Foot, and without any Servant to attend him; walking all the Day with a penſive Heart, and forced, at Night, to take up his Lodging in the open Air, with the Sky for his *Canopy*, and nothing better than an hard Stone for his *Pillow*. To ſuppoſe *Jacob* in this Caſe, I ſay, we ſhall ſoon perceive the Reaſon why he had the Repreſentation made to him in a Dream, [f] *of a Ladder, reaching from Earth to Heaven, and the Angels of God aſcending and deſcending on it.*

THE Ladder (according to the Senſe of the beſt [g] Interpreters) is an *Emblem* of Divine Providence, which governs all Things; its *being ſet upon the Earth*, denotes the *Stedfaſtneſs* of Providence, which nothing is able to unſettle; its *reaching up to Heaven*, ſignifies its *Univerſality*, or that it extends to all Things; the *ſeveral Steps of the Ladder*, are the *Motions* and *Actions* of Providence; the *Angels going up and down*, ſhew, that they are the great *Miniſters* of Providence, never idle, but always employed in the Preſervation of the Juſt; their *aſcending*, means their *going up* to receive the Divine Orders and Commands; and their *deſcending*, their *coming down* upon Earth, to put them in Execution. So that, in this *Hieroglyphick*, God ſignified to *Jacob*, now full of Cares and uneaſy Apprehenſions, that the Man, who was under the Care and Protection of Divine Providence, wanted not Company, in a Wilderneſs; wanted not Security, in the Midſt of Dangers; wanted not Direction, in his moſt difficult and momentous Undertakings, ſince there were ſo many *miniſtring Spirits*, holding

[t] Gen. xxvii. 33. [u] St Aug. Quæſt. in *Gen.* Tom. IV. [x] *Le Clerc*'s Commentary on *Gen.* xxvii. [y] Gen. xxvii. 37. [z] Ibid. *ver.* 39, 40. [a] *Heylin*'s Coſmography. [b] 2 Sam. viii. 14. [c] 2 Kings viii. 20. [d] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XIII. [e] Ibid. [f] Gen. xxviii. 12. [g] Maimonides More Nevoch.

Correſpondence between Earth and Heaven, and daily and hourly ſent forth from God's Preſence [h] *to miniſter unto them, who ſhall be Heirs of Salvation.*

Why God reveals himſelf in Dreams.

DREAMS and nocturnal Viſions were common Ways of God's revealing himſelf to the Patriarchs of old; [i] whether it was to convince them of his *Omnipreſence, that he was about their Beds, and about their Paths, and ſpied out all their Ways*; or to inform them of his *conſtant Care*, and that he was not unmindful of them, even when they little thought of him, and were moſt abſent from themſelves; to convince them of his *unlimited Power* over their Souls, when even Sleep itſelf could not hinder his Acceſs to them; or that the *Mind*, in the Dead and Silence of the Night, was fitter to receive Divine *Impreſſions*, when Nature was *huſh*, and the Paſſions *aſleep*, and no Variety of Thoughts to diſtract its Attention. However this be, the Repreſentation of the *Ladder*, [k] and the comfortable Words, which God ſpake from the Top of it, made ſuch a lively Impreſſion upon *Jacob*, that he proceeded on his Journey with Chearfulneſs, after he had performed his Devotions, and made this ſolemn Vow and Proteſtation; [l] *If God will be with me, and keep me in this Way that I go, and give me Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on, ſo that I come again to my Father's Houſe in Peace, then ſhall the Lord be my God.* He went; he married; he proſpered; [m] *the Man increaſed exceedingly, and had much Cattle, and Maid-Servants, and Men-Servants, and Camels, and Aſſes.* But, as he returned Home, hearing that his Brother *Eſau*, with four hundred Men, was coming out againſt him, his Heart began to fail him. *To fight*, his Forces were too weak; *to flee*, his Retinue was too cumberſome, and therefore he took the Method, which Prudence ſuggeſted; firſt to implore the Divine Aſſiſtance, and then to endeavour to pacify his Brother with a Preſent. His Prayer was offered up, his Preſent was ſent, when [n] *Jacob, being left alone* (as *Moſes* has given us the Account) *there wreſtled a Man with him, until the breaking of the Day.* But who this Man was, or what the Intent of this *myſtical* Action might be, has been a Matter of ſome Perplexity to Interpreters.

Jacob's *Wreſtling.*

Who it was with.

• *ORIGEN*, I think, is a little ſingular, and no Way to be juſtified in his Conceit, when he tells us, that the Perſon, with whom *Jacob* wreſtled, was an *evil Angel*; in Alluſion to which he thinks that the Apoſtle grounds his Exhortation; [p] *Finally, my Brethren, be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might, for we wreſtle not againſt Fleſh and Blood, but againſt Principalities, againſt Powers, againſt the Rulers of Darkneſs in this World, and againſt ſpiritual Wickedneſs in high Places.* But that *Jacob*, [q] who, at this Time, was under the more immediate Protection of Heaven, ſhould be ſubmitted to the Aſſaults of a wicked Angel, much more, that ſo good a Man, as *Jacob*, ſhould aſk a Bleſſing of an evil Spirit; ſhould merit the Name of *Iſrael*, i. e. *a Conqueror of the Mighty God*, for overcoming ſuch an one, or call the Place of Combat, *Peniel*, i. e. *the Face of God*, in Commemoration of his Conflict with ſuch an one, is a very abſurd, if not impious Suggeſtion.

'TIS the general Opinion of the *Jewiſh* Doctors, that the Perſon, with whom *Jacob* contended, was a *good Angel*; and as their ſettled Notion is, that theſe heavenly Spirits ſing every Morning the Praiſes of God, at the Approach of Day; [r] ſo the Requeſt, which this *Antagoniſt* makes, [s] *let me go, for the Day breaketh*, denotes him to be one of the *Angelick Hoſt*, who had ſtayed his prefixed Time, and was now in haſte to be gone, in order to join the *heavenly Choir*. The Prophet [t] *Hoſea*, I think, has determined the Matter very plainly, when, ſpeaking of *Jacob*, he tells us, *that he took his Brother by the Heel in the Womb, and by his Strength he had Power with God, yea he had Power over the Angel, and prevailed*; but then the Queſtion is, whether it was a *Created Angel*, as moſt of the *Jewiſh* Doctors maintain, or [u] an *Uncreated Angel*, i. e. the Son of God in the Appearance of an Angel, as ſeveral both ancient and modern Divines have thought. It was the received Opinion in the firſt Ages of the Church, that where-ever we find Mention of God's appearing to

[h] Heb. i. 14. [i] Watſii Miſcell. Sacra de Somniis, Tom. II. [k] Gen. xxviii. 13. [l] Ibid. ver. 20. [m] Ibid. xxx. 43. [n] Ibid. xxxii. 24. [o] De Principiis, Lib. III. [p] Eph. vi. 10, 12. [q] Gen. xxxii. 28. [r] Jarchi *in* Gen. xxxii. [s] Gen. xxxii. 26. [t] Chap. xii. 3, 4. [u] The Son of God, ſays *Tertullian*, is ſtiled an *Angel* or Meſſenger, not as a Name deſigning his *Nature*, but his *Office*; and they are ſuperficially ſkilled in *Philo* the *Jew*, who know not, that he calls the Logos both God's *Image* and his *Angel*. *Juſtin Martyr* alſo ſhews to *Trypho* the *Jew*, that the God, who appeared to *Abraham*, was the Miniſter of the univerſal Creator; and he gives this as a Reaſon, why the WORD is called an Angel, *viz.* that he may be known to be the Miniſter and Subſtitute of the Father of all Things. *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry.

to the *Patriarchs* of old, the Action muſt be aſcribed to the LOGOS, or ſecond Perſon in the ever-bleſſed *Trinity*. [x] Thus, of the *three*, which appeared in human Shape to *Abraham*, the Perſon to whom he perſonally addreſſes himſelf, calling him *his Lord*, is rightly ſuppoſed to be the Son of God, attended then only with two Angels; and for the ſame Reaſons, that we produced in Confutation of *Origen*'s vain Conceit, the *Man*, that here ſtrove with, and bleſſed *Jacob*, was the ſame *Divine* Perſon, but unattended by any Angel, and cloathed in an human Shape, the better to convince the Patriarch of the *Unreaſonableneſs* of his Fear and Diſtruſt. For, we muſt remember, [y] that when God made any *Promiſe* to the ancient Believers, gave them any *Command*, which they were to impart to others, or was minded to convince them of certain *Truths*, which they were either ignorant or diffident of before; he generally made Uſe of ſome *viſible Sign* or Token (as the Manner of the *Oriental* People was) to the End, that, their Imagination being more ſtrongly affected by ſuch Objects, they might more firmly believe the Truth, or more gladly receive the Promiſe, or more *emphatically* deliver the Command, which God communicated to them. Now this was the preſent Condition, that *Jacob* was in: He had offended his Brother *Eſau* in ſupplanting him, nor had twenty Years Abſence aſſuaged his Rage: His Brother *Eſau*, he underſtood, was coming out againſt him with four hundred armed Men; and what to do in ſuch Circumſtances he knew not. Under this Perplexity of Mind, a Perſon comes to him, wreſtles with him, and lets him obtain the Victory; and then tells him the Meaning of this *Emblematical* Action, as the Vulgar *Latin* (which is the cleareſt Tranſlation) expreſſes it, *if thou haſt been ſtrong againſt God, how much more ſhalt thou prevail with Men?* And accordingly, *Joſephus* informs us, [z] that *Jacob conſidered the Victory, he now obtained, as an* Omen *of great Happineſs, and as an Aſſurance to his Poſterity, that no human Force ſhould overcome them.*

Why they wreſtled.

THERE is one Paſſage more, wherein this Patriarch is concerned, and a very remarkable Inſtance it is of the Divine Love and Eſteem for him, and that is, the Revelation, which God vouchſafed him, of the *particular Time*, when the *Saviour of Mankind*, who was to ſpring from his *Loins*, was to make his Appearance in the World; which *Jacob*, in the Benediction he beſtows upon his Son *Judah*, is ſuppoſed to expreſs in theſe Words: [a] *The Scepter ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet, until* SHILOH *come; and unto him ſhall the Gathering of the People be.* But becauſe the Prophecy is ſuppoſed to have its *Difficulties*, it will be proper to explain its *Terms*, in order to diſcover the true Senſe and Meaning of it.

Of the World, 2315, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 1689, &c.

Jacob's *Prophecy of the* Scepter *explained.*

THE Word *(Schebet)* which we render *Scepter*, has both a *literal* and *figurative* Signification. [b] In its *literal*, it denotes a *Rod*, a *Wand*, a *Scepter*, a *Shepherd's Crook*, &c. and in its *figurative*, it either implies that *Correction* and *Puniſhment*, whereof the *Rod*, or that *Authority* and *Kingly Power*, whereof the *Scepter* is the Enſign. It cannot be doubted, I think, but that the Words are to be taken in a *figurative* Senſe here; and yet it cannot be ſuppoſed to ſignify *Puniſhment*, [c] becauſe the Tribe of *Judah* was ſo far from being in a State of Affliction, that it always flouriſhed exceedingly, and was honoured with many high Privileges above the reſt of the Tribes: It muſt therefore, in this Place, be put for *regal Power* and Dominion, whereof the *Scepter*, [d] in ancient Times, was thought a fitter Repreſentation, than either the *Crown* or *Diadem*. 2. The Word *(Mechokek)* which we render *Lawgiver*, is not *ſynonymous* with the former, but has two diſtinct Significations. [e] It ſometimes ſignifies, not a Perſon, that has Power to *make* Laws himſelf, but only to *teach* and inſtruct others in thoſe, that are already made; and in this Senſe, it differs very little from the Scribes, and Doctors, and Teachers of the Law, which we find ſo much Mention made of, in our Saviour's Time. At other Times, it denotes a Perſon inveſted with Power and Authority even to make Laws, [f] but then this Authority of his is inferior to that of a King; ſo that properly he may be called an inferior *Magiſtrate* or *Governor*, ſet over a People by the Licence of ſome *Monarch*, and by his Commiſſion appointed to rule. And in this Senſe the Word ſhould the rather be taken here, becauſe there were ſuch *Governors* and *Deputies* ſet over the *Jews*, after their Return from the *Babylonian* Captivity. 3. The Phraſe which we render

[x] Hilary, de Trinit. Lib. IV. [y] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [z] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. I. c. 19. [a] Gen. xlix. 10. [b] *Saurin*, ibid. [c] *Du Pin*'s Hiſtory of the Old Teſtament. [d] *Selden*'s Titles of Honour. [e] *Kidder*'s Demonſtration of the *Meſſias*. [f] *Patrick*'s Commentary.

render *from between the Feet*, [g] according to the Modeſty of the Scripture Expreſſion, means nothing elſe, but *of his Seed and Poſterity*; and whatever the Original of the Word *Shiloh* may be, (which ſome tranſlate [h] *the Sent, the Son, the Seed*; others *quiet, peaceable, proſperous*; and others again, *the auguſt, the renowned*, and the like) from which *Radix* ſoever, I ſay, the Word be derived, both *Jews* and *Chriſtians* are agreed in this, that by the Perſon, to whom this Title is applied, the Patriarch intended the *Great Saviour* of the World, who is called the *Meſſias*, or Chriſt. 4. By [i] *Judah*, there is not that Neceſſity to underſtand the People of that Tribe only, but all thoſe who were afterwards called *Jews*, even tho' they belonged to *Benjamin* or *Levi*; becauſe, after the Defection of the reſt from the Houſe of *David*, theſe two Tribes, joining themſelves to the other Tribe of *Judah*, were incorporated together, and uſually called the *Houſe or Kingdom of Judah*, in Oppoſition to that of *Iſrael*. 5. There is but one Expreſſion more, *and unto him ſhall the Gathering of the People be*; and herein there is no great Difficulty, ſince all are agreed, that it contains a Prophecy of the Converſion, or Obedience of the *Gentiles* to the Kingdom of Chriſt; [k] only, there is this to be obſerved, that, as the Word *(ſhall*, or *ſhall be)* is not in the *Hebrew*, it ought to be left out of the Tranſlation, and will make the Sentence run thus: *The Scepter ſhall not depart from Judah*, &c. *until Shiloh come, and the Gathering of the People be to him.* So that theſe two Events, *the Coming of Chriſt*, and *the Converſion of the Gentiles*, according to this Part of the Prophecy, were to precede the *Subverſion* of the *Jewiſh* Government.

IF then, by *Shiloh*, we are to underſtand the *Meſſiah*; by *Judah*, the People of the *Jews*; by the *Scepter*, the regal Power; and by the *Lawgiver*, a ſubordinate Magiſtrate or Governor; then may the full Senſe of *Jacob*'s Prophecy be rendered in this ſhort Paraphraſe: "The Royal Power and Authority, which in Time to "come they ſhall enjoy, ſhall not be taken from them; or, at leaſt, they ſhall not "be deſtitute of Rulers and Governors, (tho' of an inferior Degree) even in their "moſt declining Condition, until the *Meſſiah*, and Saviour of Mankind, come into "the World: But, after he is come, then ſhall the Poſterity of *Judah* have neither "King nor Ruler of their own; for their whole Commonwealth ſhall be diſſolved, "and never recover itſelf again. The Nations, that were Aliens under former Diſ-"penſations, ſhall then become obedient to the *Meſſiah*, and be made Members of "his *Myſtical* Body, the Church, whoſe Boſom ſhall be open to receive all." [l] *For the Mountain of the Houſe of the Lord* (as it is explained in an after-Prophecy) *ſhall be eſtabliſhed upon the Top of the Mountains, and it ſhall be exalted above the Hills, and the People ſhall flow unto it.* This ſeems to be a genuine Senſe of the Words, and if we look into the State of the Hiſtory, during that Time, we ſhall find the Expoſition verified by the Event.

The full Senſe of it,

and its Accompliſhment ſhewn from Hiſtory.

FROM the Time of *David* indeed, when the *Scepter* firſt came into the Tribe of *Judah*, to the Captivity of *Babylon*, which was four hundred and ſeventy Years, the Succeſſion of Kings in that Tribe was uninterrupted; but after the ſeventy Years of their Captivity was expired, tho' they lived by their own Laws, and in their own Country, [m] yet they had no abſolute and independent Authority of their own, but were, firſt, under the *Perſian* Monarchs, afterwards, upon the Conqueſt made by *Alexander*, under the *Greeks*, and after that, under the Kings of *Aſia* and *Egypt*, until they were at laſt brought under Subjection to the *Roman* Yoke.

IT muſt not be forgot however, that, all this while, that they were under the Dominion of others, they enjoyed *Rulers* and *Governors*, of their own, who adminiſtered their Affairs, by Way of *Deputation* from the ſeveral Monarchs, that held them in Subjection. The firſt of theſe Governors was *Zerobabel*, whom [n] the Prophet ſtiles a *Captain*, or *Prince of Judah*; and tho' the ſacred Hiſtory gives us no Account of his Succeſſors, yet, according to the [o] *Jewiſh* Tradition, there were two, *viz. Meſhullum*, the Son of *Nehemiah*, and *Hananiah* his Grandſon. *Nehemiah* came afterwards and executed the ſame Office; but, upon his Deceaſe, the Government came into the Hands of the High-Prieſts. The *Sacerdotal* Government, being always ſubordinate to ſome foreign Power or other, [p] ſubſiſted for above 400 Years; and in *Simon*'s Time, who was called the *Prince* and *Governor of the Jews*, was raiſed to a very great Splendor, ſo that his Grandſon *Ariſtobulus* took Occaſion from thence to

[g] *Mede*'s Diſcourſes. [h] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [i] Ibid. [k] *Mede*, ibid. [l] Iſa. ii. 2. [m] *Patrick*, ibid. [n] Hag. i. 1. [o] In Seder Olam Zuta, f. 21. p. 1. [p] *Lewis*'s Antiq. of the Heb. Repub.

to aſſert the Title of a *King*, tho' he had but a Shadow of that Power. His Succeſſors, however, continued the Title, until *Herod*, obtaining the Kingdom of *Judea* from the Senate of *Rome*, ſtripped them of their Power, and deſtroyed their Family. After the Death of *Herod* [q] the Kingdom was divided by *Auguſtus* into Tetrarchies, giving *Judea* to *Archelaus*, and dividing the reſt of the Country between *Philip* and *Antipas*. But *Archelaus*, miſbehaving himſelf, was deprived of his Government; whereupon *Judea* was reduced into the Form of a *Province*, was ruled by *Roman Prefects*, and never after that enjoyed the Privilege of having either *King* or *Governor* of its own. The *Jews* at laſt were utterly deſtroyed by *Titus*; their City and Temple were burnt to the Ground; their Form of Government, both *Civil* and *Eccleſiaſtical*, quite extinct; and above ſeventeen hundred Years are now paſt and gone, ſince all this happened to them, and yet there is not the leaſt Sign of their *Reſtoration*.

The Whole ſummed up.

To determine then the particular Period of Time, when this Prediction came to be fulfilled, we may ſay, with great Juſtice, that tho' the *Scepter*, or regal Power, never properly returned, after the firſt *Captivity*; yet the *Law-giver*, or Government by Perſons of their own Nation, did not depart from the *Jews*, until their utter Exciſion by *Titus*. [r] *The Gathering of the Gentiles*, as well as the *Coming of Shiloh*, was to precede their *Deprivation*; but, at the Time of their firſt Subjection to the *Roman* Power by *Pompey the Great*, *Shiloh* was not come; at the Time of their being reduced to a Province under *Archelaus*, the *Nations* were not gathered unto him; but, at the final Subverſion of their State by *Titus*, when both theſe Things were come to paſs, (*Chriſt* come, and the *Gentiles* converted) then did the *Law-giver* (as the *Scepter* had done before) *depart from Judah*, and never ſince that Time has there either been any *Form* of Government, or *Perſon* inveſted with regal Authority among them. May the Senſe of this their Calamity and Diſperſion be a Means, in God's Hands, to open their Eyes, and turn their Hearts!

SECT. III.

Of JOSEPH *and* JOB.

Of the World, 2276, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 1728, &c.

OF all the Children, which *Jacob* had, [s] *Joſeph* was the deareſt to him, and that not only becauſe he was the *eldeſt* Son of his beloved Wife *Rachel*, but becauſe he was a Youth of a *ſuperior* Spirit and Capacity. The Love and Partiality of the Father, however, occaſioned ſuch Envy and Indignation in the reſt of the Brethren, that they once agreed in a Deſign to have murthered him; but, upon better Conſideration, thought it more adviſeable, [t] *to ſell him*, for a Slave, *to a Company of Iſhmaelites*, who were going with their Merchandize down into *Egypt*. The Preſervation and Protection of *Joſeph* in *Egypt*, in order to the ſuccouring his Father and Brethren, in a Time of *Famine*, is a rich Diſplay of the Goodneſs and Providence of God. [u] That *Joſeph* ſhould be hated and ſold by his Brethren to the Merchants, who were travelling into *Egypt*; that theſe Merchants ſhould diſpoſe of him, not to a *private* Perſon, but to a *great Officer* of the King's Court, which gave Occaſion to his future Promotion; that he ſhould be preferred and eſteemed by his Maſter, yet, after that, caſt into *Priſon*, and ſo (to all outward Appearance) rendered incapable of making any farther Figure in the World; that, during his Confinement, he ſhould *interpret* his Fellow-priſoners, the chief Baker's and Butler's Dreams, juſt as they came to paſs; and, in ſome conſiderable Time, be recommended to *Pharaoh* to interpret his Dream likewiſe, and by him advanced, and made *Ruler* over all the Kingdom: Here is ſuch a Variety of Scenes of Life, in the Compaſs of a few Years, as manifeſt the Divine Contrivance; and the Skill of his *inſpired* Penman, in painting ſome of theſe Scenes and their Incidents, is not unworthy of our Obſervation.

Joſeph's Hiſtory.

THE Lamentation, [x] which *Jacob* makes upon the ſuppoſed Loſs of his Son *Joſeph*; the Refuſal, [y] which *Joſeph* gives to the Requeſt and Enticement of his enamoured Miſtreſs; the Severity, [z] wherewith he ſeems to treat his timorous Brethren, and the Fear, Sorrow, and Self-Condemnation, [a] which all the while ariſes, and ſtruggles in their

Moſes's Elegance in expreſſing it.

[q] *Patrick's* Commentary. [r] *Mede's* Diſcourſes. [s] Gen. xxxvii. 3. [t] Ibid. ver. 28. [u] *Collyer's* Introduction to the Scriptures. [x] Gen. xxxvii. 33, &c. [y] Ibid. xxxix. 8, &c. [z] Ibid. xlii. 9, &c. [a] Ibid. ver. 22.

their Breasts; [b] *Jacob*'s Denial to let *Benjamin* go, [c] and the Grief and Reluctancy, wherewith he is brought at last to consent; [d] *Joseph*'s Enquiry concerning his Father's Health, and [e] the ready Notice he takes of his Brother *Benjamin*; [f] *Judah*'s Confession of an unknown Crime, [g] his humble Representation of his sorrowful Case, and [h] generous Offer to become a *Bond-slave* in the room of his Brother, that *his Father's grey Hairs might not go with Sorrow to the Grave*, are all Master-strokes in their Kind, and related by *Moses* in a most inimitable Manner. What can be more affecting, than the Words of *Joseph*, upon the Discovery? [i] *I am Joseph: Does my Father yet live? Come near to me, I pray you; I am Joseph, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve Life.* What can express more triumphant Joy, than those Words of *Jacob*, upon hearing the unexpected News? [k] *It is enough, Joseph my Son is yet alive, I will go and see him before I die*; or more Satisfaction than those upon the Interview? [l] *Now let me die, since I have seen thy Face, because thou art yet alive.* Never did any Author exceed *Moses*, in the easy and lively Way (as we call it) of painting and delineating Nature.

BUT our Business is not to pursue the sacred Writer thro' all the *pathetick* Passages of this *Narration*, nor can we consider *Joseph* in all the various Transactions of his Life: What this Patriarch was more especially remarkable for, was Dreams, and the Interpretation thereof; the one the Occasion of his Sufferings, and the other of his Exaltation; and therefore it may not be improper, in the first Place, to take some Notice of them.

Dreams natural, *how occasioned.*

DREAMS, [m] according to their common Distribution, are either *Natural* or *Supernatural*. Dreams that are *Natural*, arise from several Causes; the *Temper* and Constitution of our Bodies, the *Crisis* and Disposition of our Blood and Spirits, the Nature of the Meat we eat, and the Drink we drink, [n] nay, the Want, sometimes, of Meat to eat, and Drink to drink, contribute severally to produce them; but, above all, the Accidents and Occurrences of the Day, the Passions and Affections of the Mind, and [o] the Business and Employment of the Man's Life, are the Things that occasion nocturnal Images and Representations. And as they proceed from such a Variety of Causes, there can be no Dependence on them, nor any Foreknowledge of future Occurrences to be acquired from them; for which Reason the wise Son of *Syrach* gives us this Admonition concerning them, [p] *Dreams lift up Fools* ἀναπτερεῦσιν, says the Septuagint, add Wings to them, (as sometimes Men dream they fly) and make them vainly expect great Matters; *whoso regardeth them is like him that catcheth at a Shadow, and followeth after the Wind*; and thereupon he adds, *if they be not sent from the Most High in thy Visitation, set not thine Heart upon them; for Dreams have deceived many, and have failed those who put their Trust in them.*

Supernatural.

THE wise Man, however, acknowledges that *Dreams* are sometimes *Supernatural, and sent from the Most High:* And this, indeed, was so common a Means of Revelation among the Patriarchs of Old, and among the *Jewish* People afterwards, that there is no gainsaying it. [q] *God speaketh once, yea twice*, says *Elihu* in the Book of *Job, in a Dream, in a Vision of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth upon Men, in Slumberings upon the Bed*; for not only the peculiar People of God, [r] but even *Pagans*, and such as were *Aliens* to the Covenant, have been sometimes vouchsafed Divine Admonitions in their Dreams: To which Purpose *Joseph* observes to *Pharaoh*, that [s] *God, by his Dreams, had shewn him what he was about to do*; in like Manner, as *Daniel* does to *Nebuchadnezzar*, that [t] *the Great God had made known to the King what was to come to pass hereafter.*

How

[b] Gen. xlii. 36, &c. [c] Ibid. xliii. 14. [d] Ibid. ver. 27. [e] Ibid. ver. 29. [f] Ibid. xliv. 16. [g] Ibid. ver. 18. *Philo*, in the Treatise, which he calls *Joseph*, has put in the Mouth of *Judah* a very long and elaborate Speech upon this Occasion; but, though it is excellently well turned, it has not near the Life of the *Original*. [h] Gen. xliv. 33. [i] Ibid. xlv. 3, &c. [k] Ibid. ver. 28. [l] Ibid. xlvi. 30. [m] *Vid.* Watsii Miscell. Sacra, Tom. I. and *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. p. 193. [n] *An hungry Man dreameth, and behold he eateth, a thirsty Man dreameth, and behold he drinketh*, Isa. xxix. 8.

[o] In somnis eadem plerumque videmus obire
Causidici causas agere & componere Leges,
Enduperatores pugnare, & prælia obire.——LUCRET. Lib. IV.

[p] Eccl̃us. xxxiv. 1, &c. [q] Job xxxiii. 14, 15. [r] *Empedocles, Pythagoras*, and *Plato*, were of Opinion, that Dreams were sometimes sent by good *Dæmons:* They talk much of Θεῖοι Ὄνειροι: They fancied there was some one particular God, who was employed in sending them to Men, whom they therefore call Ὀνειροπομπός; though *Homer* ascribes them immediately to the Supreme *Jupiter*—Καὶ γὰρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστι, Iliad. I. [s] Gen. xli. 25. [t] Dan. ii. 29.

HOW Dreams, which were ſo common a Method of God's communicating himſelf to Mankind, come now to be ſuperſeded, can be no great Difficulty to us, who have it recorded in the Rule of Faith, that [u] *God, who at ſundry Times, and in divers Manners, ſpake, in Times paſt, unto the Fathers, hath, in theſe laſt Days, ſpoken unto us by his Son.* The full and compleat Manifeſtation of his Will, which he hath made to Mankind under the Goſpel, has taken away the Neceſſity of inferior Means; though it may not perhaps be amiſs to ſuppoſe, (as [x] a great Divine of our Church has done) that the Increaſe of Wickedneſs in the World, Multiplicity of Buſineſs, Sollicitude of Mind about Worldly Affairs, and Mens too much depending upon *politick* Devices to accompliſh their Ends, are in a great Meaſure the Cauſes of the Ceſſation of Divine Admonitions by true Dreams. It is not to be queſtioned however, but that, even in theſe Days and under this Diſpenſation, in great Exigencies, or very momentous Occurrences, under ſore Grievances, or very difficult Undertakings, God may ſtill comfort and encourage, direct and admoniſh, either by Words or viſible Repreſentations, good Men, in their Dreams. *Why intermitted.*

AND as Dreams very often proceed from God, and are ſometimes very *Myſterious* and *Enigmatical*; ſo the true Senſe and Interpretation of them can only be derived from the ſame Spirit, that produced them. To which Purpoſe we may obſerve, that *Joſeph* reminds *Pharaoh* of a *Maxim*, not unknown to the *Egyptians* before, *viz.* that the Art of *Divination* does not proceed from Men, but from God; or as *Moſes* makes him ſpeak, [y] *It is not for me, God ſhall give Pharaoh an Anſwer of Peace:* And having thus made Acknowledgment to Heaven for the Light and Underſtanding, which he received from thence, he gave the King the Explanation of two of his Dreams. He told him, that both of them prognoſticated the ſame Event, that the [z] *Seven Fat Kine*, and the *Seven full Ears of Corn*, implied ſeven Years of Plenty, which would begin preſently; and that the *Seven Lean Kine*, and the *Seven withered Ears*, denoted *Seven Years of Famine*, which would immediately ſucceed the former. The *Emblems*, 'tis owned, were natural enough: The full Ears did not improperly repreſent Plenty, as the withered did Famine: The Cow or Ox was a common *Hieroglyphick*, which the *Egyptians* made uſe of to ſignify *Food* and *Agriculture*; and the *Nile*, upon the Banks of which *Pharaoh* imagined he ſaw theſe Objects, was the general Cauſe, either of their Want or Plenty. But how reſemblant ſoever theſe Images might be, yet it certainly had been above the Power of any Man's Conjecture, to have applied them to ſo many Years of *Plenty* and *Famine*, had not the Spirit of God ſuggeſted it to him. *Interpretation of Dreams, whence.*

DANIEL makes the ſame Acknowledgement of Divine Inſpiration, when he comes to explain *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Dream; [a] *Art thou able*, ſays the King, *to make known unto me the Dream, which I have ſeen, and the Interpretation thereof?* To which *Daniel* anſwers, *The Secret, which the King hath demanded, cannot the Wiſe Men, the Aſtrologers, the Magicians, the Soothſayers ſhew unto the King, but there is a God in Heaven, that revealeth Secrets:* And if we are minded to know by what Method he obtained that Revelation from Heaven, the inſpired Hiſtory has acquainted us farther, that it was by Prayer and Interceſſion; [b] *Then Daniel went to his Houſe, and made the Thing known to Hananiah, Miſhael, and Azariah, his Companions, that they would deſire Mercies of the God of Heaven, concerning this Secret; and the Secret was revealed unto him in a Night-Viſion, for which he bleſſed the God of Heaven.* From which Paſſage it ſeems reaſonable to imagine, that the Way of finding out the Meaning and Interpretation of a Dream, was not by deviſing any *Rules of Art*, or conſulting with *Evil Spirits*, (as it afterwards became a Practice among the *Pagan Oneirocriticks*) but by immediately addreſſing to God, who either, for that Time, made to them (in their Sleep) a freſh *Repreſentation* of the Thing wherein they were conſulted, together with its *Explanation*, as it was in the Caſe of *Daniel*; or gave them a permanent and inherent Power and Faculty of expounding Dreams, whenever they were propoſed to them, as it ſeems to have been in the Patriarch *Joſeph*; whoſe Renown for *Divination* was ſo great, even in the Heathen World, that the Abridger of *Trogus Pompeius* has given him a Character, (wherewith we conclude this Patriarch's Story) very much reſembling what we read of him in Scripture: [c] *Joſeph, the Youngeſt of his Brethren*, ſays he, *had a Superiority of Genius, which made them fear him, and ſell him to foreign Merchants, who carried him into* Egypt, *where he practiſed the Magick Art with ſuch Succeſs, as rendered him very dear to the* Joſeph's *Character from* Juſtin.

[u] Heb. i. 1.
[a] Dan. ii. 26, &c.
[x] *Jackſon*, on the *Creed*, Lib. I.
[b] Ibid. *ver.* 17, &c.
[y] Gen. xli. 16.
[c] Juſtin, Lib. XXXVI. c. 2.
[z] Ibid. *ver.* 26, &c.

the King; he had a great Sagacity in the Explanation of Prodigies and Dreams; nor was there any Thing ſo abſtruſe, either in divine or human Knowledge, that he did not readily attain. He foretold a great Dearth, ſeveral Years before it happened, and prevented a Famine's falling upon Egypt, *by adviſing the King to publiſh a Decree, requiring the People to make Proviſion for divers Years. His Knowledge, in ſhort, was ſo great, that the* Egyptians *liſtened to the Prophecies coming from his Mouth, as if they had proceeded not from Man, but God himſelf.*

Job's Country, and when he lived.

NOT long after the Days of *Joſeph*, when the Children of *Iſrael* ſojourned in *Egypt*, there lived a Perſon of great Renown in the Land of *Uz*, [d] (which ſome place in *Arabia Deſerta*, and ſome elſewhere) whoſe Patience and Conſtancy under Affliction is largely recorded in Scripture, and recommended as a Pattern to all ſucceeding Generations. That *Job* lived in the Days of the Patriarchs, is very probable, from the long Duration of his Life, which, [e] continuing an hundred and forty Years after his *Reſtoration*, could hardly be leſs, in all, than two hundred. That he lived before the Law, may be gathered, from his Burnt-offerings, in the Land where he lived, both commanded and accepted by God, though ſuch Offerings were by the Law forbidden in any other Place, but that, which the [f] *Lord had choſe in ſome one of the Tribes of Iſrael:* And that he lived after *Jacob*, may be inferred from the Character given of him by God, [g] that *there was none like him upon the Earth for Uprightneſs, and the Fear of God*; which large Commendation could not have been allowed to any, while *Jacob* lived, who was God's favourite Servant, and deſcended from the *Father of the Faithful* in a direct Line; nor can it be ſuppoſed, that it was proper to be given, after *Jacob*, to any, while *Joſeph* lived, who, in moral Virtues, and other Excellencies, made as bright a Figure, as any in his Time.

[h] AFTER theſe Conjectures, though the preciſe Time of *Job*'s Birth cannot, with ſufficient Ground, be aſcertained; yet there is a general Concurrence in Opinion, that he lived in the Time of the Children of *Iſrael's* Bondage, ſince his Birth is placed in the very ſame Year wherein *Jacob* went down into *Egypt*, and the Beginning of his Trial, in the Year when *Joſeph* died; though it might probably be leſs liable to Exception, if his Birth were ſet a little lower, much about the Time of *Jacob*'s Death; and then *Joſeph*, who ſurvived his Father about four and fifty Years, will be dead about ſixteen Years; at which Time *Job* might juſtly deſerve the great Character, that is given of him, and have no Man then living, in Virtue and Integrity, his Equal or Competitor.

Job a real Perſon, and of what Family.

THAT *Job* was a *real* Perſon, * and not a *fictitious* Character, and his Story Matter of Fact, and not a *parabolical* Repreſentation, is manifeſt from [i] all thoſe Places in Scripture, where we find Mention made of him. His Name, his Quality, his Country, the Number of his Children, and Pedigree of his Friends, do all denote the *Reality* of his Hiſtory; though it muſt not be denied, that whoever compoſed it, has dilated and adorned his *Narrative*, to make it a more ſenſible and moving Inſtance of perfect Patience, and to give us more lively and particular Inſtructions of the Notions we are to entertain of Proſperity and Adverſity. His Family, however, is not ſo well agreed on, ſince ſome will have him to be deſcended from *Terah*, the Brother of *Abraham*; others from *Eſau*, the Brother of *Jacob*; and others (with more Probability)

[d] *Wells*'s Geography. [e] Job xlii. 16. [f] Deut. xii. 13, 14. [g] Job i. 8. [h] *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible.

* Though the learned Author of *the Divine Legation of* Moſes has taken a great deal of Pains to ſhew, that the *Book of Job* is certainly a *Dramatick* Compoſition; that, from ſeveral *Alluſions* and *ſimilar* Paſſages, it was written under the Diſpenſation of the Law; within a ſhort Time after the Return of the *Jews* from their Captivity, and not improbably by *Ezra* himſelf; yet nevertheleſs, he plainly acknowledges the real Exiſtence of this holy Patriarch, and the Truth of this exemplary Story; for, "It is a general Practice of *Dramatick* Writers, of the ſerious Kind, "to chuſe an illuſtrious Character, and well-known Story, in order to give the Piece its due Dignity and Efficacy; "and therefore, it by no Means follows, *ſays he*, that though we allow the Book of *Job* to be *dramatical*, the "*Perſon* and Hiſtory of *Job* ſhould be *fictitious*." Vol. II. Lib. 16. As to the Time, when the Author of the Book of *Job* lived, ſeveral learned Men ſeem, in a great Meaſure, to be of the ſame Sentiment; for thus we find them repreſented: "Grotius croit, que cet Auteur eſt poſterieur à David, & à Solomon, dont il ſemble qu'il ait "imité divers endroits, & remarque fort judicieuſement, qu'il y à dans ce Livre des Maniéres de parler, qu'on ne trou-"ve, que dans Eſdras, dans Daniel, & dans les Paraphraſes Caldaïques. Cadure, dans ſon Commentaire ſur Job, à "auſſi remarqué pluſieurs Chaldaïſmes dans ce Livre; & quelques perſonnes ſavantes ſoutiennent, que les Arabiſmes, "qu'on y croit avoir remarqué, ne ſont que des Maniéres de parler Chaldéennes. On y trouve des Imitations de di-"vers endroits des Pſeaumes, &c. Ainſi lors qu'on dira que l'Auteur de ce Livre peut avoir véçu au Commencement "de la Captivité, on ne dira rien que ne ſoit aſſez vraiſemblable, & qui ne ſoit conforme au Stile de cet Ouvrage." *Vid.* Sentimens de quelque Théologiens ſur l'Hiſtoire Critique. *Let.* 9. 4

[i] Ezek. xiv. 14. *and* James v. 11.

Probability) from *Abraham* by *Keturah* his ſecond Wife; ſince he is ſaid [k] to have been the *greateſt of all the Men in the Eaſt*, into which Country *Abraham* ſent the Children, [l] which he had by that Woman.

His Wealth, Virtue, and Afflictions.

How conſiderable a Figure *Job* made in the World, both in temporal and ſpiritual Bleſſings, the Vaſtneſs of his Stock, [m] conſiſting of 7000 Sheep, 3000 Camels, 500 Yokes of Oxen, and 500 She-Aſſes; the Largeneſs of his Family, conſiſting of ſeven Sons and three Daughters; and the Excellency of the [n] Character, which God has been pleaſed to give him, is a ſufficient Demonſtration: And yet we ſee, that, as ſoon as God was pleaſed to ſubmit him to the Devil's Aſſaults, what a ſad Cataſtrophe befel him. The *Sabeans* ran away with his Aſſes; the *Chaldeans* plundered him of his Camels; a Fire from Heaven conſumed his Sheep and Servants; a Wind overwhelmed all his Children; and, while the Senſe of theſe Loſſes lay heavy upon his Spirits, his Body was ſmitten with a ſore Diſeaſe; inſomuch that he, who, but a few Hours before, was the greateſt Man in the Country, *in whoſe Preſence* [o] *the young Men were afraid to appear, and before whom the aged ſtood up*; to whom Princes paid the moſt awful Reverence, and whom Nobles, in humble Silence, admired; diveſted of all Honour, ſits mourning on a Bed of Aſhes, and, inſtead of royal Apparel, is overſpread with Sores and Ulcers. Nay, and to add, if poſſible, to the Weight of his Calamity, the *Wife of his Boſom*, from whom, more than all the World, he might expect ſome comfortable Aſſiſtance, inſtead of pitying him in his deplorable Condition, treats him with the utmoſt Scorn, and reproaches him with his Virtue, [p] *doſt thou ſtill retain thine Integrity, curſe God and die.*

His Conferences with his Friends.

The Misfortunes and Afflictions that befel *Job* were ſo remarkable, that they ſpread about the neighbouring Countries, and from thence, to more diſtant Regions, till at laſt they reached the Ears of his old Friends, *Eliphaz* the [q] *Temanite*, *Bildad* the [r] *Shuhite*, and *Zophar* the [s] *Naamathite*, who no ſooner heard of his ſad Condition, but they made an Appointment to go together, and pay him a Viſit, and comfort him. The unaccountable Greatneſs of his Calamities led them into a Miſconception of him, and made them ſuppoſe, that it muſt be the *vindictive* Hand of God, either for ſome deep Hypocriſy, or ſome ſecret Enormity, that fell ſo heavy upon him: And therefore *Eliphaz*, in three Orations, *Bildad* in as many, and *Zophar* in two, argue from common *Topicks*, that ſuch Afflictions as his could come from no Hands but God's, and that it was inconſiſtent with the Juſtice of God, to afflict without a Cauſe, or puniſh without Guilt; and thereupon charging *Job* with being a grievous Sinner, and a great Hypocrite, they endeavour, by all Means, to extort a *Confeſſion* from him. But *Job*, immoveable in his Sincerity to God, and Innocence to Man, confidently maintains his Virtue, in *reſponſory* Speeches to every one of theirs; refutes their unkind Suggeſtions, and reproves their Injuſtice and Want of Charity, but always obſerves a ſubmiſſive Stile and Reverence, when he comes to ſpeak of God, of whoſe ſecret End, in permitting this Trial to come upon him, being ignorant, he often importunately begs a Releaſe from Life, leſt the Continuance of his Pains ſhould drive him to Impatience.

During theſe Arguments between *Job* and his Friends, there was preſent a young Man named *Elihu*, [t] who having heard the Debates on both Sides, and diſliking both their *Cenſoriouſneſs*, and *Job*'s *Juſtification* of himſelf, undertook to convince him, by Arguments drawn from God's *unlimited Sovereignty*, and unſearchable Wiſdom, that it was not inconſiſtent with his *Juſtice*, to lay his afflicting Hand upon the *beſt* and moſt *righteous* of Men; and that therefore, when any ſuch Thing came upon them, it was the Duty of all Men to bear it without murmuring, and to

[k] Job ii. 3. [l] Gen. xxv. 6. [m] Job i. 3. [n] Ibid. *ver.* 8. [o] Ibid. xxix. 8. [p] Job ii. 9. The Ambiguity of the *equivocal* Word in the *Hebrew*, which ſignifies *to bleſs*, as well as *curſe*, has occaſioned great Diſagreement among Interpreters, who have thereupon given a quite different Conſtruction to the Words. They that make *Job*'s Wife bid him *curſe God and die*, ſuppoſe, that *Job* lived after the Law was given, which made it [*Lev.* xxiv. 15, 16.] Death to *curſe God*; and that his Wife (an *Arabian* and *Heathen*) knowing the Law, and the Puniſhment for Blaſphemy, ſpake thus to him, not to reproach, but in Pity to him, that he might be delivered from his Pains. But all this Suppoſition is overthrown, if, according to the general Conſent, *Job* lived before the Delivery of the Law. Others therefore ſuppoſe, that ſince it was the Devil's Deſign to make *Job curſe God*, he inſtigated his Wife to perſuade her Huſband to it, not with Reſpect to any *penal* Law, (for that is ridiculous to imagine) but in Expectation, that ſo open and bold a Blaſphemy would provoke the Divine Juſtice immediately to ſtrike him dead, and thereby deliver him from his intolerable Miſeries. But however it was, 'tis certain, by *Job*'s Anſwer, that ſhe gave him no good Advice, otherwiſe, ſo meek and good a Man would not have given her ſo ſharp a Reproof. *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [q] So called from *Teman*, Grandſon to *Eſau* by his Son *Eliphaz*, Gen. xxxvi. 10, 11. [r] Deſcended from *Shuah*, the youngeſt Son of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, Gen. xxv. 2. [s] His Deſcent is not eaſily traced without ſtraining, though ſome would derive it from *Eſau*. *Howell*, ibid. [t] Job xxxii.

God's juſtifying and rewarding him.

acknowledge the Divine Goodneſs in every Diſpenſation. When every one had ſpoken what he thought proper, and there was now a general Silence in the Company, the Lord himſelf took up the Matter, [u] and, out of the *Whirlwind* directed his Speech to *Job*; wherein, with the higheſt *Amplifications*, deſcribing his *Omnipotence*, in the Formation and Diſpoſition of the Works of the Creation, he ſo effectually convinced him of his Inability to underſtand the *Ways* and *Deſigns* of God, that, with the profoundeſt Humility he breaks out into this Confeſſion and Acknowledgment, [x] *Behold I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee? I will lay my Hand upon my Mouth: Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer; yea twice, but I will proceed no farther*; which Acknowledgment pleaſed God ſo very well, that he declared himſelf in Favour of *Job* againſt his injurious Friends; and thereupon put an End to his Sufferings, and rewarded his Faith and Piety with a larger *Portion* of Earthly Felicity, than he had before, and with the *Prolongation* of his Life, beyond the common Extent of thoſe Times.

SECT. IV.

Of MOSES, *and his Miracles in* EGYPT.

Of the World, 2433, &c. Before Chriſt, 1571, &c.

The King of Egypt *who oppreſſed* Iſrael.

AFTER the Death of *Joſeph*, the ſacred Hiſtory informs us, *that* [y] *there aroſe up a new King over Egypt, which knew not Joſeph*, who was either unacquainted with the *Benefits*, the Crown had received from his Service, or willing, upon *Political* Accounts, to overlook them, and to treat his Kindred with Severity. Who this King was, the Silence of *Moſes*, and the Defect of profane Hiſtory, has made it almoſt impoſſible for us to know; unleſs the Paſſage, which [z] *Joſephus* relates out of *Manethon*, the *Egyptian* Hiſtorian, may be ſuppoſed to give us any Intelligence. It tells us, that, under the Reign of *Timaus*, a great Army, compoſed of a People without any Name, came from the *Eaſt*, and made themſelves Maſters of *Egypt*; ſlew the Princes, burnt the Cities, deſtroyed the Temples, carried the Women and Children into Captivity, and made a Man of their own Nation, named *Salatis*, King. If this Piece of Hiſtory has any Foundation of Truth, then might the *New King* here mentioned poſſibly be this *Salatis*; and a Fear, leſt the *Iſraelites* might join with the Natives of *Egypt*, to drive out thoſe new *Conquerors*, might perhaps have occaſioned a great many Cruelties, both to them, and *Iſrael*.

The Manner of their Oppreſſion.

[a] A LEARNED Hiſtorian of our own Nation is of the Opinion, that the firſt King of *Egypt*, who oppreſſed the *Iſraelites*, was *Buſiris*, both in the Time of his Regency under *Seſoſtris* the *Younger*, and when he came into the Poſſeſſion of the Throne himſelf. The vaſt Increaſe of the People gave him an uneaſy Umbrage, leſt, as they had already grown too numerous for one Province to contain, they might, in Proceſs of Time, elbow him out of his Kingdom; and [b] a Report (which was current in thoſe Days) that, in a ſhort Space, a Child would be born among the *Hebrews*, whoſe Virtue would be admired by all the World; who would raiſe the Honour of his own Nation; depreſs that of *Egypt*; and make his Name and Renown immortal, might be another Inducement to uſe them cruelly, and *make their Lives bitter with hard Bondage*. Making of *Mortar* and *Brick*, and other *rural* Labours, [c] making *Dikes* and *Banks* to ſtop the Waters of the *Nile*, digging of *Canals* and *Aqueducts* to water the Land, [d] building of *Forts*, and [e] erecting of *Pyramids*; theſe, and

[u] Job xxxviii. [x] Ibid. xl. 4, 5. [y] Exod. i. 8. [z] Contra Appian. Lib. I. c. 5.
[a] Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s Hiſtory of the World, p. 204. [b] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. II. c. 5. [c] Ibid.
[d] Exod. ii. 11.

[e] The *Pyramids* are vaſt Piles of Building, raiſed by the Kings of *Egypt*, in Teſtimony of their Grandeur and Magnificence, and to be the Repoſitories of their Bodies, when dead. There are three now ſtanding, not far from the Place, where *Memphis* formerly was ſituate, the largeſt of which is deſervedly reckoned one of the ſeven Wonders of the World. It is an exact Square at the Bottom; every Square 704 Feet in Length; aſcended by 210 (ſome ſay more) great Stone Steps, moſt of them above three Feet high, and of a Breadth proportionable. Its Height is 616 Feet, by Degrees growing narrower and narrower, till you come to the Top, where there is a fine *Platform*, (conſiſting of ten or twelve great Stones, each of ſixteen or ſeventeen Feet ſquare) from whence you have a pleaſant Proſpect of old *Cairo*, and the adjacent Country. This Pyramid (as the Inhabitants of the Country ſay) was built for the Sepulchre of a King, that was never buried in it, and the common Opinion is, that the ſaid King was that *Pharoah*, who, by the juſt Judgment of God, was drowned with all his Army, in the *Red-Sea*. The Curious, that are deſirous to know the Inſide of this vaſt Structure, the Chamber of the Tombs, and the ſurprizing Aſcent to it, *&c.* had beſt conſult *Thevenot's Voyage de Levant*, or *Le Bruyn*, upon the Subject. I ſhall only add from *Pliny*, that this Pyramid was twenty Years a building, tho' 370,000 Men were every Day employed in the Work, and 1800 Talents expended upon them, merely in Radiſhes and Onions.

and many more principal Taſks were perpetually impoſed upon them, in order to *impoveriſh* their Spirits, and *infeeble* their Bodies. But when, thro' the Bleſſing of God, the People rather grew, than were diminiſhed under theſe Oppreſſions, effectual Meaſures were taken at laſt, to bring about their utter Extirpation; and, in Purſuance of theſe, an Edict was put forth, that [f] *every Son that was born unto them, ſhould be caſt into the River.* Under theſe unhappy Circumſtances *Moſes* was born; by the *Cruelty* of his Prince deſtined to immediate Death, but by the *Decrees* of God reſerved to be the glorious Inſtrument, who was to execute his all-wiſe Purpoſes. All the Care, that could be taken by a tender Mother of a lovely Child, was taken by the Mother of *Moſes* for his Preſervation; [g] when *ſhe ſaw him, that he was a goodly Child, ſhe hid him three Months:* But it ſeems the Enemy was as vigilant for his Ruin, as his Parents could be for his Safety, and therefore, the Concealment of him was now no longer *practicable.* To God's Providence therefore they commit him; [h] *and putting him into an Ark, laid him in the Flags by the River's Brink.* By an happy Train of Events, [i] *Pharaoh*'s Daughter comes at that very Time to that very Place: She ſpies the Ark; ſends one of her Retinue to fetch it; [k] opens it; ſees the Child weeping; has Compaſſion on it; diſcovers it to be one of the *Hebrew* Children; ſends for a Nurſe of the *Hebrew* Women to nurſe it, who happens to be its own Mother, and to whom ſhe delivers it, with a Charge to take Care of it, and to bring it up at her Expence.

Moſes *at that Time born.*

THE ſacred Hiſtory leaves a great Gap in the Life of *Moſes*; only it acquaints us, that when [l] *the Child grew, his Mother brought him to Pharaoh's Daughter, who made him her own Son, and called his Name Moſes* [m]; whereupon *Joſephus* tells us this Story, that when *Moſes* was three Years old, *Thermutis* bringing him to her Father one Day, who took him in his Arms, and put his Diadem upon his Head, the Child pulled it off, threw it on the Ground, and trampled it under his Feet: And 'tis not improbable, that the Apoſtle might have ſome Regard to this very Action, when he ſays, that [n] *Moſes, when he came to Years,* (intimating that he did not only trample upon the Diadem of *Pharaoh,* when he was a Child, but when he was come to Years, and was capable of judging better of thoſe Things) *refuſed to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter, chuſing rather to ſuffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleaſures of Sin for a Seaſon.*

His Childhood.

THERE is no doubt to be made, but that in his *Minority,* all Care was taken of his Education; but whether he made all the Advancement in Learning [o] as is pretended; whether he was that compleat *Poet,* and excellent *Orator,* as ſome would have him; 'tis certain, that he was an incomparable *Hiſtorian,* and not unlikely, that he was very well verſed in *Aſtronomy,* at that Time one of the moſt cultivated Sciences in *Egypt.* His Command of *Pharaoh*'s Army, in his more advanced Years, his Exploits againſt the *Ethiopians,* [p] retaking the Cities, which *Egypt* had loſt, penetrating into the Enemies Country, and even reducing their very *Capital*; [q] together with his Marriage to *Tharbis,* the King of *Ethiopia*'s Daughter, ſavour a little of the *Romantick,* tho' they give us ſome Reaſon to infer, [r] that his Name, and ſeveral Paſſages of his Life (mixed as they are with ſome Fables) were not only known to other Nations, but by them highly admired and magnified.

[s] *WHEN*

[f] Exod. i. 22. [g] Ibid. ii. 2. [h] Ibid. *ver.* 3. [i] *Joſephus,* and from him *Philo,* calls this Royal Princeſs *Thermutis*; and adds, that ſhe was the King's only Daughter and Heir; and that having been ſome Time married without any Child, ſhe pretended to be delivered of *Moſes,* and owned him for her Son, but it looks much more likely, that he came to be called her Son, by Way of Adoption, as we ſaid elſewhere, p. 24. [k] Exod. ii. 5, 6. [l] Ibid. ver. 10. [m] This Name ſeems to be derived from the *Hebrew* Word *Maſhal,* which is never uſed in the Bible but for *drawing out of the Water*; but ſome will have it compounded of Μῶ, which in the *Egyptian* Tongue ſignifies *Water,* and ὕσης, which ſignifies *ſaved,* becauſe they think it not ſo very likely, that this Princeſs ſhould give her adopted Son a Name, that was derived from any other Language, but her own. The Word *Maſhal* however, (from whence the Name moſt naturally flows, and to which ſhe herſelf ſaid ſhe had Reſpect) might have the ſame Signification in her Language, that it had in *Hebrew*; there being a great Affinity between the two Tongues. *Clem. Alexandrinus* tells us, that the Name he had given him by his Parents, at his Circumciſion, was *Joachim. Patrick*'s Commentary. [n] Heb. xi. 24, 25. [o] See the Teſtimonies of *Eupolemus,* and others, related by *Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib.* I. [p] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. II. c. 5. *and* Philo, de Vitâ Moſis, Lib. I.

[q] This Story is dreſſed up in a very gallant Manner: *Tharbis,* Daughter of this *Ethiopian* King, ſees from the Walls of the City, where ſhe was beſieged, this brave *Warrior* doing Actions more than *human:* She finds herſelf wounded with a Dart, different from thoſe, which flew from his Arm; and being unable any longer to conceal her Paſſion, ſhe declares it to him, who was the Author of it: He, like a generous Lover, makes a ſuitable Return, and at laſt marries this *Ethiopian* Princeſs; but becauſe ſhe oppoſed his Return into *Egypt,* he, who was well ſkilled in Aſtronomy, cauſes two Images to be engraven upon two precious Stones, the one of which *increaſed Memory,* and the other *cauſed Forgetfulneſs.* Theſe he ſet in two Rings, giving that of *Oblivion* to his Wife; which, after ſhe had wore for ſome Time, ſhe began to neglect the Love ſhe had to her Huſband, and ſo he, without Danger, returned into *Egypt. Joſephus* and *Euſebius* tell this Story out of *Artapanus.*

[r] *Patrick*'s Commentary.

Moſes *kills the* Egyptian, *how juſtified.*

[s] *WHEN he was full forty Years old, it came into his Heart to viſit his Brethren, the Children of Iſrael; and ſeeing one of them ſuffer Wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppreſſed, and ſmote the Egyptian.* The *Egyptian*, [t] whom *Moſes* ſlew, was, we will ſuppoſe, one of thoſe *Taſk-Maſters*, whom *Pharaoh* had ſet over the Children of *Iſrael*, and he falling upon the poor *Hebrew* in a moſt violent Manner, beat him, till he had almoſt killed him, for not doing his Work ſo faſt, as he would have had him: Nay, ſuppoſing it true, that *Moſes* (according to the *Jewiſh* Tradition) did not kill him with a Sword, or any other Weapon, but merely by the Word of his Mouth, pronouncing him dead, in the Name of God; yet even thus he could not have juſtified the Fact, had he not been moved, and animated thereunto by a Divine Impulſe, or inveſted before it happened (as [u] St *Stephen*'s Comment upon the Place gives us Occaſion to think he was ſo inveſted) with the Title and Office of *Deliverer of the People of God.*

His Manner of Life in Midian.

BUT the Time for their Deliverance was not yet come: And therefore *Moſes* having Reaſon to apprehend, that it would not be long, before his killing the *Egyptian* would reach *Pharaoh*'s Ear, [x] thought it the ſafeſt Way to withdraw into *Arabia Petræa*, and there wait, until he had a farther Commiſſion from God. In this Place he [y] providentially fell into the Acquaintance of *Jethro*, a *Prince* or Governor of a Province in *Midian*, with whom he contracted an Intimacy, married his Daughter, and ſerved him, in the Capacity of a *Shepherd*, for forty Years. 'Twas here, very probably, [z] that in the leiſure Hours, (whereof that Kind of Life afforded him Plenty) he gave himſelf up to Contemplation, and to perfect that Knowledge, which he had laid the Foundation of in his Youth. 'Twas here, very probably, [a] that he compoſed ſome of thoſe admirable Books, which he has tranſmitted to the Church, † the Book of *Geneſis*, and that of *Job*, as ſome imagine, that, by the Example of a patient Man, he might ſtrengthen the oppreſſed *Hebrews*, and by the Promiſes of God to *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, give them Aſſurance of their Deliverance from *Egyptian* Slavery: And 'twas moſt certainly here, [b] that God appeared to him in the *burning Buſh*; gave him full Power and Authority to go, and releaſe the Children of *Iſrael* from their Slavery in *Egypt*; joined his Brother *Aaron* with him in the Commiſſion; and preſcribed them *Inſtructions*, how they were to proceed in that important Affair. And with this *Epocha* the *Theocracy* of the *Jews*, [c] or God's viſible Government of that People, in like Manner, as other Kings govern their Subjects, and his Appointment of *Moſes*, to be his *Deputy* and *Viceroy* over them, moſt properly did commence.

The Sufferings of the Iſraelites, *why permitted.*

GOD had hitherto ſuffered his People to be oppreſſed with hard Labour and cruel Bondage, [d] in order to keep up a Diſtinction between them and the *Egyptians*, which a friendly Uſage might have poſſibly deſtroyed; to cure them of their Proneneſs to *Idolatry*, by making Oppreſſion an Incitement to their Hatred of the *Gods*, as much as the *Taſk-Maſters* of the Country; and by the Hardſhips they ſuffered, to make them more willing to leave it, whenever he ſhould ſend them an Order to depart. But now he thought it fit Time to declare in Favour of them, and accordingly ſent his two Embaſſadors, *Moſes* and *Aaron*, to demand of the King of *Egypt* the Releaſe of

[s] Acts vii. 23, 34. [t] Philo, de Vitâ Moſis, Lib. I. Some of the *Jewiſh* Doctors tell us, that this *Egyptian*, whom *Moſes* killed, had broken into the *Hebrew*'s Houſe, bound him, and raviſhed his Wife, and was now going to murther him; but this looks too like a Tale: Nor is there much more Probability in his ſlaying him with a Word of his Mouth; for then there would have been no Need for his cautious looking about him, before he gave him his Death's Blow, or hiding him in the Sand, after he was dead. Whether the *Egyptian* had almoſt killed the *Jew*, and that *Moſes* could, no other Way, than by Force, keep him off: Or whether he might not attack even *Moſes* himſelf, and force him to kill him in his own Defence, are Conſiderations, that make a mighty Alteration in the Caſe. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [u] Acts vii. 25.

[x] Notwithſtanding the Flight of *Moſes* is plainly affirmed, yet ſo fond are the *Jews* of their own Conceits, and ſo bold in their Inventions, that they ſay, that he was not only condemned to have his Head cut off, but actually brought to ſuffer; but that, when the Executioner came to do his Office, *Moſes*'s Neck was, by a Miracle, turned into a Pilaſter of Marble, ſo that the Sword would not enter, as the Story is told by the Author of *Moſes*'s Life. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [y] Exod. ii. [z] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [a] Sir *Walter Raleigh*, p. 211. from *Pererius*.

† Whether *Moſes* wrote theſe Books or no, 'tis certain, that the Matters, treated in both, were very proper to be laid before the *Iſraelites* at this Juncture. For, in one of them, they might have a full and clear View of the Hiſtory of the World, ſo far as they were concerned in it; of the Creation of Mankind, of their own Origin; and of the Promiſes, which God made to their Fathers; ſo that it would give them the beſt Account of their Condition and Expectations: And in the other, they might ſee a very inſtructive Pattern of Patience and Reſignation to the Will of God, in the Life of a virtuous Perſon, led, from a great Share of worldly Proſperity, into the moſt afflicting Circumſtances, and, after a due Courſe of Trial, brought back again to a greater Proſperity than ever. A Subject, very proper to be ſet before them in this Time of their Diſtreſs, that thereby they might be inſtructed to poſſeſs their Souls in Patience, until God, in his great Wiſdom, ſhould think proper to put a Period to their Troubles. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. II. Lib. IX.

[b] Exod. iii. [c] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [d] *Sherlock*, of Providence.

of his People *Iſrael*, and, in Caſe of his Refuſal, gave them Power and Authority to inflict upon the Land many terrible *Plagues*, until they compelled him to comply.

Moſes *and* Aaron's *Speech to* Pharaoh.

[f] The Embaſſadors, at firſt, took all the Meaſures, that Prudence ſuggeſted, not to provoke, but mollify the Prince. They told him, that *the God of their Fathers* had appeared unto them, and required them to hold a ſolemn Faſt, and perform a Courſe of religious Worſhip, in a certain Place, he had appointed them: They therefore aſked Leave for the *Iſraelites* to go three *Days Journey* into the Wilderneſs, to offer unto God ſuch Sacrifices, as would be an Offence to the *Egyptians*, in Caſe they were offered there; and they pretended to fear, that if they ſhould neglect giving God this Proof of their Obedience, he would chaſtiſe them with ſuch Plagues, as might poſſibly be fatal to *Egypt* itſelf. With theſe, and ſuch-like Arguments, they endeavoured to work upon *Pharaoh*; but when nothing of this Nature would avail, they betook themſelves to the other *Method*, that they were directed to, in order to force his Conſent. Ten Judgments ſucceſſively they brought upon the Land: The *firſt* was a [g] Change of the Water into Blood; the *ſecond*, [h] a prodigious Number of Frogs; the *third*, [i] of Lice; the *fourth*, [k] of Flies; the *fifth*, a Murrain, which deſtroyed all the Cattle; the *ſixth*, Ulcers, both in Man and Beaſt; the *ſeventh*, Hail, which ſpoiled the Fruits of the Ground; the *eighth*, [l] Locuſts, which devoured what the Hail had left; the *ninth*, Darkneſs, which covered all the Land; and the *tenth*, the Slaughter, and general Deſtruction of their Firſt-born. How *Pharaoh*'s Obſtinacy and Perverſeneſs could be Proof againſt theſe *Scourges*, (which affected the *Egyptians* only, but did the *Iſraelites* no Harm) we have the leſs Reaſon to admire, in that the holy Scripture has told us, that ſome of theſe Miracles his *Magicians* imitated, and, in others, God *hardened* him againſt Conviction: But how either of theſe could be done, with the Preſervation of God's Honour and Goodneſs, is a Matter of ſome Enquiry among *Divines*.

The Plagues enumerated.

The Egyptian Magicians, *who.*

1. WHO the *Magicians* were, that oppoſed *Moſes* and *Aaron*, in working their Miracles, our ſacred Hiſtorian makes no Mention; but ſeveral, both [m] *Jewiſh* and [n] *Heathen* Authors (from whom [o] St *Paul*, without doubt, borrowed their Names) have informed us, that, among the *Egyptians*, they were called *Jannes* and *Jambres*, which, to give them a *Latin* Termination, would be *Johannes* and *Ambroſius*, of whom *Numenius* (as he is quoted [p] by *Euſebius*) has given us this remarkable Account, *viz. That they were the Scribes of religious Matters among the Egyptians; that they flouriſhed in Egypt, at the Time when the Jews were driven from thence, and did not give Place to any Body in the Science of Magical Secrets. They were choſen unanimouſly by all Egypt, to oppoſe Muſeus, a Leader of the Jews, and whoſe Prayers were very prevalent with his God.*

Different Kinds of Magick.

NOW, in order to form a right Notion, both of the Profeſſion and Abilities of theſe Men, we muſt be careful to obſerve, that *Magick* is properly of three Kinds, *Natural*, *Artificial*, and *Diabolical*. [q] The *firſt* of theſe is no other than *Natural Philoſophy*, but highly improved and advanced; whereby the Perſon, that is well ſkilled in the Power and Operation of *natural* Bodies, is able to produce many wonderful

[f] Exod. v. [g] This Plague was the more remarkable, becauſe, as *Theodoret* obſerves upon it, as they had drowned the *Hebrew* Children in the River, God now puniſhed them for it, by giving them bloody Water to drink; according to the Obſervation of the Wiſe Man, *Inſtead of a Fountain of running Water, their Enemies were troubled with corrupt Blood, which was to rebuke the Commandment of killing the Children*, Wiſd. xi. 6. [h] The River *Nile* naturally produces Frogs, but ſo great an Abundance, appearing on a ſudden, filling the Country, and leaving the Rivers and Fields, to go into the Cities and Houſes, made the Thing miraculous. [i] Some would have the Word [*Cinnim*] which we render *Lice*, to ſignify Gnats. The *Septuagint* call it Κνίπες, but what Kind of Creature it was, is not certainly known. It ſeems more probable, that it was ſome new Sort of Animal, called *analogically* by an old known Name; and this might be ſome Reaſon, why the Magicians could not counterfeit this Miracle, becauſe ſuch Creatures were not to be got; at leaſt it is as good, as the Fancy of the *Jews*, *that Dæmons have no Power over Creatures ſo ſmall as Lice*. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [k] The Word [*Arob*] which we render *Fly*, in general, is, by the *Septuagint*, called κυνομυια, *i. e. Dog-Fly*, from its biting; for it faſtens its Teeth ſo deep in the Fleſh, and ſticks ſo very cloſe, that it oftentimes makes Cattle run mad. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [l] This is the Creature, which we properly call a *Graſhopper*: And wonderful is the Account, which Authors have given us of the Armies of thoſe Creatures, and the Order and Regularity of their *March*; *viz.* That in the Year of our Lord, 853, an infinite Number of theſe Creatures were ſeen to fly over twenty Miles in *Germany* in one Day, in Manner of a formed Army, divided into ſeveral *Squadrons*, and having their *Quarters* apart, when they reſted; that the *Captains* marched a Day's Journey from the reſt, to chuſe the moſt opportune Places for their Camp; that they never removed till Sun-riſing, at which Time they went away in as much Order, as an Army of Men could do; that, at laſt, having done great Miſchief, whereſoever they paſſed, (after Prayers were made to God) they were driven by a violent Wind into the *Belgick Ocean*, and there drowned; but, being caſt again, by the Sea, upon the Shore, they covered 140 Acres of Land at a Time, and cauſed a great Peſtilence in the Country. *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [m] *Vid.* Talmud Babil. Tit. Menachos, c. 9. [n] Orig. contra Celſ. Lib. IV. & Plin. Hiſt. Lib. XXX. c. 1. [o] 2 Tim. iii. 8. [p] Præp. Lib. IX. c. 8. [q] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

derful Effects, miſtaken, by the Illiterate, for *Diabolical* Performances, but ſuch as lie perfectly within the *Verge* of Nature. *Artificial* Magick is what we call *Leger-demain*, or Sleight of Hand, and whoſe Effects are far from being what they ſeem: They are Deceptions and Impoſtures, the merry Tricks of *Jugglers*, (as we corrupt the Word *Joculatores*) far from exceeding the Power of Art, and yet what many Times paſs, with the Vulgar, for *Diabolical* too. *Diabolical* Magick is that which is done by the Help of the Devil, who, having great Skill in natural Cauſes, and a large Command over the Air, and other Elements, may aſſiſt thoſe, that are in League and Covenant with him, (in Scripture called *Wizards*, *Sorcerers*, *Diviners*, *Enchanters*, *Chaldeans*, *and ſuch as had familiar Spirits*) to do many ſtrange and aſtoniſhing Things. To deny that there ever were ſuch Men as theſe, is to ſlight the Authority of all Hiſtory; and to gueſs at the [t] probable Riſe and Original of them, we may ſuppoſe it to be this,—That God, being pleaſed to admit the holy Patriarchs into *familiar* Conferences with him, the Devil endeavoured to do the ſame; and, to retain Men in their Obedience to him, pretended to make *Diſcoveries* of ſecret Things, and that when God was pleaſed to work Miracles for the Confirmation of the Truth, he, in like Manner, directed thoſe, that were *familiar* with him, how to invoke his Help, for the Performance of ſuch ſtrange Things, as might confirm the World in their Error.

The Original of them.

UNDER which of the Denominations, *Natural*, *Artificial*, or *Diabolical*, the Magicians, who ſet themſelves in Oppoſition to the Servants of the Moſt High God, are to be ranked, we have no Inſtructions from Scripture; but it ſeems highly probable, that neither would *Pharaoh* have called together thoſe of the leaſt Capacity and Repute, neither would the Devil (as far as his Power extended) have been backward to aſſiſt his *Votaries*, upon ſuch a ſolemn and momentous Occaſion, as this. [u] Now there are two Ways wherein the Devil (as is agreed on all Hands) may be ſuppoſed aſſiſtant to thoſe, that pretend to work Miracles. The *firſt* is, by raiſing falſe *Images* and Appearances of Things, which he may do, either by affecting the *Brain*, or confuſing the *Optick* Nerves, or altering the *Medium*, which is between us and the Object. [x] That he did ſome ſuch Thing as this to our bleſſed Saviour, when, from the Top of an high Mountain, he pretended to *ſhew him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them, in a Moment of Time*, is very plain, from the *Convexity* of the Earth, which bounds the *Horizon*, and admits of no ſuch unlimited Proſpect; ſo that all he could be preſumed capable of doing in this Caſe, (and our Saviour was not inſenſible what he did do) was to make *fictitious* Repreſentations of gay and magnificent Things in the *Air*. *Secondly*, The other Way, wherein the Devil may be ſuppoſed to be aſſiſtant to theſe *Sorcerers*, is [y] by making Uſe of the Laws of Nature, in producing Effects, that are not above the natural Power of Things, tho' they certainly exceed what Man can do. Thus to *tranſport* a Body, with inconceivable Rapidity, from one Place to another; to *bring together* different Productions of Nature, which *ſeparately* have no viſible Effect, but, when *united*, work Wonders; to make *Images* move, walk, ſpeak, and the like; theſe may come within the Compaſs of the Devil's Power, becauſe not tranſcending the Laws of Nature, though we cannot diſcern by what Means they are effected. Nay, *thirdly*, if we go a Step farther, and, [z] with ſome learned Men, ſuppoſe, that, under the Almighty's Permiſſion, wicked Spirits have Power to work real Miracles; (and for this we have ſome Intimations [a] in Scripture, and in the Nature of Things no Reaſon to the contrary) which of theſe Suppoſitions ſoever we take, it will be no hard Matter to account for the Things, which the Magicians did, and, at the ſame Time, diſtinguiſh them from the *Miracles* which *Moſes* wrought. For, if we ſuppoſe a real Power in the Devil, the Thing is done at once, without any *Sham* or *Impoſture*; but if we deny him this Power, our Solution will then be this,—That a falſe *Medium* might, thro' the whole *Scene*, impoſe upon the Spectators; the *Rods* might be nimbly moved off, *Serpents* and *Frogs* introduced in a Trice, and, by a ſmall Injection of ſome other Liquid, *Water* converted into the Colour and Conſiſtence of Blood. Innumerable evil Spirits might attend on this Occaſion, and every one have his appointed Office; eſpecially

The Devil's Power.

How the Magicians might do what they did.

[t] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [u] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [x] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [y] *Saurin*, ibid. [z] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ, p. 236. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary, on *Exod.* vii. [a] Deut. xiii. 1, &c. Matth. xxiv. 24. 2 Theſ. ii. 9. where *Grotius* makes this Remark, *Non ſunt miracula falſa, ſed quæ falſæ Doctrinæ ſerviunt.* *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations.

eſpecially if the *Wizards* made uſe of the common *Rites* and *Incantations*, which might be of excellent Service to give them an Opportunity for Trick and *Colluſion*.

[a] A LEARNED Author has given us another *Solution* of this Difficulty.——He lays it down as a *Poſition*, that, though no Knowledge of the Powers of Nature, or Study of occult Sciences, can enable a Man to work ſuch Wonders, as were performed before *Pharaoh*; yet from what appears in the ſacred Hiſtory, the Miracles which the *Magicians* did, in producing Serpents, and Frogs, and in turning Water into Blood, were as *true* and *real* Performances, as thoſe, which *Moſes* did; but then the Queſtion is, by what Power or Aſſiſtance did they do them? They themſelves could never think, that, by all their Arts and Incantations, they ſhould be able to perform ſuch Works, as *Moſes* and *Aaron* had done; but as the King's Command was *urgent*, they were obliged to make the Experiment, and God was pleaſed, in ſome Inſtances, to give an unexpected Succeſs to their Endeavours, in order to ſerve and carry on his own Deſigns: Juſt as he permitted, the *Pythoneſs* of *Endor*, [b] contrary to her own Intention, to raiſe up the Ghoſt of *Samuel*, not by any Power of her Inchantments, but by his own Direction and Appointment, to upbraid and rebuke *Saul*.

And why God permitted them.

HOWEVER this be, and whether *divine* or *diabolical* Power interpoſed in this Affair, the Wiſdom of God is not a little manifeſt in permitting theſe *Sorcerers* to proceed ſome Time in their Conflict with his Servants, which added Diſgrace to the one's *Defeat*, as it did no ſmall Glory to the other's *Conqueſt*. [c] They turned their Rods indeed into Serpents, but theſe Serpents were devoured by *that*, which *Moſes* and *Aaron* produced: Some Things they did, either in Fact or Appearance, ſuch as *Moſes* and *Aaron* did, but then theſe were Things, wherein Art and Fallacy might have ſome Share. The Storm and Hail, Thunder and Lightning, and thick Darkneſs, they never pretended to imitate; nay, they themſelves were involved in the ſame Diſeaſes, which *Moſes* and *Aaron* ſent among the *Egyptians*: They were forced to acknowledge [d] *the Finger of God*, and do Homage to that ſupreme Power by which *Moſes* and *Aaron* acted; and therefore the Obſervation, which the Author of the Book of *Wiſdom* makes, is both true, and ſevere upon them at once; [e] *As for the Illuſions of Art Magick, they were put down, and their Vaunting in Wiſdom was reproved with Diſgrace; for they, that promiſed to drive away Terrors and Troubles from a ſick Soul, were ſick themſelves of Fear, worthy to be laughed at.*

How Pharaoh's Hardneſs might be occaſioned.

2. THE other Hindrance to *Pharaoh*'s Conviction, upon the Sight of theſe ſuperior Miracles of *Moſes*, we may preſume was the *Hardneſs of his Heart*; but whether this Hardneſs was of God's *Infliction*, or his own *Contraction*, is the Queſtion. And here, beſides the ordinary Solutions given in this Caſe, *viz.* that whatever God does, in Regard to the Obduration of a Sinner, he cannot but act after ſuch a Manner, as is always wiſe, always juſt, always agreeable to the Greatneſs of his Perfections, and the Rules of that Order, which he never departs from; that in the Heart of Man, there are Springs of Wickedneſs enough to produce ſuch an *Obduration*, without any Need of ſuppoſing an immediate Action from God; and that perhaps the bare withdrawing the neceſſary Aſſiſtances for the Practice of Virtue, may be enough to plunge any Man into the greateſt Crimes: Beſides theſe Solutions, I ſay, we may obſerve, [f] that not only in the *Hebrew*, but in moſt other Languages, the *Occaſion* of an Action, and what in itſelf has no Power to produce it, is very often put for the *efficient Cauſe* thereof. Thus, in the Caſe before us, God ſends *Moſes* to *Pharaoh*, and *Moſes*, in his Preſence, does ſuch miraculous Works, as would have had an Effect upon any other: But, becauſe the *Iſraelites* were numerous, and ſerviceable Slaves, and a terrible Shock and Diminution of his Wealth and Grandeur it would be, to think of parting with them; becauſe ſome of the Miracles which *Moſes* did, he ſaw imitated by his own Magicians; and becauſe the Plagues which God ſent, came *gradually* upon him, and, by the Interceſſion of *Moſes*, were conſtantly removed; he thence took Occaſion, inſtead of being ſoftened by this *Alternative* of Mercy and Judgment, to become more ſullen and unrelenting. *When Pharaoh* (as the Text tells us) *ſaw that the Rain, and the Hail, and the Thunder were ceaſed, he ſinned yet more, and hardened his Heart:* The Mercy of God, which ſhould have led him to Repentance, had a contrary Influence upon him, and made him more obſtinate; but all this while God had no farther Hand in his Obduration, than as he was too kind

[a] *Shuckford*'s Connection of ſacred and profane Hiſtory, Vol. II. Lib. IX. [b] 1 Sam. xxviii. 12.
[c] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [d] Exod. viii. 19. [e] Wiſd. xvii. 7, 8. [f] *Le Clerc*'s Commentary on Exod. iv.

kind and indulgent to him. God's *Clemency* was, in ſome Meaſure, the Occaſion of *Pharaoh*'s Hardneſs, but the true Cauſe of it was in himſelf, and proceeded from his Abuſe of that Clemency.

BUT, to go a Step farther, I cannot ſee why we may not adventure to affirm, [g] that God might, conſiſtently with his ſacred *Attributes*, ſuffer this Obdurateneſs to come upon *Pharaoh*, as a *Conſequence*, or even inflict it, as a *Puniſhment* of the many Crimes, which he voluntarily incurred, and obſtinately perſiſted in before. To exemplify this by ſome parallel Inſtances, in the xxiid Chapter of the firſt Book of *Kings*, the Prophet relates a very ſtrange Viſion: [h] *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon his Throne, and all the Hoſt of Heaven ſtanding by him, on his Right-Hand, and on his Left; and the Lord ſaid, Who ſhall perſuade Ahab, that he may go and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? And one ſaid on this Manner, and another ſaid on that Manner. And there came forth a Spirit, and ſtood before the Lord, and ſaid, I will perſuade him. And the Lord ſaid unto him, Wherewith? And he ſaid, I will go forth, and be a lying Spirit in the Mouth of his Prophets: And he ſaid, Thou ſhalt perſuade him, and prevail alſo; go forth and do ſo.* This is ſomewhat odd and ſingular: From the Throne of the Lord, founded upon Truth and Righteouſneſs, and from whence proceeded Laws of Juſtice and Equity, deſigned to eſtabliſh good Order in the World, come forth Commands, to lead a Man into an Error, that thereby he may fall into a Snare; and from among the heavenly Hoſts of Courtiers belonging to the Lord of the Univerſe, all of them ready to fly at his Word, all of them burning with the Love, all of them animated with a Spirit of imitating his Perfections; out of this heavenly Hoſt, I ſay, comes forth a Spirit, who undertakes (if with Reverence we may uſe the Expreſſion) to inſpire all the Prophets of the King of *Iſrael* with a *Lye*. But who was this *Ahab*, this King of *Iſrael?* Was he a Man, who for the Main of his Life, ſet the Fear of God before his Eyes? No, on the contrary, he was one of the moſt wicked Kings that ever poſſeſſed the Throne of *Iſrael*. A *baſe* and *treacherous* Man, who abandoned himſelf to the Counſels and Inſtigations of a proud and barbarous Woman; an *Idolater*, who was the firſt that in *Samaria* built Altars unto *Baal*; an *Hypocrite*, who humbled himſelf before God, when he apprehended his approaching Wrath, and inſolently raiſed his Head, when the Storm was over-paſt; an inſatiable *Lover of Blood*, who had ſlain a great Number of the Lord's Prophets, and was then ſeeking after *Elijah*'s Life to deſtroy it; and an inſatiable *Lover of unjuſt Wealth*, who could not be eaſy until he had added a poor Man's Vineyard to his immenſe Poſſeſſions, and, to compaſs this End, ſlew the innocent Owner of it by a falſe Accuſation. This was a Man, whom God ordered a Spirit to deceive: And, if it be demanded who this Spirit was, the *Jews* have a Notion very *ſingular* upon this Occaſion. They tell us, that it was the Soul of *Naboth the Jezreelite*; but we ſhould do them Injury, to take that in a *literal* Senſe, which is capable of a very good Meaning. The Soul of *Naboth*, the innocent Blood which *Ahab* ſhed, the Altars of *Baal*, the Murther of the Prophets, his real Wickedneſs, and counterfeit Devotions, theſe were the Spirits ſent from God to *miſlead him*; theſe were the fatal Cauſes of his Blindneſs, and of that impenitent and hardened State, into which God permitted him to fall.

Ahab's *Caſe.*

Pharaoh's *ſelf only blameable.*

TO apply this now to the Caſe of *Pharaoh*. Whoever this King of *Egypt* might be, 'tis certain, that his intolerable Tyranny over the poor *Iſraelites*, and devoting himſelf to wicked and abominable Arts, were far from being Indications of a good Man. Before ever God is ſaid to *harden his Heart*, five Times did he inflict, and as oft remove his Chaſtiſements, and [i] twice it is ſaid expreſsly, that he ſent for *Moſes* and relented; but ſtill, upon the Removal of every Plague, relapſed. His Covetouſneſs, and great Advantage he made of the *Iſraelites* Slavery, would not ſuffer him to think of releaſing them in earneſt. The *Magicians*, perhaps, at firſt, were acceſſary to his Obſtinacy: They might perſuade him, that *Moſes*, for the preſent, had found out a *Secret*, yet it would come to their Turn at laſt to *vie* Miracles, if not get the better of him; or very likely himſelf might fondly imagine, that God might in Time grow weary, or his *Store-houſe* of Plagues become exhauſted. Whatever might contribute to his Obduration, 'tis plain, that, even when [k] the Magicians owned a *Divine Power* in what they ſaw done, and were quite confounded; when they perceived themſelves ſmitten, and not able to [l] *ſtand before Moſes becauſe of the Boils*, and

[g] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [h] 1 Kings xxii. 19, &c. [i] Exod. viii. 8, and 25. [k] Ibid. ver. 19.
[l] Ibid. Ch. ix. 11.

and might thereupon very likely perſuade him to a *Surrender*, he is ſo far from relenting, that he does not ſo much as aſk a *Removal* of the Plague. And therefore it was entirely agreeable to the Rules of divine Juſtice, when nothing would reclaim this wicked King, when even that, which wrought upon the *Miniſters of Satan*, made no Impreſſion upon him, to let his Crime become his Puniſhment, and to leave him *to eat the bitter Fruit of his own Ways, and to be filled with his own Devices.*

SECT. V.

Of the PASSOVER, *and the* Iſraelites *leaving* Egypt.

BEFORE God thought fit to give the great *deciſive* Blow to *Egypt*, which was to bring about the Deliverance of his People, he eſtabliſhed a *Memorial* thereof, which was to continue until the Coming of the *Meſſiah* ſhould put an End to the old *Oeconomy*, and call off Mens Attention to a greater and more remarkable *Deliverance*. This Memorial, from the *Hebrew* Word *Peſach*, is called the [m] *Paſſover*; becauſe the Angel, which ſlew the Firſt-born of the *Egyptians*, paſſed over the Houſes of the *Iſraelites*, when he ſaw the Blood of the Lamb, which was that Day ſlain: And the Manner of its Inſtitution was this:——On the *tenth* Day of the Month [n] *Niſan*, (which anſwers our *March*) every Family of *Iſrael* (or if the Family was too little, two neighbouring Families joined together) was to take a *Male Lamb*, or *Kid* (for the original Words ſignify either) under a Year old, and without Blemiſh, and ſhut it up till the *fourteenth*, when it was to be killed [o] in the Evening. They were then to take a Bunch of *Hyſſop*, and dipping it in the Blood, were [p] to ſtrike it upon the two Side-Poſts, and the upper Door Poſts of every Houſe, where they did eat it, and ſo not ſtir out until next Morning. This Lamb was to be dreſſed *whole*, not a *Bone* of it was to be broken; it was to be *roaſted* with Fire; eat all *at once*, with *Bread* and *bitter Herbs*; and if any Part of it was left, it was to be burnt with Fire: The *Habit*, laſtly, and *Poſture*, in which it was to be eat, was with their *Loins girded*, their *Shoes on their Feet*, and their *Staves in their Hands*, in the Manner of Travellers.

Of the World, 2513, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 1491, &c.

The Paſſover, *what.*

SOME are of Opinion, that a good many of theſe Particulars were inſtituted purely in Oppoſition to thoſe *impious Rites*, which then prevailed, or, in a ſhort Time, were to prevail among the *Egyptians*, and other Nations, where the *Iſraelites* were to dwell. Thus they tell us, [q] "That God appointed a Lamb to be ſlain and eaten, and the "Month *Niſan*, or *March*, to be the particular Time of eating it, in Contempt of "the *Egyptians*, who, at that Time, when the Sun firſt entered into *Aries*, began "their ſolemn Worſhip and Adoration of this *Creature*, and that *Celeſtial Sign*: "That he forbad the People to eat the Fleſh of the *Paſchal* Lamb raw or ſodden, to "break its Bones, or leave any Fragments of it; becauſe, in the profane Feaſts of "*Bacchus*, it was a Cuſtom to eat the *raw* Fleſh of the Victims, they offered to that "God, and to break all their Bones; and in the Adoration of the ὥραι, whom the "*Egyptians* (and from them the *Athenians*) reputed *Goddeſſes*, they boiled all their Sacrifices, and carried conſtantly ſome Part of them Home, as a good Preſervative "againſt Misfortunes." Thus they oppoſe all the Rites and Ordinances of the Paſſover to the Superſtition of *heathen Idolatry*. But there is not that Need, I think, for ſuch *elaborate* Explications; when, conſidering the Situation the *Iſraelites* were then in, ſorely oppreſſed by the *Egyptians*, but ſhortly to be releaſed, and ſent away with all Speed and Precipitation, the Nature and Quality of the *Paſchal* Sacrifice, as well as the

Its Rites not in Oppoſition to Heathen Idolatry.

[m] The Word *Paſſover* was likewiſe applied to the Lamb, which was offered in Remembrance of this Deliverance; to the other Sacrifices, which accompanied this Lamb, and were offered, with it, at the Feaſt of unleavened Bread; as it was likewiſe made to ſignify the whole Term of that Feaſt, but more eſpecially the ſecond Day thereof, which was the *fifteenth* of the Month. *Lewis*'s Antiquities, and *De Beauſobre*'s Introduction. [n] The Names of the *Jewiſh* Months are, 1. *Niſan* or *Abib*, which in ſome Meaſure anſwers our *March*; 2. *Jyar*, our *April*; 3. *Sivan*, our *May*; 4. *Samus*, our *June*; 5. *Ab*, our *July*; 6. *Elul*, our *Auguſt*; 7. *Tiſri*, our *September*; 8. *Marcheſvan*, our *October*; 9. *Ciſleu*, our *November*; 10. *Tebeth*, our *December*; 11. *Shevet*, our *January*; and 12. *Adar*, our *February*. But it muſt be obſerved, that the *Jewiſh* Months being Lunar, cannot exactly anſwer ours. *Lamy*'s Introduction. [o] The *Hebrew* Words are *between the two Evenings*, the firſt of which began upon the Sun's Decline from its Noon-day Point, and laſted till Sun-ſet, and then began the ſecond, and laſted till Night: Accordingly, *Joſephus* tells us, that the *Paſchal* Lamb was ſlain between the ninth Hour, *i. e.* our *three* in the Afternoon, and the *eleventh*, our *five*. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *De Beauſobre*'s Introduction. [p] This ſtriking, or ſprinkling of the Blood upon the Poſts, ſeems to have been peculiar to the firſt Paſſover, at their going out of *Egypt*, and not to have been uſed in After-ages, when there was not the ſame Occaſion for it. [q] Vid. Spencer de Ritib. Heb. Tom. I. L. 2. c. 4.

Manner of dreſſing, and Manner of eating it, may, with other appendent Circumſtances, very pertinently be accounted for. *Its literal,* [r] It was to be *a Male*, becauſe a more excellent Species than the Female; *without Blemiſh*, to render it acceptable to God; *under a Year old*, otherwiſe it could not properly be called a Lamb; and *ſet apart from the reſt of the Flock*, that it might be in Readineſs, when the People came in Haſte to offer it. *Roaſted it was to be, and not boiled,* becauſe roaſting was the ſpeedier Way of dreſſing it; but *roaſted thoroughly*, becauſe the whole was to be eaten; and *the whole was to be eaten*, that none might be left for the *Egyptians* to profane. It was *to be eaten ſtanding and in Haſte*, and with other Circumſtances of Men every Moment expecting to begin their Journey; *with bitter Herbs*, to put them in Mind of their cruel Servitude; and *unleavened Bread*, in Memory of their Deliverance from it ſo ſuddenly, that they had not even Time to leaven the Bread for their Journey. This is all that the *Iſraelites* underſtood, and perhaps all that God, at that Time, intended they ſhould underſtand, by the *Direction* he gave them concerning this remarkable *Ordinance:* But the Chriſtian Doctrine does more than intimate, that God himſelf had all along a *myſtical* Meaning in each Particular, not ſo much in Oppoſition to *Heathen* Superſtition, as in Conformity to the Death of his Son; for which Reaſon, we find the Apoſtles, in their Writings, running the *Parallel* between the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* Paſſover, in ſuch Terms as theſe: [s] *Chriſt our Paſſover,* [t] *a Lamb without Blemiſh, and without Spot, is ſacrificed for us*; the very ſame Day that the *Jews* eat the *Paſchal* Lamb, *made he his Life an Offering for the World,* [u] *by the ſprinkling of whoſe Blood,* [x] *we have Redemption, even the Forgiveneſs of our Sins;* [y] *therefore let us keep the Feaſt, not with old Leaven, neither with the Leaven of Malice and Wickedneſs, but with the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth.* *and* myſtical *Meaning.*

Its modern Way of Celebration.

THIS was the Paſſover, which the Children of *Iſrael* celebrated, the Night before they left *Egypt*; and this was the Intent both *Literal* and *Typical* of the Rites and Ceremonies, which God then appointed to go along with it. But the *Jews* afterwards made conſiderable Alterations: They omitted ſome Things, and added others, and carried the Obſervation of it to ſuch a Degree of *Superſtition*, as was inconſiſtent with its firſt Inſtitution. [z] Two or three Days before the *Feaſt* began, they cleaned all the Veſſels, and other Furniture of their Houſes. Such as were too big to be dipped in Water, they ſprinkled and waſhed all over; and ſuch as were able to bear the Fire, they purified that Way. [a] When the Evening of the *fourteenth* Day was come, they lighted *Wax-Tapers*, and, before they went to ſearch whether there was any Leaven in the Houſe, the Maſter of the Family made this ſhort Ejaculation: *Bleſſed be thou, O Lord our God, the everlaſting King, who has ſanctified us by thy Commands, and enjoined us to put away Leaven from among us.* All the Domeſticks, except the Women, joined in the Search: They ranſacked every Hole and Corner, not only in the Dwelling-Houſe, but even in the Barns and Stables; and after the Search was ended, the Maſter made this Denunciation: *All the Leaven, that is in mine Houſe, what I have ſeen, and what I have not ſeen, be it null, and like the Duſt of the Earth.* Nay, ſo very ſcrupulous were they in this Reſpect, that, for the whole ſeven Days, that the Feaſt laſted, [b] they would not ſo much as name the Word *Leaven*, for fear of polluting their Minds with the Idea of Bread.

BEFORE the Paſſover was ſlain, [c] they firſt agreed and concluded upon the Company, that was to eat it, which was ſometimes more, and ſometimes leſs, in Proportion to their eating; for at this Time there was no Diſtinction; for Men, Women, and Children, Maſters and Servants (if circumciſed) were all entertained at the ſame Table. The Manner of eating the *Egyptian* Paſſover was in a travelling Poſture, leaning on their Staves, and ſtanding all the while; but, in Proceſs of Time, this came to be altered into what we call *Diſcumbency*, when all the Gueſts lean, on their left Arms, upon Beds round the Table; [d] a fit Emblem (as they pretend) of that Reſt and Freedom, which God had vouchſafed the Children of *Iſrael*. When the Gueſts were thus placed round the Table, the Maſter of the Family, or ſome other Perſon of Note, took a Cup of Wine and Water; and, after he had given Thanks, *Bleſſed be thou, O Lord, who haſt created the Fruit of the Vine*, he drank it, and gave one round to the Company, who were all obliged to drink of it. After this, they eat of the bitter Herbs, and unleavened Bread, which they dipped in [e] a thick Sauce, made of ſweet and ſour Things, pounded and mingled together, in Memory of the Clay, wherein

[r] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [s] 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. [t] 1 Pet. i. 19. [u] Ibid. *ver.* 2. *and* Heb. xii. 24. [x] Eph. i. 7. [y] 1 Cor. v. 8. [z] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [a] *Lewis*'s Antiquities of the *Jewiſh* Republick. [b] *Lamy*'s Introduction. [c] *Lewis*'s Antiquities. [d] *De Beauſobre*'s Introduction. [e] This Sauce was not appointed by God, nor had it any Foundation in the Law of *Moſes*. *Lewis*, ibid.

wherein their Forefathers laboured, in the Land of *Egypt*. Hereupon, the Maſter of the Family drank another Cup, which was accompanied with ſeveral Thankſgivings; and then they began to eat of the Fleſh of the *Paſchal Lamb*, and drank a third Cup, which was called the *Cup of Bleſſing*, becauſe the Bleſſing, or Grace after Meat, was ſaid over it; and ſo the whole Ceremony concluded with the fourth Cup, commonly called the Cup of *Hallel*, becauſe [f] ſome ſelect Pſalms were ſung over it; and then the Maſter of the Family, or whoever rehearſed the Office of the Paſſover, diſmiſſed the Company with a Bleſſing. Thus was this Solemnity celebrated, in the latter Times of the *Jewiſh Republick*, when Innovations had crept in, and ſeveral Rites, foreign to the *primitive* Inſtitution, were introduced.

BUT to return to the *Iſraelites*. While they were employed in eating the Paſſover, and in Expectation of the Event; [g] *The Lord, at Midnight, ſmote all the Firſt-born in the Land of Egypt, from the Firſt-born of Pharaoh, that ſat on the Throne, to the Firſt-born of the Captive, that was in the Dungeon; and all the Firſt-born of Cattle, ſo that there was* [h] *a great Cry in all Egypt; for there was not a Houſe, where there was not one dead.*

NOTHING ſurely can be more amazing to the Imagination, than ſuch a dreadful Spectacle as this; and therefore we need not wonder, that the *Egyptians* ſhould be ſo importunate with the *Iſraelites*, even before the Morning Dawn appeared, to depart out of their Country. The Fate of thoſe, that had periſhed, made every one tremble for himſelf; but why the *Iſraelites* ſhould take the Advantage of their Fears and Conſternation, to ſpoil and plunder them, is a Queſtion that admits of ſome Diſpute. The Word which our Tranſlators have rendered *borrow*, is *Shaal*, which does not ſignify to *borrow*, but to aſk one to give; by Virtue of which Interpretation, the *Iſraelites* are cleared from the Cenſure of all Injuſtice and Wrong, becauſe what was *freely* given them, they had doubtleſs a Right to retain. And accordingly we find [i] *Joſephus* repreſenting this Fact agreeably to the true Senſe of the ſacred Text, when he tells us, "that the *Egyptians* made the *Hebrews* conſiderable Preſents; ſome to "induce them to be gone the ſooner, and others, in Token of the Acquaintance they "had had with them." But, even if the Word ſignifies to *borrow* only, 'tis a Truth allowed on all Hands, that God, who is the Supreme Lord of all Things, may, when he pleaſes, and in what Manner he pleaſes, transfer the Right of Men from one to another. Conſidering then, that God was now become the King of the *Iſraelites* in a proper and peculiar Manner, and [k] conſidering withal, what inſufferable Wrongs the King and People of *Egypt* had done to this People of God, who were now become his peculiar Subjects, or *Proprietary Lieges*: [l] This Fact of *ſpoiling the Egyptians*, even in the harſheſt Senſe of the Word, was, according to the *Laws of Nations*, more juſtifiable, than Royal Grants of *Letters of Mart*, or other ſuch like Remedies, as Kings are accuſtomed to make uſe of againſt other *Powers*, that have wronged their Subjects, or ſuffered them to be wronged by thoſe under their Command, without making a proper Reſtitution. In ſhort, whatever the *Hebrews* took from the *Egyptians*, they took and poſſeſſed it *by the Law of Repriſals*, i. e. by Virtue of

Why the Iſraelites *ſpoiled the* Egyptians.

[f] The Pſalms that were ſung upon this Occaſion, were CXIII. and CXIV, which began to be ſung over the ſecond Cup; and the CXVI, CXVII, or CXXXVI, which were ſung over the fourth; which laſt Singing was called *Hallel*, or *Praiſe*. The Reader that is deſirous to know more upon this Subject, may conſult, at his Leiſure, *Lamy's Treatiſe of the Paſſover*, or Mr. *Lewis*'s *Antiquities of the Jewiſh Republick*. [g] *Exod.* xii. 29, 30. [h] It is no improbable Conjecture, that the ſolemn Feaſt among the *Egyptians*, wherein they went about with Candles in the Night in Search of *Oſiris* with Tears and great Lamentations, took its Original from *Pharaoh*'s riſing up out of his Bed at Midnight, and all the *Egyptians* with him; who lighted Candles, and finding their Children dead, bewailed them with loud Cries; nor is it unreaſonable to think, that *Pharaoh*'s eldeſt Son, who was now ſlain, had the Name of *Oſiris*, whoſe ſudden Death by this Stroke was, every Year, in one Night, univerſally lamented. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [i] Antiq. Jud. Lib. II. Cap. XIV. [k] In the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrim*, there is told a memorable Story concerning this Tranſaction. In the Time of *Alexander the Great*, the *Egyptians*, brought an Action againſt the *Iſraelites*, deſiring they might have the Land of *Canaan*, in Satisfaction for all they had borrowed of them, when they went out of *Egypt*. To which *Gibeah Ben Koſam*, who was Advocate for the *Jews*, reply'd, that, before they made this Demand, they muſt prove what they alledged, *viz.* that the *Iſraelites* borrowed any Thing of their Anceſtors. To this the *Egyptians* thought it ſufficient to ſay, that they found it recorded in their own Books. Well then, ſaid the Advocate, look into the ſame Books, and you will find the Children of *Iſrael* lived *four hundred and thirty Years in Egypt*, Exod. xii. 40. Pay us then, ſaid he, for all the Labour and Toil of ſo many thouſand People, as you employed all that Time, and we will reſtore what we borrowed; to which they had not a Word to anſwer. *Patrick*'s Commentary. It muſt be obſerved, however, that *Moſes* does not affirm, that the *Iſraelites* ſtayed 430 Years in *Egypt* (for it is certain they were but half that Time) but his Meaning is, that in all they ſojourned ſo long, *viz.* that, from the Time of *Abraham*'s ſetting out from *Meſopotamia*, to his Poſterity's now leaving *Egypt*, included ſuch a Number of Years. From *Abraham*'s leaving *Charran*, to *Jacob*'s going down into *Egypt*, was 215; and the Time that he and his Poſterity abode there, was the like Number of Years: So that it is plain, that *Moſes*, in the Place where he tells us, that *the ſojourning of the Children of Iſrael, who dwelt in Egypt*, (the *Samaritan* Copy has it, *in the Land of Canaan and Egypt*) *was four hundred and thirty Years*, had Reſpect to all the Pilgrimages of *Abraham*, and his Poſterity. *Patrick*, ibid. [l] *Jackſon*, upon the Creed.

of a *ſpecial Warrant* from the Lord himſelf, who was now become not their God only, but their *peculiar King*.

The Action vindicated.

BUT, becauſe the Exceptions to this Action lie not againſt the *Doing*, but againſt the *fraudulent Manner* of doing it; it may therefore be obſerved, [m] that the Providence of God deſigned by this Means to make the *Iſraelites* ſome Reparation for the tyrannical Uſage, which they had received from the *Egyptians*, as is manifeſt from his *giving them Favour with the Egyptians*, who indeed, for their own Ends, and to get rid of ſuch troubleſome Gueſts, were diſpoſed to lend them any Thing they had. Thus far all is right; here is nothing but fair Borrowing and Lending; and if the *Iſraelites* acquired a Right to theſe Things afterwards, there was then no Obligation to Reſtitution. Now that they acquired ſuch a Right is manifeſt, from the *Egyptians* purſuing them in an *hoſtile* Manner, and with a Purpoſe to deſtroy them, after they had given them free Liberty to depart; by which Hoſtility and Perfidiouſneſs, they plainly forfeited their Right to what they had only lent before: For this *hoſtile* Attempt (which would have warranted the *Iſraelites* to have fallen upon the *Egyptians*, and ſpoiled them of their Goods) did certainly warrant them to keep them, when they had them; ſo that now they became the rightful Poſſeſſors of what they had only upon Loan, and could not have detained, without Fraud and Oppreſſion, before.

The Pillar of the Cloud, what.

THUS the *Iſraelites* having got their Deſire of their Enemies, marched triumphantly out of the Land of *Egypt*, ſix hundred thouſand Men, beſides Women and Children, *and a mixt Multitude*, which are ſuppoſed to be *Proſelytes* to the *Jewiſh* Religion, conducted [n] *by the Lord*, as the Text tells us, *in a Pillar of a Cloud by Day, and in a Pillar of Fire by Night*. This wonderful Phænomenon, all dark on one Side, and all ſhining on the other, in the Shape of a Pillar, is ſuppoſed by moſt Interpreters [o] to be the SHECHINAH, or *Divine Majeſty*, exhibiting [p] its Preſence by a Train and Retinue of Angels: And therefore he, who in the xiiith Chapter of *Exodus*, is ſtiled [q] *the Lord*, in the very next Chapter, is called [r] *the Angel of God*; and they ſuppoſe farther, [s] that as the Majeſty of God appeared to *Moſes* in the *Buſh*, when he gave him Commiſſion to bring his People out of *Egypt*, and directed him all along in his Embaſſy to *Pharaoh*; ſo it appeared now in a *glorious Cloud*, [t] to conduct the *Iſraelites*, and aſſure them of his *ſpecial Providence* and Superintendency for their Safety and Protection: But in Oppoſition to all this, we are told, "That there was no Manner

An Objection againſt it.

"of Miracle in this whole Affair; that, as in *waſte* and deſolate Countries, where "there were no remarkable Places for Armies to form their *Rout* by, it was a cu-"ſtomary Thing, to carry a *blazing Fire*, fixed upon a *Pole*, before the firſt Line, "thereby to give Signals to all the reſt of the Army; ſo this *Pillar of a Cloud*, "which attended the *Iſraelites*, was nothing elſe, but one of theſe *ambulatory Beacons*, "carried by Men, appointed for that Purpoſe, when they were under *March*; and, "when they were to *halt*, fixed over the *General*'s Tent; and, that to ſuch a *portable* "Fire as this, whoſe *Flame*, but not its *Smoak*, is very far ſeen by *Night*, as its Smoak, "but not its Flame, is perceived at a great Diſtance *by Day*, all the ſtrange Things, "which are ſaid of the different *Phaſes* of this pretended miraculous *Pillar*, may, with "great Facility, be referred."

Anſwered.

THAT in the Deſerts of *Arabia*, and ſuch extended Plains, where there were no Cities, Rivers, or Mountains for *Signals* and *Land-Marks*, it was a general Cuſtom (before the Invention of the *Compaſs*) to carry Fire before Armies, in order to direct their March; and that (notwithſtanding the preſent Uſe of the Compaſs) ſuch Guidance of Fire is ſtill practiſed among the *Caravans* of the *Eaſt*; and the great Number of *Pilgrims*, who go every Year from Grand *Cairo* in *Egypt*, to *Mecca* in *Arabia*, cannot, by any one, that is acquainted either with *ancient* or *modern* Hiſtory, be denied; and had the ſole Intent of the *Cloudy Pillar* been, to guide and conduct the *Iſraelites* in their Journies, there might have been more Grounds for aſſerting, that it was a *mere Machine of human Contrivance*, and had nothing miraculous or ſupernatural in it: But, when it ſhall appear, that this *Pillar of a Cloud* was of much greater Uſe to the Children of *Iſrael*, than barely to conduct them; that in it reſided a *ſuperior* Power upon whom the Name and Attributes of God are conferred; that from it proceeded *Oracles* and Directions every Day what the People were to do, and *Plagues* and Puniſhments,

[m] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [n] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [o] *Mede*'s Works, p. 343. [p] Exod. xiv. 24. [q] Ibid. ver. 19. [r] *Patrick*, ibid. [s] The *Jews* are of Opinion, that this Conductor of the *Hebrews* was either the Angel *Michael* or *Gabriel*; but whichſoever of them it was, he was the only Commander of that Hoſt, which went before the *Iſraelites*. They call him by the proper Name of *Metraton*, becauſe he marked out their Camp, where they were to ſtay, and directed their Way, in their Journey, to their ſeveral *Stations*. *Patrick*, ibid. [t] *Toland*'s *Hodegus*.

Puniſhments, when they had done amiſs; and that to it are aſcribed ſuch *Motions* and Actions, as cannot, with any Propriety of Speech, be applied to any *material* Fire; it will from hence, I hope, be concluded, that this Guidance of the Cloud was a *real* Miracle, its *Subſtance* quite different from that of *portable* Fires preceding Armies, and its *Conductor* ſomething more than a mortal Man.

THE firſt Mention that is made of this Phænomenon is in the 13th Chapter of *Exodus* [u], where *Moſes*, deſcribing the *Rout* which the *Iſraelites* purſued, firſt to *Rameſes*, and thence to *Succoth*, tells us, that *they took their Journey from Succoth, and encamped at Etham, at the Edge of the Wilderneſs; and the Lord went before them by Day in a Pillar of a Cloud, and by Night in a Pillar of Fire:* And what we are to underſtand by *the Lord, that went before them*, we are advertiſed in another Place: [w] *Behold I ſend my Angel before thee, to keep thee in the Way, and to bring thee into the Place which I have prepared; beware of him, and obey his Voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your Tranſgreſſions, for my Name is in him*, i. e. *my Name* JEHOVAH, which is the proper and incommunicable Title of God. The next Place wherein we find this Pillar of a Cloud mentioned, is in the 14th Chapter, [x] *And the Angel of God, which went before the Camp of Iſrael, removed, and went behind them; and the Pillar of the Cloud went from before their Face, and ſtood behind them, and it came between the Camp of the Egyptians and the Camp of Iſrael, and it was a Cloud and Darkneſs to them, but it gave Light to theſe.* There is, in the ſame Book, another Place where this Pillar is taken Notice of, and that is in the 33d Chapter, where God, being highly offended at the People's Impiety in making the *Golden Calf*, refuſes to conduct them any longer himſelf, and propoſes to depute an Angel to ſupply his Place: [y] *Depart, and go up hence*, ſays he to *Moſes, thou, and the People, which thou haſt brought up out of the Land of Egypt, and I will ſend an Angel before thee, for I myſelf will not go up in the midſt of thee; for thou art a ſtiff-necked People, leſt I conſume thee in the Way. When the People heard theſe evil Tidings, they mourned, and no Man did put on him his Ornaments. And when Moſes went into the Tabernacle, they all roſe up, and ſtood every Man at his Tent-Door, and looked after Moſes, until he was gone into the Tabernacle, and it came to paſs, as Moſes entered into the Tabernacle, the Cloudy Pillar deſcended, and ſtood at the Door of the Tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moſes; all the People ſaw the Cloudy Pillar at the Tabernacle-Door, and they roſe up and worſhipped, every Man at his Tent-Door.* We have Occaſion to take Notice but of one Place more; and that is in the 16th Chapter of *Numbers*; where the People murmured for the Loſs of *Korah* and his Company. [z] *And it came to paſs, that when the Congregation was gathered againſt Moſes and againſt Aaron, that they looked toward the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and behold the Cloud covered it, and the Glory of the Lord appeared; and Moſes and Aaron came before the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and the Lord ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, Get you up from among this Congregation, that I may conſume them, as in a Moment; and they fell upon their Faces; and Moſes ſaid unto Aaron, take a Cenſer, and put Fire therein, from off the Altar, and put on Incenſe, and go quickly unto the Congregation, and make an Atonement for them; for there is Wrath gone out from the Lord, the Plague is begun.*

NOW, from a bare Recital of theſe Paſſages, we cannot but obſerve, that the *Iſraelites* Pillar made quite another Appearance, than any *combuſtible* Matter, when ſet on Fire, and hoiſted upon a Pole, can be ſuppoſed to do; that, in this Pillar, reſided a Perſon of Divine Character and Perfections, and therefore called *the Lord, the Angel, the Angel of the Lord*, and *the Angel of his Preſence*, &c. that this Perſon was inveſted with a Power of demanding Obſervance, of both puniſhing and pardoning Tranſgreſſions, and to whom even *Moſes* and *Aaron*, as well as the reſt of the Congregation, might fall down on their Faces, and pay Obeyſance, without the Imputation of *Idolatry*. The whole Tenour of the Narration, in ſhort, ſeems to denote, that every one in the Congregation ſhould look upon the Pillar, as ſomething awful and tremendous, and the Perſon reſiding therein, above the Rank and Dignity of any *created Eſſence:* And therefore the moſt general Opinion is, that he, to whom the Divine Appellations, Divine Powers, and Divine Honours, are, in ſo many Places, aſcribed, was the *Eternal Son of God*, with a Troop of bleſſed Angels attending him, in bright and luminous Forms, and who, either by the *Diſplay* or *Contraction* of their Forms, could make the Cloud, they inhabited, either *condenſe* or *expand* itſelf,

[u] Exod. xiii. 20, 21. [w] Ibid. xxiii. 20, 21. [x] Ibid. xiv. 19, 20. [y] Ibid. xxxiii, 1, &c.
[z] Numb. xvi. 42.

either put on a *dark* or *radiant* Appearance, according as the great Captain of their Hoſt ſignified his Pleaſure: For to ſuppoſe *mere Fire*, without any ſupernatural Direction, appearing in different Forms, Darkneſs to one Sort of People, and Light to another, at the ſame Time, is a Thing incongruous to its Nature.

FOR how many Purpoſes this Pillar of a Cloud might ſerve the *Hebrews*, 'twould be Preſumption to determine: But this we may ſafely ſay, that, beſides its guiding them in their Journies, [a] it was of Uſe to defend them from their Enemies, that they might not aſſault them; of Uſe to cover them from the Heat of the Sun in the Wilderneſs, where there were but few Trees, and no Houſes to ſhelter them; and of ſingular Uſe to convey the Divine Will, and to be, as it were, a ſtanding *Oracle*, whereunto they might reſort upon all Occaſions.

IN this Cloud, we are told expreſſly, [b] that the Lord appeared in the Tabernacle; from this Cloud, [c] that he called *Aaron* and *Miriam* to come before him; and out of this Cloud, again, that he ſent forth the Expreſſes of his Wrath, as well as Tokens of his Love, among the whole Congregation: And therefore this Cloud could be nothing elſe but the Vehicle of God, or the Place of *Majeſtick* Appearance, at that Time; nor is that Conjecture very improbable, that, from this very Inſtance, the Poets firſt took the Hint of making their Gods deſcend on a [d] Cloud, and arrayed with a bright Effulgence.

HOWEVER this be, 'tis certain, that the *Jews* were perſuaded of the *Divinity* of their Guide, otherwiſe [e] they would not have expreſſed ſuch undiſſembled Sorrow and Concern, upon hearing the News of his Intention to relinquiſh them; nor would they ever have ſubmitted to wander ſo long in the *Wilderneſs*, expoſed to ſo many Dangers and Hardſhips, had it been a Man only, with ſome Fire elevated [f] upon a *Pole*, that was their Conducter. From *Horeb* to *Kadeſh-Barnea* (which was upon the Borders of the Land of *Canaan*) the Way was not far, much about eleven Days Journey, and in a Manner a beaten Road, and almoſt impoſſible for them to miſs; and therefore we cannot but ſuppoſe, that had they not been convinced of the Miraculouſneſs of their Direction, even *Moſes* himſelf, with all his Authority, would not have been able to perſuade them to take the Compaſs, we find they did, through an Enemy's Country, where they were to fight their Way, inſtead of purſuing their direct Road to the *Land of Promiſe*; but therefore they willingly followed the Cloud, becauſe they were ſenſible a Divinity reſided in it; and therefore that Divinity led them in the Wilderneſs ſo long, to inure them to Hardſhips, and to prolong their Stay, until that Generation was dead, [g] *of whom he had ſworn in his Wrath, that they ſhould not enter into his Reſt.*

SECT. VI.

Of the ISRAELITES *Paſſage over the* Red-Sea.

Why the Egyptians *purſued the* Iſraelites.

WHILE the *Iſraelites* continued their March, the Impreſſion, which the late Plagues had upon *Pharaoh* and his Miniſters, began to abate. They knew, from the Accounts they received, that the People intended ſomething more, than the *Celebration* of a Feaſt, for the Space of three Days in the Wilderneſs: They began to conſider, what *Egypt* was like to loſe by the Revolt of ſo many uſeful Slaves, and perhaps they likewiſe flattered themſelves, that the Power of the God of *Iſrael*, as great as it appeared to be, might nevertheleſs have its Bounds, as well as that of other Gods: [h] For the *Pagan* Theology allotted certain *Diſtricts* and *Provinces* to their Deities, making one Supreme in the *Mountains*, and another in the *Plains*; one preſide over the *Waters*, and another over the *dry Land*; and therefore, deluded with theſe Notions, or rather *judicially* blinded by God, *Pharaoh* reſolved to purſue the Children of *Iſrael*; and, having got together what Forces he could, came up with them, as they were encompaſſed by the Sea.

NEVER

[a] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [b] Deut. xxxi. 15. [c] Numb. xii. 5. [d] Ad hoc exemplum credo Poëtas ſanciviſſe, nullum Numen mortalibus apparere ſine Nimbo; eſt autem Nimbus Nubes Divina, ſeu fluidum Lumen, quod decorum Capita cingit, *Taubman*, upon *Virgil*. [e] Exod. xxxiii. 4, 6. [f] *Lewis*'s Antiquities of the *Hebrew* Republick. [g] Pſal. xcv. 11. [h] *Vid.* 1 Kings xx. 25.

NEVER was poor People in a more diſmal Situation, hemmed in, on the *Weſt*, by a Ridge of Mountains, preſſed from the *South* by *Pharaoh*'s Army, and on the *Eaſt* and *North*, ſhut up by the Sea: The *Sea* not to be paſſed, without a good Number of Ships to contain ſuch a Multitude; the *Mountains* not to be attempted, with ſuch a Train of Women and Children; and the *Enemy* not to be encountered, for Want of Arms as well as Courage. In theſe diſtreſſed Circumſtances what were they do? [h] They had but one Recourſe, and that was to lift up their Eyes and Hearts to that *Cloud*, where their great *Captain* ſat, and to call to their Aſſiſtance that Arm, that invincible Arm, which had already wrought ſuch wonderful Things for them. But inſtead of imploring the Help of God, [i] they murmur againſt his Servant *Moſes*, ſo that *Moſes* pours out his Complaint before the Lord, *and the Lord*, to deliver an undeſerving People, at the Signal of his Servant's Rod, [k] *cauſed the Sea to go back by a ſtrong Eaſt Wind all that Night, and made the Sea dry Land, and the Waters were divided*, ſo that *the Children of Iſrael went into the Midſt of the Sea upon dry Ground, and the Waters were a Wall unto them on their right Hand and on their left*: And, at another Signal given, [l] *the Sea returned to its Strength*, the roaring Waves broke looſe from their inviſible Chain, and ſwallowed up *Pharaoh* and all his Hoſt, *ſo that there remained not ſo much as one of them.*

The Diſtreſs the Iſraelites *were in.*

[m] THUS *the Lord ſaved Iſrael*, ſays the ſacred Hiſtorian, but other People will tell us, that he did it quite another Way; "That the [n] *Red-Sea*, eſpecially, in the extreme Part of it, where the *Iſraelites* paſſed over, [o] was not above two Miles broad, "and very often quite dry, by Reaſon of the great *Reflux* of the Tide; [p] that *Moſes*, "who perfectly underſtood the Country, and had obſerved the ebbing and flowing of "the Sea, led down his Men at the Time of *Ebb*, and, being favoured by a ſtrong "Wind, blowing from the *Shore*, and retarding the Return of the Tide, had the "good Luck to get ſafe to the other Side; while *Pharaoh* and his Army hoping to "do the ſame, but miſtaken in their *Computation*, had the Misfortune to be loſt: "But in all this Event what is there more, [q] than in *Alexander*'s paſſing the Sea of "*Pamphylia?* To be ſure, had there been any Appearance of Miracle in the Thing; "had the Water divided itſelf in two Parts, and reared up on each Side like *Walls*, "for the Reception of the *Iſraelites*, the *Egyptians*, mad as they were with Rage, "would never have been ſo deſperate, as to purſue them."

An Objection againſt the Miraculouſneſs of their Paſſage.

OF what Breadth the *Red-Sea* may be, at the Place of Paſſage, is not ſo eaſy a Matter to determine, [r] becauſe both *Geographers* and *Travellers* mightily differ in their Computation: But if (according to ſome of the loweſt Accounts) we ſuppoſe it to be much about two Leagues, moſt Writers agree, that the Sea, in this Place, is very boiſterous and tempeſtuous, which is hardly conſiſtent with a *Shallowneſs*, much leſs a total Deſertion of Water, upon any haſty *Reflux*. The Wind, it muſt be owned, if it blew from a right Quarter, might both forward the *Ebb*, and retard the *Flow*; but the Wind, which blew at this Time, we are told was an *Eaſt Wind*, whereas it muſt have been a *Weſt*, or *North-Weſt* Wind, to have driven the Water away from the extreme Parts into the main Body of the Sea; as any one that looks into a *Map*, may perceive. The *Eaſt Wind* blew athwart the Sea, and cut it aſunder, ſo that one Part fell back towards the *South*, and up the main Channel, and the other Part retired towards the *North*, where *Sues* is ſituated, and where the Sea terminates in a Point: And this very likely is the Meaning (if there be an *Hyperbole* in the Expreſſion) of the Waters being *a Wall to the Iſraelites on their right Hand and on their left*; becauſe they ſo defended them on both Sides, that the *Egyptians*

Anſwered.

[h] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [i] Exod. xiv. 10. [k] Ibid. xiv. 21, 22. [l] Ibid. *ver.* 27. [m] Ibid. *ver.* 30. [n] The *Red-Sea* (called alſo by the Antients *Sinus Adriaticus*, and now *Golfo di Mecca*) is that Part or Branch of the Southern Ocean, which interpoſes itſelf between *Egypt*, on the *Weſt*, *Arabia Fælix*, and ſome Part of *Petræa* on the *Eaſt*, the *North* Bounds of it touching upon *Idumea*, or the Coaſt of *Edom*. *Edom*, in the *Hebrew* Tongue, ſignifies *Red*, and was the Nick-name given *Eſau*, for ſelling his Birth-right for a Meſs of *red* Pottage. The Country, which his Poſterity poſſeſſed, was called after that Name, and ſo was the Sea, which adjoined to it; but the *Greeks*, not underſtanding the Reaſon of the Appellation, tranſlated it into their own Tongue, and called it ἐρυθρὰ θαλάσση, thence the *Latins*, *Mare Rubrum*; and we, the *Red-Sea*. The *Hebrews* call it the Sea of *Suph*, or *Flags*, there being ſuch Abundance of this Kind of Weed in that Sea, that the Inhabitants of the Coaſt pluck it up out of the Water, and, after they have dried it, make themſelves Huts of it. Vide *Heylin*'s Coſmography, *Wells*'s Geography, and *Patrick*'s Commentary. [o] *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations. [p] *Vid. Euſeb. Præpar.* Lib. IX. c. 27. [q] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. II. c. 7. [r] One affirms, that the Sea is ſix Leagues wide in this Place, another makes it but 15 *Stadia*, or Furlongs; one ſays it is narrow and long, like a River, and another allows it but the Breadth of one League. *Vid. Diod. Sicul.* Lib. III. *Strabo*, Lib. II. *P. Belon*'s Obſervations, Lib. II. and *Pietro della Valle*, Tom. I. Ep. 11. *Thevenot* makes it 8 or 9 Miles in Breadth, and tells us, that the Place, where the *Iſraelites* came out of the Sea, is, at preſent, called *Corondel*. *Voyage de Levant*. But *Andricomius* will have it to be more than 6. *Theatrum Terræ Sacræ*.

tians could no Way come at them, but by purſuing them in the ſame Path, which they took.

IT is not to be queſtioned, but that *Moſes* was a Perſon of an excellent Judgment: * By his being ſo long in the Army, he could not but know the proper Advantages to be made in *Marches* and *Retreats*; and yet he ſeems to give us no great Specimen of his Skill, by declining the Mountains, which poſſibly were inacceſſible to the Chariots and Horſemen, and betaking himſelf to the *Strand*, where *Pharaoh*'s Army might make after him, (as we find they did) and ſo truſting to the uncertain Return of a Tide, had not God both commanded him to take that Way, and foretold him the Event. He might not perhaps be ignorant of the Courſe of the *Tide*, and could eaſily diſcern the favourable Diſpoſition of the *Wind*; but was there never a Man, in all the great Army which *Pharaoh* brought with him, of equal Obſervation and Skill? 'Tis a Thing incongruous to Reaſon, [t] that the *Egyptians*, who excelled, at that Time, all other Nations in their Knowledge and Obſervation of *Celeſtial Bodies*, ſhould be ignorant of the *Fluxes* and *Refluxes* of the Sea, in their own Country, in their own Coaſt, and in their own moſt traded and frequented Ports and Havens: But if they were not ignorant of the Time of the Reflux, it is hardly to be imagined, that the Eagerneſs of Purſuit would have made them venture into the *Bay*, when they could not but be ſenſible, that, in Caſe they miſcomputed, the returning Waves would devour and ſwallow them up. Why they ventured to purſue the *Iſraelites*, the ſacred Hiſtorian ſeems plainly to intimate, when he tells us, [u] that *the Angel of the Lord, which went before the Camp, removed, and went behind them: It came between the Camp of the Egyptians, and the Camp of Iſrael, and was a Cloud and Darkneſs to the one, but gave Light in the Night to the other.* So that the true Reaſon, why the *Egyptians went in after the Iſraelites into the Midſt of the Sea*, was, that they knew not where they were. They imagined perhaps, that they were ſtill upon the Land, or at leaſt upon the Shore, where the Sea had retired: The Darkneſs of the Night, and the preternatural Darkneſs of the Cloud, not ſuffering them to ſee the Mountains of Waters on each Side: But, [x] *when the Lord looked unto the Hoſt of the Egyptians through the Pillar of Fire*; when he turned the bright Side of the Cloud upon them, to let them ſee the Danger they were in, and, at the ſame Time, (as *Joſephus* adds) poured out a Storm upon them, with Thunder, and Lightning, and Hail-Stones from the Cloud, their common Cry was then, [y] *let us flee from the Face of Iſrael; for the Lord fighteth for them againſt the Egyptians.*

That they went directly croſs.

THAT the *Iſraelites* went not quite *croſs* the *Red-Sea*, but only fetched a *Compaſs* as they found the Waters caſt up for them, and ſo came out upon the ſame Shore, from which they went in, there is not that Reaſon, I think, to infer, either from the Length of the Paſſage, or the Place where they came out. For, taking the Channel in its utmoſt Breadth, and allowing the *Iſraelites* the loweſt Computation of Time, yet we have ſtill this to ſay, that, in a Relation, abounding with *Miracles*, there can be no Abſurdity to ſuppoſe *one more*. [z] Now, if God interpoſed his Power to *diſable* the Chariots of *Pharaoh*, leſt the Return of the Waters ſhould excite their Fears, and their Fears, by improving their Diligence, ſave them from Deſtruction; why might not God interpoſe the ſame Power (if there was Occaſion) to quicken the *Iſraelites*, and enable them to perform their Paſſage in the Time appointed? Nay, if we will allow his own Words to be a good Comment upon his Actions, we cannot but ſuppoſe that he did ſo, when we find him, after all was over, recounting his Kindneſs to them in this wiſe; [a] *Ye have ſeen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on Eagles Wings*, (where the Expreſſion certainly denotes ſome extraordinary *Aſſiſtance*, given them in their Paſſage) *and brought you unto myſelf.* Tho' therefore ſome Ambiguity may ariſe as to the Place, where the *Iſraelites* came on Shore, (ſince they were [b] at *Etham* but two Days before, and now landed in a Wilderneſs of the ſame Name) yet, [c] if we will but ſuppoſe, that there were two *Ethams*, the one a Town, where they encamped, on the *Egyptian* Side, and the other, on the *Arabian* Side, a Wilderneſs; or (if we will needs have the Wilderneſs of *Etham* denominated from the Town) ſuppoſing [d] the Town was ſituated near the *upper* Part of the *Red-Sea*, and gave Denomination to a great *Deſert*, which ſurrounded the Head of the Bay, and reached down a conſiderable Way on *both Sides*, we may eaſily perceive, that tho' the *Iſraelites* marched from the Wilderneſs of *Etham* croſs the Bay, they would only

* Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s Hiſtory. [t] Ibid. [u] Exod. xiv. 19, 20. [x] Ibid. *ver.* 19. [y] Ibid. *ver.* 25. [z] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [a] Exod. xix. 4. [b] *See* Numbers xxxiii. compared with Exodus xiv. [c] *Wells*'s Geography, and *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [d] *Le Clerc*'s Diſſertations.

only be in another Part of the Wilderneſs of *Etham* ſtill. [e] Now, if the *Iſraelites* croſſed the Sea in a direct Line, (upon the Suppoſition that it was no more than an ordinary Return of the Tide, which overwhelmed the *Egyptians*, before they could recover their own Coaſt) the *Egyptians* could not have been caſt aſhore (as the Scripture teſtifies they were) on that Coaſt of *Arabia*, where *Moſes* landed; but muſt neceſſarily be carried away with the Flood, which runneth up to *Sues*, and the utmoſt Point of the Bay.

THESE are ſome Arguments for the real Paſſage of the *Red-Sea*, in the Manner that *Moſes* has repreſented it: And tho' we have not Time at preſent to examine † the ſeveral Facts, that are commonly alledged in Contrapoſition to this, and ſhall therefore, for Brevity's Sake, allow them all to be true; [f] yet, if we reflect as we ought, on the Prediction of *Moſes* concerning the Event, the Virtue of his Rod, the Facility of the *Iſraelites* Paſſage, the Raſhneſs of the Enemies following, and their [g] univerſal Overthrow and tragical End, we ſhall find every Thing concurring to render this an unparallelled Inſtance; and that nothing, but an immoderate Deſire of depreciating the Miracles of the ſacred Hiſtory, can diminiſh the Wonder of this famous Paſſage, into a Compariſon with what other Men have done. I call it a *famous Paſſage*, and that, not only becauſe [h] both *ſacred* and *profane* Hiſtory make Mention of it; not only becauſe [i] the Name of the Sea records, and [k] the Inhabitants of the Coaſt tranſmit, the Remembrance of the Fact; but becauſe we find two renowned Men in Scripture, a mighty *Law-giver*, and a mighty *Monarch*, *Moſes* and *David*, both exerciſing their *Poetick Genius*, to celebrate the Miracle in ſuch lofty *Strains*, as theſe, [l] *with the Blaſt of thy Noſtrils the Waters were gathered together, the Floods ſtood upright as an Heap, and the Depths were congealed in the Heart of the Sea. The Enemy ſaid, I will purſue, I will overtake, I will divide the Spoil, my Luſt ſhall be ſatisfied, and my Hand ſhall deſtroy them. Thou didſt blow with thy Wind, the Sea covered them, they ſunk as Lead in the mighty Waters.* [m] *For the Waters ſaw thee, O God, the Waters ſaw thee, and were afraid, the Depths alſo were troubled, the Clouds poured out Water, the Air thundered, and thine Arrows went abroad; thy Way is in the Sea, and thy Paths in great Waters, and thy Footſteps are not known.*

[e] Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s Hiſtory.

† *Joſephus* has compared this Paſſage of the *Iſraelites* over the *Red-Sea*, with what *Alexander the Great* did, when he marched Part of his Army over the Sea of *Pamphylia*; but there is little or no Reſemblance between them. *Alexander* was to march from *Phaſelis*, a Sea-Port, to *Perga*, an inland City of *Pamphylia*. The Country near *Phaſelis*, upon the Shore of the *Pamphylian* Sea, was mountainous and rocky, ſo that he could not find a Paſſage for his Army, without either taking a large Compaſs, or attempting to go over the Strand between the Rocks and the Sea. *Arrian* hath obſerved, that when the Wind blows North, (eſpecially to any great Degree) the Strand is dry, and paſſable; and therefore *Alexander*, taking the Advantage of the Wind thus blowing, ſent ſome of his Army over the Mountains, and went himſelf, with the reſt of his Forces along the Shore. But in this we can find no Miracle, unleſs the Wind's blowing opportunely for *Alexander*'s Purpoſe may be reputed one. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. II. Lib. IX.

[f] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [g] *Apollonius*, in the Lives of the Fathers, affirms, that thoſe *Egyptians*, who ſtayed in the Country, and did not follow *Pharaoh* in the Purſuit of *Iſrael*, did, ever after that, honour thoſe Beaſts, Birds, Plants, and other Creatures, about which they were occupied, at the Time of this general Deſtruction. He, for Inſtance, that was working in the Garden, made a God of that Plant or Root, he was then buſied about, and ſo of the reſt. But how thoſe Multitudes of Gods came to obtain among them, we ſhall have Occaſion to obſerve elſewhere. [h] *Vide* Joſh. iv. 23. Pſal. lxxviii. 13. Ibid. cxiv. 3. 1 Cor. x. 1. Heb. xi. 29, *&c.* [i] The Name, which the *Arabs* give it, is *Buhr el Calzem, the Sea of drowning*, or overwhelming, in Memory of that ſignal Judgment of God upon *Pharaoh* and his Army. *Wells*'s Geography. [k] The Account of *Oroſius*, who tells us, that there ſtill remain ſome Monuments of that Event, and that the Track of the Chariots and Wheels may be ſeen, not only on the Shore, but alſo at the Bottom, as far as the Sight can reach, is a little too fabulous. *Oroſ.* Hiſt. Lib. I. c. 10. But there is Credibility enough in what *Diodorus Siculus* relates, *viz.* that the *Ichthuophagi*, i. e. *thoſe that live upon Fiſh*, the Inhabitants of the weſtern Coaſt of the *Red Sea*, have the following Tradition, "That upon a "great Receſs of the Sea, the Bottom of it was quite dry, and appeared green, (from the Weeds, we may ſuppoſe, "that were in it) that it was divided into two Parts, but returning back with a mighty Force, the Waters re-united, and "regained their former Place." *Lib.* III. [l] Exod. xv. 8, *&c.* [m] Pſal. lxxvii. 16, *&c.*

CHAP. IV.

Of the Jewiſh LAWS, *Moral, Eccleſiaſtical, and Civil.*

Of the World, 2513, &c. Before Chriſt, 1491, &c.

AFTER the Lord had thus mightily delivered the Children of *Iſrael*, and every Day given them freſh Inſtances of his miraculous Care and Providence; at *Marah*, [a] ſweetened the Water by the Injection of a Wood of a certain Tree; in the Wilderneſs of *Sin*, ſent [b] Quails for their Meat, and [c] Manna for their Bread; and at *Rephidim*, given them [d] Water out of the Rock, and a perfect Victory over their Enemies; he intended now to reduce them to a regular *Society*, and to give them a *Syſtem* of Laws, both *Moral*, *Civil*, and *Eccleſiaſtical*, ſuch as might direct their Conduct in all Capacities; and to this Purpoſe, in the Space of ſeven and forty Days, after their Departure out of the Land of *Egypt*, he brought them into the Wilderneſs of *Sinai*, to the Mount of God.

The Laws the Jews had, before thoſe given at Mount Sinai.

THE People indeed hitherto were but poorly provided with Laws: All they had were *traditional*, and conſiſted in ſome particular Precepts, that were not at all Times ſo clearly conveyed; and therefore it was neceſſary (now, that he had taken them under his immediate Care) to appoint them a *Compleat Syſtem*. "He gave ſix "Commandments to *Adam*," ſays [e] *Maimonides*, (ſo that, according to him, *Noah* was not the firſt that received theſe famous Precepts from God) "of which, the "*five firſt* forbid Idolatry, Blaſphemy, Homicide, unlawful Conjunction, and "Theft; the *ſixth*, commands the Eſtabliſhment of Magiſtrates; and the *ſeventh*, "(which *Noah* received) inhibits the eating any Animal, until the Blood be taken "out of it. Theſe, in all, I ſay, are ſeven, and were obſerved by the whole World. "After this, God gave *Abraham* the Commandment of *Circumciſion*, and 'twas "by this Patriarch, that *Morning-Prayer* was inſtituted. *Iſaac* eſtabliſhed *After-"noon-Prayer*, and taught, that the Tenth of every Thing muſt be ſet a-part for "an Offering to God. *Jacob* forbad the eating the *Sinew which ſhrank*, and com-"poſed the *Evening-Prayer*, and *Amram* added ſeveral other Precepts to theſe; till "at length, came *Moſes*, and he gave the utmoſt Perfection to the Law, by digeſting "the *Commandments*, *Statutes*, and *Judgments*, which God delivered to him, into "a *Code*, and leaving it in the Hands of the Church, for the Inſtruction of all ſuc-"ceeding Ages."

BUT before we come to an immediate Diſcuſſion of theſe Laws, it will not be improper to ſay ſomething concerning the *Difference* of Laws in general, the better to perceive the particular Nature of ſuch, as are to come preſently under our Conſideration.

Of Laws in general.

Now all Laws, in their *primary* View, are either *Divine* or *Human*, i. e. either from God or Men. [f] *Divine* Laws are either *eternal*, ſuch as we ſuppoſe are in the Nature of God, and the unvariable Rule of his Actions; or *natural*, ſuch as are inwardly implanted by God in Men; or *revealed*, ſuch as he has preſcribed them in the Declaration

[a] We are not told what Tree this was, whoſe Wood, being thrown into the Waters, took off their Brackiſhneſs. But, to increaſe the Miracle, the *Jews* will have it, that the Wood of this Tree (which they call *Ardophne*) was itſelf of a *bitter* Taſte, and would naturally have made the Waters bitter, had they been ſweet before. *Patrick*'s Commentary. Which ſeems to be quite contrary to the Words of the Wiſe Man, [*Eccluſ* xxxviii. 5.] *Was not the Water made ſweet wi h Wood, that the Virtue thereof might be known?* [b] The *Hebrew* Word [*Selau*] which we, after the Example of *Joſephus*, render *Quails*, is by different Interpreters thought to ſignify *Thruſhes*, *Pheaſants*, *Sea-Fowl*; and by *Job Ludolphus*, in his learned Commentary upon his *Æthiopick* Hiſtory, *Locuſts*; which he tells us were not only uſed for Food, but in ſeveral Countries were very delicious Meat. See *Patrick*'s Commentary, on *Numb.* xi. who ſeems to be entirely of his Opinion. [c] *Le Clerc*, in his Commentary on *Exod.* xvi, tells us, that the Word *Man*, ſignifies a *Gift*, and that, when the *Iſraelites* ſaid *Man how*, it imported, *is this the Gift?* For he makes it a Queſtion of Scorn and Contempt, as much as to ſay, is this little Grain, which covers the Dew, the Gift which God promiſed us? And he entirely agrees with *Cl. Salmaſius*, that it was the ſame with common *Manna*, tho' differing from it in ſome Properties. [d] *Thevenot*, in his *Voyage de Levant*, tells us, that he was ſhewn the Rock, (as they called it) out of which *Moſes* brought Water; but that it was only a Stone of a prodigious Height and Thickneſs, riſing out of the Ground. He ſaw on each Side of it ſeveral Holes, out of which, it was plain, the Water had iſſued, by the Marks and Impreſſions that it had made; but at preſent, ſays he, no Water comes out of them. [e] In his Treatiſe *of a Proſelyte*, c. 4. [f] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

Declaration of his Will. As for *human* Laws, they are either ſuch as relate to Mankind in general, and are agreed upon by People of all Nations; or ſuch, as concern the *Government of the Church*, being *Canons* and Conſtitutions made at ſeveral Times, either in *General Councils*, or in *National* or *Provincial Synods*; or ſuch as concern the *Government of Civil Communities*, being the *Secular* and *Political* Conſtitutions of particular Kingdoms and Commonwealths, for the Eſtabliſhment of Peace, Order, and Religion.

The Law of Nature.

ALL People and Nations claim the Right and Privilege of making ſuch Laws for themſelves, as they think fit; and for this Reaſon there muſt be as great a Variety of Laws, as there are different *Forms* of Government in the World, or indeed different *Humours* in the Legiſlators. [g] But now, amidſt this Diverſity of Laws, depending either upon the Conſtitution of Governments, or the arbitrary Choice of thoſe that govern, there is an *univerſal* Law, which is the Foundation of all others, and that from whence they derive their Authority. This we call *natural*, becauſe it flows immediately from Nature, which, being in all Men the ſame, univerſally preſcribes the ſame Rules. 'Tis indeed nothing elſe but Reaſon itſelf; and Reaſon, though in ſome Countries more improved than in others, every where ſpeaks the ſame Thing. She *ſpeaks diſtinctly* to ſome People, who ſtudy and obſerve her carefully; to others ſhe but *liſps*, (as we may call it) nor can they well underſtand what ſhe ſays, for Want of being accuſtomed to hear her; but to others ſhe is quite *ſtruck dumb*, as it were, nor can they hear her Language at all, by Reaſon of thoſe *Obſtructions*, which Stupidity and a Proſtitution to the moſt infamous Vices has placed betwixt them, and her gentle *Whiſpers*. But notwithſtanding this, Reaſon has always a Right to rule, and is appointed and authorized by God, to give Laws to all the Nations in the World. God at firſt placed it in the Soul of Man: For divers Ages it ſupplied the Place of every other Law; and when he thought fit to add unto it the Laws, which he pronounced from his own Mouth, and wrote with his own Finger upon the Tables in Mount *Sinai*, 'twas only to lay before the Eyes of the *Jews* the ſame Law, he had originally engraved in the Heart of all Men; according to theſe remarkable Words to the *Romans*, that [h] *the Gentiles, who had not the Law*, (as the *Jews* had) written by God upon Tables of Stone, *did by Nature*, or the ſole Impreſſion of the Law of Nature, *the Things contained in the Law, i. e.* the very Things commanded by the written Law; becauſe, ſays he, *theſe, having not the Law, were a Law to themſelves*, and ſhewed by their *Sentiments*, which their *Philoſophers*, their *Poets* and *Orators*, clearly explained, and by the *Eſteem* they teſtified for Virtue, that *there was a Law written in their Hearts*, from which they formed all their great Notions and laudable *Maxims*. Thus [i] when the *Roman* Orator comes to ſpeak, in one of his moſt beautiful Philoſophick Works, of the wicked Action of the Son of *Tarquin* againſt the Chaſtity of *Lucretia*, he ſays, " That indeed there was no written Law among the " *Romans* againſt ſuch Outrages, but that the Action of the young *Tarquin* was " nevertheleſs flagitious on his Score, becauſe there was an *eternal* and *immutable* " Law againſt theſe Enormities, and this eternal Law, or Law in Force from all " Times, (ſays he) is Reaſon itſelf, which we have from Nature; a Law, which does " not begin to have the Force and Authority of a Law, when it comes to be written, " but has it *originally*." Whereupon he concludes, " That the true Law, which " is our *Sovereign*, and has a proper Power of commanding and forbidding, is right " Reaſon, which is derived to us from the moſt High God."

Its univerſal Extent and Obligation.

'TIS to this *original* Law, deſcending from God, and naturally engraved in every Man's Breaſt, that all *particular* Laws both of God and Men ſhould conform, and are to be referred. [k] God himſelf, *Sovereign* as he is, without Reſtriction, and without Controul, and having, conſequently, an inconteſtable Right of commanding or forbidding whatever he pleaſes, never yet made any *Ordinances*, contrary to the Law of Nature, which would be acting contrary to himſelf, ſince himſelf is the great and immediate Author of that Law. *Oppoſite* indeed, we allow, they are to the *Corruption* of human Nature, becauſe they were deſign'd to *rectify* the Diſorder, which Sin had brought upon it; but this we account a Matter of their *Commendation*, and a ſure Argument, that whenever they come to be *weighed in the Ballance of the Sanctuary*, (as we are now going to examine into them) they will ever be found to be *true and righteous altogether*.

THE

[g] *Martin*, of Natural Religion. [h] Rom. ii. 14, *&c.* [i] *Tully de Legibus*, Lib. II. *Vid. Towerſon's* Explic. of the Decal. [k] *Martin*, ibid.

The ſeveral Kinds of Laws given to the Jews.

THE Laws, which God was pleaſed to give the Children of *Iſrael*, were, as we ſaid before, of three Kinds, *Moral*, *Civil*, and *Eccleſiaſtical*. By the *Moral* Law, we underſtand thoſe Precepts and Commands, whoſe Obſervance have a Tendency to make Men *good* and *virtuous*. The *Civil* Law contained the Conſtitutions and Orders, which reſpect *publick Juſtice*, and the Adminiſtration thereof; and the *Eccleſiaſtical*, directed the *Jews* in their external Behaviour in *religious Worſhip*, and appointed what *Rites* and *Uſages* they were to obſerve. The *firſt* of theſe are ſuch Precepts and Prohibitions, as are good in themſelves; the *ſecond* are of a mixt Nature, being partly in their own Nature good, and partly indifferent; and the *third* are in their own Nature indifferent, but ſo far good, as they are commanded by a *poſitive* Law of God.

The Number of them.

THE whole Number of theſe Commands, (according to the Computation of the *Jews*) amounts [m] to ſix hundred and thirteen in all; and theſe they divide into two Claſſes, *Affirmatives*, of which they reckon two hundred and forty-eight; and *Negatives*, whereof they make three hundred and ſixty-five; and their *Rabbins* (according to their Cuſtom of finding Wonders in every Thing) pretend to affirm, that the Number of the *Affirmative* Commandments anſwers to that of the *Parts* of an human Body, and that of the *Negatives* to the Number of the Days of the *ſolar* Year, or, as others will have it, to that of the *Veins*. Whether they are exact in their *Anatomy* or no, is not ſo eaſy a Matter to determine; but this is obvious to our firſt Conceptions, that ſuch a Multitude of Precepts could not but be a very *heavy Yoke, which neither they, nor their Fathers were able to bear*; and yet it was in ſome Sort neceſſary for that *ſtupid* and *carnal* People, in Order to ſhew them their Obligations in every minute Particular, becauſe the *Groſſneſs* of their Underſtandings diſabled them from ſupplying any Thing, which was not expreſsly commanded in the Law.

Their Oral *Law.*

BESIDES this written Law, the *Jews* do likewiſe acknowledge another, which they call the *Oral* Law; and the Account that they give of it is this,——[n] That as ſoon as *Moſes* returned from converſing with God, and retired into his Tent, he called *Aaron*, and firſt delivered to him the *Text*, which was to be the written Law, and after that, the *Interpretation* of it, which was to be the *Oral*, in the ſame Order as he had received both from God on the Mount; after which *Aaron* roſe up, and placed himſelf on his right Hand. After *Aaron*, came in *Eleazar* and *Ithamar* his Sons, and *Moſes* repeated to them the ſame Things, which he had done to *Aaron*; whereupon they aroſe and ſeated themſelves, one on the left Hand of *Moſes*, and the other on the right Hand of *Aaron*; and then the ſeventy *Elders*, who conſtituted the *Sanhedrim*, or great Senate of the Nation, came in, and being taught by *Moſes* both theſe Laws in the ſame Manner, they alſo ſeated themſelves in the Tent; and then entered all the People, or ſuch of them as were deſirous to know the Law of the Lord, and its Interpretation. So that *Moſes* repeated both theſe Laws four Times to *Aaron*, three Times to his Sons, twice to the *Elders*, and once to the People. After this he withdrew, and *Aaron* having repeated the ſame to the Congregation, he likewiſe withdrew; after him his Sons ſtood up, and repeated the ſame; and, upon their withdrawing, the ſeventy *Elders* did the ſame; ſo that each of them heard both the Law and its Interpretation four Times. The Law was written, but the Interpretation of it was preſerved by *Tradition*, and from hence it is, that their Doctors have generally divided the Law into two Kinds, the one *Written*, and the other *Oral*.

Whence it aroſe.

So great is the Honour, which the *Jewiſh* Doctors give to their *Traditions*, that they attribute them, we ſee, as well as the Law, to God himſelf; and the only Difference they make is, that the Law was written, and the Traditions conveyed down by Word of Mouth, from one Generation to another; but whether this be Matter of Fact, or not rather a *Fiction*, ſpun out of the fertile Invention of the *Talmudiſts*, is very much a Queſtion. What is certain and indiſputable is this,——[o] That the Reſpect, which the *Jews* had for the Majeſty of God, from whom they received the Law, and the Puniſhments, which were annexed to the Breach of it, inſpired them with a fervent Deſire of being acquainted with it, and obſerving it. Above all Things, they were afraid of breaking it through Ignorance; and *Moſes*, having commanded that, in all Things, *the Prieſts*, i. e. *the Sanhedrim*, ſhould be conſulted, it is highly probable, that the *oral* Law is nothing but the *Deciſions* of this Aſſembly, which, in Proceſs

[l] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [m] *Lamy*'s Introduction. [n] *Prideaux*'s Connection, Vol. II. p. 1. where he has given the Reader, that deſires to know more of it, a long and learned Account of the true Original of the *Jewiſh* Traditional Law. [o] *Lamy*'s Introduction.

Proceſs of Time, were reverenced, and, by a perpetual Addition of new Obſervations, became a Sort of Barrier againſt the Violation of the *Law of the Lord*.

General Obſervations upon the ten Commandments.

AMONG the many Commandments, that God gave *Moſes* to deliver unto the People of *Iſrael*, there are *Ten*, that excel the reſt, as containing the moſt eſſential Duties of *Morality*, and were therefore not only pronounced by God himſelf, but by him engraven likewiſe on two *Tables of Stone*, in order to ſet before their Eyes what Sin had blotted out of their Hearts. And of theſe we have ſome Obſervations to make in general, before we come to a particular Explication of them.

Mount Sinai *deſcribed.*

SINAI [p] which is the ſame with *Horeb*, (only two different *Heads* or Riſings of one and the ſame Mountain) is [q] an Hill ſituated in *Arabia Petræa*, ſo very high and lofty, that both Shores of the *Red-Sea* may be ſeen from thence. It is at preſent called the *Mount* of *Moſes*; and, beſides the Top of *Horeb*, has another Head or Riſing, called, [r] the *Mountain of St. Catherine*; on the Top of which, there is a Dome, and under it, the Body of that Saint (which, as they tell us, was brought thither by Angels, immediately after ſhe was beheaded at *Alexandria*) lies interred. As ſoon as the *Iſraelites* were arrived at this Place, *Moſes* was called into *Conference* with God, and had Directions given him in what Manner he was to prepare the People, that they might ſee, without *Profanation*, the *viſible* Tokens of his *Preſence* upon the Mount. Two Days were ſpent in Conferences between God and *Moſes*, and between *Moſes* and the People; [s] *and on the third Day God came down in the Sight of all the People upon the Mount.* The Royal Prophet has given a very lofty Deſcription of God's Deſcent; [t] *He bowed the Heavens, and came down, and it was dark under his Feet; he rode upon the Cherubims, and did fly, he came flying upon the Wings of the Wind; he made Darkneſs his ſecret Place, his Pavilion round about him, with dark Water, and thick Clouds, to cover him. At the Brightneſs of his Preſence the Clouds removed, Hail-Stones, and Coals of Fire. There went a Smoke out of his Preſence, and a conſuming Fire out of his Mouth*, ſo that *the Earth trembled and quaked, and the very Foundations of the Hills ſhook and were removed.* And ſo analogous is all this to what *Moſes* ſays of the Deſcent upon Mount *Sinai*, [u] *That the Mountain was altogether on a Smoke, becauſe the Lord deſcended upon it in Fire; that the Smoke thereof aſcended, as the Smoke of a Furnace, and the whole Mount quaked greatly*; that no room would be left to doubt, whether it was God himſelf who deſcended and pronounced the Decalogue, had not the New Teſtament told us expreſsly, that [x] *the Law was ordained by Angels*, that it was [y] *an Angel, who ſpake to Moſes on Mount Sinai*, and comparing the Law and Goſpel together, that the [z] *one was ſpoken by Angels*, but the other *by Jeſus Chriſt.*

God's Deſcent.

Himſelf proclaimed the Law.

THE Pomp however of this Appearance ſeems to be too great for Angels only: The Holy Mount covered with Smoke, Thunder ready to break out, and Lightnings darted forth with a diſmal Brightneſs; formidable Barriers not to be paſſed, without expiating the raſh Attempt with immediate Death; the Earth trembling, and, as it were, ſhrinking into its Foundations; ſix hundred thouſand Men ſhaking for fear, and begging, that [a] *God would not ſpeak to them, leſt they die*; and *Moſes* himſelf, though *habituated* to the Divine *Majeſty*, terrified at this Spectacle, and crying out, *I exceedingly fear and quake*: Theſe, and ſome more Inſtances, that might be collected from the Narration, together with the incommunicable Title of JEHOVAH affixed to the very Preface, ſeem to portend a great deal more, than the Preſence of Angels; and are not therefore badly explained by another Paſſage or two, wherein the ſame Fact is recounted; [b] *The Lord came from Sinai, and roſe up from Seir unto them*;

[p] Thus the Covenant, which God made with the *Iſraelites* on Mount *Sinai*, is alſo ſaid to be made with them at *Horeb*; and the *Decalogue*, or ten Commandments, which are ſet down in *Exod.* xx. as delivered from Mount *Sinai*, are repeated *Deut.* v. as delivered from Mount *Horeb*. [q] *Heylin's* Coſmography, and *Wells's* Geography. At the Bottom of the Mount *Sinai* ſtands, at preſent, the Monaſtery of St *Catherine*, a very large and beautiful Building, from which there were formerly Steps up to the very Top of it, and computed to be 14,000 in Number. There are two Churches on it, the one for the *Greeks*, and the other for the *Latins*; near that for the *Latins*, there is a little *Moſque*, and by the Side of it a little *Cave*, where *Moſes* (as they tell you) faſted forty Days; and not far from it a ſmall *Grot*, where he is ſaid to have hid himſelf, when he deſired to have a View of God's Face, and was permitted only to ſee his *Back Parts*. Near Mount *Horeb* ſtands the Monaſtery of the forty Martyrs, a neat Building, with a large Garden, and a fair Church, dedicated to the bleſſed Virgin. Here is the Stone, or Rock, out of which *Moſes* brought Water; and not far from hence, is the Place where they tell us the *Golden Calf* was moulten. There is to be ſeen indeed a great Head of a Calf, cut to the Life in Stone; but this (as *Thevenot* obſerves) looks liker a Contrivance of the *Greeks*, to impoſe upon Travellers. *Voyage de Levant.* [r] The St *Catherine*, from whom this Mount is denominated, is ſaid to be the Daughter of one *Coſta*, a King of *Cyprus*, who, in the Time of *Maxentius*, converted many unto Chriſt. Before ſhe was beheaded, ſhe was, for ſome Time, tortured on a Wheel, whence comes the *Catherine-Wheel* to be uſed for a Sign in this very Kingdom, to this very Day. *Wells's* Geography. [s] Exod. xix. 11. [t] Pſal. xviii. 9, &c. [u] Exod. xix. 18. [x] Gal. iii. 19. [y] Acts vii. 38. [z] Heb. ii. 2. [a] Exod. xx. 19. [b] Deut. xxxiii. 2.

them; he ſhined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thouſand of Saints; from his Right-Hand went a fiery Law for them; for [b] *the Chariots of God are twenty Thouſand, even Thouſands of Angels, and the Lord is among them, as in Sinai*: And therefore to make the whole Senſe conſiſtent, when St *Paul* oppoſes the *Law* and the *Goſpel*, upon Account of their different Manner of *Promulgation*, what we render given *by Angels*, muſt be underſtood, *in the Midſt of Angels*; and ſo the Meaning will be——That, when God gave the Law, he was ſurrounded with a moſt dreadful Equipage; proclaimed it in Thunder and Lightning, in Flames of Fire, and Clouds of Smoke, raiſed by the *Angelical Hoſt*, attending his Throne: [c] But that, when he promulged the Goſpel, all Things were tranſacted in the moſt eaſy and familiar Method, and with all poſſible Marks of Kindneſs and Condeſcenſion; he aſſumed our Nature, and adapted himſelf to our Infirmities; not diſdaining the Converſation of the vileſt, provided they were *vile* in their own Eyes, and applied to him for Inſtruction and Amendment.

Not a compleat Syſtem.

BE it allowed then, that the Commandments were given by God himſelf, attended with all theſe Enſigns of Terror; yet it will not therefore follow, that they were ever deſigned [d] for a perfect *Compendium*, much leſs a *compleat Syſtem*, of the whole *Moral* Law. They contain indeed ſome of the moſt momentous Precepts, but (without taking a vaſt Scope in our Expoſition) they omit many material Duties, both towards God and Man. *That we ſhould not worſhip other Gods*, is an expreſs Injunction, and an obvious Inference it is, that we ſhould worſhip that God, who is the Maker of us, and of all the World; but then, in what Manner we are to worſhip him, either as to the *ritual* Service, or *moral* Affection of the Heart, is no where told us in the *Decalogue*. No Mention is made of Praiſe and Thankſgiving, of Confeſſion and Prayer, of Faith and Hope, of Reliance and Reſignation, and other ſpiritual Graces, which alone can make our *Homage* acceptable. Our Duty to ourſelves is almoſt totally omitted: Sobriety, Abſtinence, and Modeſty, *&c.* are not once taken Notice of, nor can they, without drawing the moſt diſtant Conſequences, be inferred: And though great Care is taken of our Neighbour's Life and Property, yet what Benevolence and Kindneſs, what Forbearance and Forgiveneſs of Injuries we are to extend to him, we have no certain Direction given us. To ſupply this Defect therefore, there are other Precepts, included in the Body of the Law, which properly relate to the Commandments; and are, as it were, the *Sequel* and Explanation of them. Of this Kind, with Relation to the *firſt* Table, are the Commands given to the *Jews*, [e] not to offer Sacrifice to ſtrange Gods, [f] not to offer up their Children in Sacrifice to the Idol *Moloch*; [g] to break down the Statues of falſe Gods; [h] to deſtroy Diviners; and [i] not to ſwear by ſtrange Gods. And in Relation to the *ſecond* Table, they are ſuch as follow; [k] All thoſe, which regulate the Puniſhments of Murther and Uncleanneſs; [l] all thoſe, which relate to the Reſpect due to the Sovereign, and the Aged; [m] that of not ſuffering a Daughter of *Iſrael* to proſtitute herſelf; [n] that of not requiring Uſury of their Brethren; that of relieving their Neighbour; [o] that of bringing back a wandering Ox into the Way; [p] that of helping up the Aſs, that lies under his Burthen; [q] that of not giving falſe Witneſs with the Wicked; [r] that of not following a Multitude to do Evil; [s] that of not retaining the Hire of a Stranger; [t] that of leaving Gleanings in their Eſtates and Vineyards, when they gathered in the Harveſt and the Vintage, for the Widows, the Orphans, and the Strangers, *&c.* Theſe, and ſuch like Precepts, being of *Moral* Intendment, are a Kind of *Appendix* to the ten Commandments, and a very good *Comment* to explain and illuſtrate them.

Additional moral Precepts.

The Method of explaining them.

THERE is a farther Expedient, for enlarging the Senſe of the Ten Commandments, and that is, the Method and Rules, which are generally preſcribed us, in the Expoſition of them: *viz.* [u] That where any Duty is *enjoined*, there the *contrary* Practice is *forbid*, and where any *Vice* is forbid, there the contrary *Virtue* is commanded; that where a Virtue is required, there all the *Ways* that lead to it, all the *Means*, and Helps, and Inſtruments, that may be ſerviceable to attain and advance it, are likewiſe commanded; and where a Sin is forbidden, there all the *Cauſes*, and *Occaſions*, and *Invitations* to it are, at the ſame Time, prohibited; that whatever is implied

[b] Pſal. lxviii. 17. [c] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I. [d] *Le Clerc*'s Commentary. [e] Exod. xxii. 20. [f] Lev. xviii. 21. [g] Exod. xxiii. 24. [h] Lev. xix. 31. [i] Exod. xxiii. 32. [k] Lev. xx. 10, *&c.* [l] Ibid. xix. 32. [m] Exod. xix. 29. [n] Deut. xxiii. 19. [o] Exod. xxiii. 4. [p] Ibid. *ver.* 5. [q] Ibid. *ver.* 1. [r] Ibid. *ver.* 2. [s] Lev. xix. 13. [t] Ibid. *ver.* 9, 10. [u] *Towerſon*, on the Decalogue, and *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II.

implied in the Commandment, or follows by natural Conſequence, is to be reckoned as a Part of it, *i. e.* ſomething enjoined or forbidden in it, though it be not expreſsly mentioned; that, under one Kind of Duty or Vice, all others of the like Nature, yea all the Species and Sorts of it, are comprehended; that where one *relative* Duty is preſcribed, there the other is always to be underſtood; that whatever we are to do ourſelves, that we are to take Care that others, under our Charge, perform in their Places and Stations; and laſtly, that the Intent of theſe Commandments is, not only to forbid the *outward* Act of Vice, but the *inward* Deſire of it; and, on the contrary, not only require the *external* Performance of religious Duties, but that *internal* and vital Principle likewiſe from whence they proceed, and are animated. Theſe are ſome of the received Rules for the *Expoſition* of the Ten Commandments, by Virtue of which they are made to comprehend, not only all the Duties of *Moral* Religion, but ſome of the great Precepts of *Evangelical* Righteouſneſs; as indeed our bleſſed Saviour, [x] in his excellent *Comment* upon them, has ſufficiently informed us, that they are *larger* and more extenſive in their Signification, than what they were ſuppoſed to be, at their firſt *Promulgation*.

Their Order,

[y] THE Decalogue (as theſe Ten Commandments are called) were, [z] by God himſelf, [a] divided into two Tables; the firſt Table contains four Commandments. 1. That of worſhipping one God only. 2. That of abſtaining from Idolatry. 3. That of not taking the Name of God in vain. And, 4. That of hallowing the Sabbath-Day. But the ſecond Table has ſix. 1. That of honouring Father and Mother. 2. That of not committing Murther. 3. That of not committing Adultery. 4. That of not Stealing. 5. That of not bearing falſe Witneſs. And, 6. That of not coveting any Thing, that is our Neighbour's: And 'tis worthy our Obſervation, [b] that as the Commandments have their Place according to the Dignity of the Duties commanded, *i. e.* thoſe which have Regard unto God, have the Pre-eminence of thoſe that relate to Men; ſo are they ranked and diſpoſed, according to the Heinouſneſs of the Sins that are forbidden. Thus the Offences againſt God, being more grievous than thoſe againſt Men; the Neglect of divine Worſhip, Proſtration to Images, Profanation of God's Name, and Violation of his Sabbath, are mentioned, before the Tranſgreſſions of the other Table: And then as to the Commandments, which it contains, becauſe it is more heinous to offend our Parents, (whether *natural* or *civil)* than any other Perſons, the Prohibition of doing that, is therefore put in the firſt Place, and the others follow according to their Order. For ſince there are three Degrees of ſinning, *in Deeds*, *in Words*, and *in Deſires*; and theſe differ as to their Guilt, (it being more *criminal* to offend in Actions, than in Words, and in Words, than in bare Deſires) according to the gradual Defilement of theſe Sins, we are forbid, firſt, to hurt our Neighbour by any Act, whether it be *Killing*, or *Adultery*, or *Theft*; next by our Words, in *bearing falſe Witneſs*; and then by our Thoughts and Deſires in *coveting any Thing that is his.* Nor is the ſame Order neglected as to the Sins of the firſt Claſs; for though Stealing is a very great Crime, yet Adultery is more heinous than that, and Killing more flagitious than this, and therefore, firſt *Killing*, then *Adultery*, and after that *Stealing*, are made Mention of and forbidden.

and Univerſality.

I HAVE but one Obſervation more to make, and that is——That [c] though theſe Commandments were *primarily* intended for the Uſe of the *Jews*, (for which Cauſe the Deliverance commemorated in the Preface, the Reaſon alledged in the *fourth*, and the Promiſe annexed to the *fifth* Commandment, are apparently peculiar to that People) yet, conſidering that the Children of *Iſrael* were at this Time the only *Church* of God, and that, in ſpeaking to them, God addreſſes himſelf to the *Houſhold of Faith*

[x] Matth. v. [y] *Lamy*'s Introduction. [z] Deut. v. 22. [a] The Diviſion of the Ten Commandments, as it is with us, is what the moſt learned of the *Jews* and *Chriſtians* always received, and is certainly very right, not only from the different Matter of them, but becauſe our Saviour ſeems to confirm this Diſtribution of them, when he mentions the *firſt* and the *ſecond Commandments*, (Matth. xxii. 38, 39.) by which he means the firſt and the ſecond Table, and reduces the Duties, we owe to God, to the one, and thoſe that are due to Man, to the other. Some of the *Rabbins* indeed (to make the Tables even) put *five* Commandments *in one*, and five in the other; but we never heard that they were for expunging any. St *Jerome* (in his Comment upon *Hoſea* x.) makes four Commandments have Reſpect unto God, and ſix to our Neighbours; but his Diviſion of the former is very ſtrange; for the *firſt* Commandment, he ſays, is, *I am the Lord thy God*; the *ſecond*, *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods but me*; the *third*, *Thou ſhalt not make to thyſelf any graven Image*; and the *fourth*, *Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain*: So that he leaves out the Precept of obſerving the Sabbath, and makes the firſt Commandment out of the Preface to it. But in this he is ſingular, and not a little culpable. The Church of *Rome* has ſtruck the *ſecond* Commandment quite out of the Decalogue, and, to make up the Number, ſplit the *tenth* into two: But the Reaſon for their doing ſo, is plainly this, that they are willing to *conceal* a Commandment, which ſo expreſsly forbids *the Uſe of Images* in the Worſhip of God. They muſt not let the People ſee, and take Notice, that theſe are *poſitively* forbidden by a divine Law. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [b] *Edwards*, ibid. [c] *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

Faith in all ſucceeding Generations, there is no one Precept, which may not, in a *larger* and *ſpiritual* Senſe (at leaſt by good *Analogy*, and Parity of Reaſon) concern us; and though the *Motives* of our Obedience may vary from theirs, yet the *Matter* of the Injunction is to all of us the ſame.

The Preface to the Decalogue.

" *I am the Lord*, JEHOVAH, [d] the only true God, eternal, independent, and " unchangeable in *Eſſence*; true and infallible in Word; conſtant and immutable " in *Purpoſe*; and firm and faithful in the Performance of whatever I promiſe, or " threat: That ſame God, who, under this Appellation, diſcovered myſelf to thy " Fore-fathers, enacted a ſpecial *Covenant* with them, received their Homage and " Engagements, and promiſed eſpecial Favour and Protection to them and their Seed: " For I am *thy God*, and, though the *univerſal* Lord and Father of the World, yet " to thee I bear a peculiar Relation, as having choſen and avouched thee to be a " *ſpecial* People to myſelf, above all the People that are upon the Face of the Earth; " promiſed to make thee high above all Nations in Praiſe, and in Name, and in " Honour; and, by many ſignal Demonſtrations of Favour and Mercy, confirmed " to thee the Performance of my Covenant and Promiſe. *For I brought thee out of* " *the Land of Egypt*, in a Manner ſo full of Wonder in itſelf, ſo full of Grace to- " wards thee, delivering thee from the ſaddeſt Oppreſſion, and Slavery, *in the Houſe* " *of Bondage*, and tranſlating thee into a deſirable State of preſent Liberty, and of ſure " Tendency towards the Enjoyment of Reſt, of Plenty, and of all Joy and Com- " fort, in the *Promiſed* Land. And therefore I, who am the only true God, *doing* " *what I pleaſe in Heaven and Earth*, and *thy God*, by a particular Engagement and " Endearment, do, [e] upon the Score of former Favours, and future Expectancies, " the Senſe of my Love, and the Dread of my Power, call upon, and require you " to liſten to my Words, and let theſe my Commandments ſink down into your " Minds."

Its Relation to us.

Now what God, in a *direct* and *literal* Senſe, thus ſpeaks to the *Jewiſh* People, may, by *Parity* of Reaſon, (eſpecially in a *myſtical* and *ſpiritual* Senſe) be applied to us; [f] for to us he is the ſame *Jehovah*, whoſe *Nature* is eternal, and *Power* infinite, and to whom the higheſt Reſpect and Obſervance is due, as being the *eſſential* Author, Lord, and Governor of all Things. He likewiſe, in a nearer Relation, is *our God*, having choſen us, and conſecrated us to himſelf; received us into a cloſer Alliance, *a new and better Covenant*, *eſtabliſhed upon better Promiſes*, and obliged us, by the Grant of nobler Privileges, and the Diſpenſation of more excellent Benefits. Nor muſt it be forgotten, that he has brought us up out of a ſpiritual *Egypt*, reſcued us from the *Tyrannical* Dominion of *Satan*, freed us from ſerving Sin in our Souls and Bodies, and is now conducting us in the Way, and has conferred on us an aſſured Hope (if we be not wanting to ourſelves and our Duty) of entering into the *heavenly Canaan*, a Place of perfect Reſt, and inconceivable Bliſs; for [g] he *hath delivered us* (as the Apoſtle expreſſes it) *from the Power of Darkneſs, and tranſlated us into the Kingdom of his moſt beloved Son*; and therefore, according to a ſpiritual Intent, he may well be ſuppoſed here to ſpeak in an higher *Strain* to us, and to exact a more *punctual* and *accurate* Obſervance of his Commandments.

SECT. I.

TABLE I. Firſt Commandment.

Thou ſhalt have no other Gods but me.

THESE Words are delivered in the Form of a *Prohibition* (as moſt of the other Commandments are) * and yet in the Natural Senſe and Deſign of them, they (as well as the reſt) ſuppoſe and require [h] ſomething *poſitive*, and may therefore be reſolved into theſe two Propoſitions.

I. THAT

[d] *Barrow*'s Expoſition of the Decalogue. [e] *Le Clerc*'s Commentary. [f] *Barrow*, ibid. [g] Col. i. 13. * *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [h] This was accounted ſo much the Senſe of the Command, that we find *Joſephus* making mention of no other, διδάσκει ὁ πρῶτος λόγος, ὅτι Θεὸς ἐστιν εἷς, καὶ δεῖ τοῦτον σέβεσθαι μόνον. *The firſt Commandment teaches us, that there is but one God, and him only we ought to worſhip.* Ant. l. 2. c. 5.

I. THAT we ſhould not worſhip any [l] *falſe* or *foreign* Gods. And,

II. THAT we ſhould worſhip the *True* God only.

The Unity of God, proved from Reaſon and Scripture.

I. THAT there is a God, *i. e.* an Eternal, Infinite, and Almighty Being, the Creator and Governor of the Univerſe, all perfect himſelf, and the Author of all Perfection in others, is what we have ſufficiently ſhewn already from Reaſon, from Scripture, and (what is the plaineſt Proof of all) [k] from the *viſible* Works of the Creation: And that there is but *one* ſuch Being, † the Voice of Reaſon, as well as the Teſtimony of Scripture, the eſſential Perfections of the Divine Nature, as well as the frequent Declarations of God himſelf, [l] *I am the Lord, and there is none elſe, there is no God beſides me*; *I am the Lord, and there is none elſe*, is an abundant Conviction.

¶ THE *Unity* of the Divine Nature indeed is a Notion, wherein the greateſt and wiſeſt Part of Mankind did always agree, and is ſo very congruous to the *Frame* and Government of the World, wherein we ſee all Things conſpiring to one *End*, and continuing in one uniform *Order* and Courſe, (which cannot reaſonably be aſcribed to any other, but a conſtant and uniform *Cauſe*) that it ſeems a Principle, if not *innate*, yet ariſing from the Contemplation of the Works of the Creation, to believe, *that there is no other God, but one*; * and had not Perſons of *vain* and conceited Imaginations, *profeſſing themſelves wiſe, become Fools*; had not Men of corrupt Manners, *diſliking to retain God in their Knowledge*, and *having their fooliſh Hearts darkened*, filled the Minds of the Ignorant, and deluded the Vulgar with a ſuperſtitious Belief of *many* Gods, having Rule over particular Places and Countries; the true Notion of God, ſo agreeable to the plain and natural Dictates of Reaſon, might have been preſerved amongſt all Nations. For the plain Connection and Dependence of one Thing upon another, through the whole *material Univerſe*, through all Parts of the Earth, and in the viſible Heavens; the Diſpoſition of the Air, the Sea, and Winds; the Motion of the Sun, and Moon, and Stars, and the uſeful *Viciſſitudes* of Seaſons, for the regular Production of the various Fruits of the Earth, have always been ſufficient to make it evidently appear, even to mean Capacities, that all Things are under the Direction of *one* Power, under the Dominion of *one* God, as the wiſeſt and beſt Men, in all *Heathen* Nations, upon mature Deliberation, have always declared.

† *ORPHEUS*, indeed, was the firſt who attempted the *Genealogy* of the *Gods*, and reduced their Number to 360: But he was afterwards ſo ſenſible of his *impious* Folly, that, in a particular Diſcourſe to his Son *Muſæus*, and his other Friends, he retracts theſe wild and abſurd Fables, and having admoniſhed them, in the firſt Place, that there is but *one* God, by whom all other Things were made, and on whom they depend, he then goes on to ſhew, that tho' this God is *inviſible*, yet he ſees and knows all Things, and that as he is merciful, ſo is he likewiſe juſt, and the Author of all thoſe Judgments which befal wicked Men, *&c.* *Homer*, tho' he follows *Orpheus* too cloſely in his Fictions concerning a *Multitude* of Deities; yet, when he is moſt ſerious, he ſuppoſes but *one*, εἷς Κοίρανος ἔστω; and therefore we find *Pythagoras*, and ſeveral others after him, ſtiling God by the Name of *Monas* or Unity: For "tho' Men differ much in their Opinions about other Matters," "*ſays an ancient Author* ‖, yet in this they all agree, that there is *one* God, the "*King* and *Father* of all, under whom there are *ſubordinate* Deities, his Offſpring, "who are admitted to ſome Share of Government with him. In this the *Grecian* "conſents with the *Barbarian*, the Inhabitants of the *Continent* with the *Iſlanders*, "the Wiſe with the Unwiſe."

BUT tho' the Belief of *one Supreme* God ſeems to be fixed upon the Foundations of right Reaſon, and confirmed by Names of great Authority; yet the groſs Idolatry of

[l] It is obſervable, that the Word *Achadim*, which we tranſlate *other*, is ſometimes, by the *Septuagint*, rendered ἄλλοι, *alii*, and ſometimes ἀλλότριοι, *alieni*, and ſo, in this latter Acceptation, it denotes thoſe *ſtrange Gods*, ſo often mentioned in Scripture, accounted and called Gods by the *Heathens*, but ſuch as, in Reality, were not ſo.

[k] See Page 5, *&c.*

† The moſt obvious Notion we have of God, is, that he is a *Being of all poſſible Perfections*; now, upon the Suppoſition of *two* Gods, either they muſt have *ſeveral* Perfections, or the *ſame*; but to ſuppoſe *two* Gods with *ſeveral* Perfections, ſome belonging to one, and ſome to another, will plainly prove, that neither of them can be God, becauſe neither of them have *all poſſible* Perfections. To ſuppoſe two Gods of the *ſame* and *equal* Perfections, would likewiſe prove, that neither of them can be God, *i. e.* not *abſolutely* perfect, becauſe it is not ſo great a *Privilege*, to have the ſame *equal* Perfections with another, and in a Kind of *Partnerſhip*, as to be *alone*, and *ſuperior* above all others; and yet to ſuppoſe one of them *inferior*, in any Reſpect, is to evince, that he cannot be God, becauſe not Supreme. The Truth is, God, in the Conception we have of him, is an *infinite* Being: But now nothing is more evident, than that *one* infinite Being is ſufficient to all Purpoſes whatever; and therefore to ſuppoſe more Gods than are neceſſary, whether of the *ſame*, or *ſeparate* Perfections, whether agreeing, or diſagreeing with each other, is the Height of Abſurdity, *Wilkins*'s Principles of Natural Religion, Lib. I.

[l] Iſai. xlv. 5, 6. [m] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. * *Clarke*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

† *Wilkins*'s, ibid. ‖ *Maximus Tyrius*, Diſſertat. I.

the *Heathen* World plainly ſhews, that, in Proceſs of Time, it came to be greatly corrupted.

The primary Meaning of the Commandment.

THE *Chaldeans*, from whom the *Iſraelites* originally deſcended, worſhipped [n] the Sun, Moon, Stars, and *all the Hoſt of Heaven:* The *Egyptians*, from whom they were now departed, made them Gods, not of *Animals* only, but of any *Inanimate* Creature, they either accounted *hurtful* or *beneficial* to them: The *Canaanites*, and other Nations, among whom they were now going, made their Adorations to *Devils*, and even ſometimes offered their very Children in Sacrifice to them: Nay, the *Iſraelites* themſelves were too prone to Idolatry: Soon after the Delivery of the Law, they gave a lamentable Inſtance of this, in the Matter of the *Golden Calf*, and in Length of Time became ſo infected with the Cuſtoms of the Nations, among whom they lived, that, *according to the Number of their Cities were their Gods*, ([o] as the Prophet tells them) *and according to the Number of the Streets of Jeruſalem, did they ſet up Altars to that ſhameful Thing, even Altars to burn Incenſe unto Baal:* So that the chief and primary Intent of this Law was to prohibit the *Jews* from paying any religious Worſhip [p] *to Aſhtoreth the Goddeſs of the Zidonians, to Milcom the Abomination of the Children of Ammon*, or to any of the Gods of the Nations, among whom they either had, or were to *ſojourn*; and 'twas highly agreeable to the Wiſdom of God, in order to retain the People in his Service, that he ſhould caution them againſt this idolatrous Worſhip, which they were ſo much addicted to; a Crime uſually expreſſed in Scripture by the Metaphor of *Adultery*, as denoting not only a Deſertion of the true God, but a Deſertion in direct Breach of Faith, and the ſolemn Covenant, wherein they were engaged with God.

Its ſecondary Meaning.

BUT, becauſe all People naturally conceive of God, as a Being of ſupreme Excellency, Juſtice, Goodneſs, and Power over them; and ſo, whatever it is, that they imagine to be God, *that* they honour and fear, and love, and truſt on, as if it were really ſo; therefore the Prohibition may be extended to ſuch *Senſe* as this: "[*] Thou ſhalt not think, believe, or own any Thing to be God, but Me: Thou "ſhalt not aſcribe ſupreme Authority, Power, or Goodneſs, or any other Divine "Perfection, to any, but Me: Thou ſhalt not regard them, [q] *that have familiar "Spirits*, nor ſeek after *Witches*, nor *Wizards*, nor uſe *Divinations* or *Enchant-"ments*, or any ſuch-like Abominations: Thou ſhalt not put any Truſt or Confi-"dence in any Creature that is in Heaven or Earth: Thou ſhalt not love, nor re-"ſpect, nor value, nor deſire any Thing, in Compariſon of Me: If thou doeſt "any of theſe Things, thou *haſt other Gods before Me*, or *in my Sight*, who am the "Searcher of all Hearts, and to whom all thy ſecret Sins and Imaginations lie open "and detected."

The Reaſonableneſs of this Part of the Command.

II. THE poſitive Propoſition, contained in the Commandment, is, *that we ſhould worſhip the true God only.* 'Tis a Piece of *Juſtice* generally acknowledged, [r] that all Beings ſhould have a Regard paid them, in Proportion to the *Dignity* of their Nature, the *Advantages* we receive from them, and the *Juriſdiction* they have over us: Neither ought we only to have a true Apprehenſion of theſe Diſtinctions in our Minds, but declare it viſibly in our Actions, that others may perceive our Notions are right, and our Diſpoſitions virtuous: That we are willing to pay an Eſteem to *abſtracted* Excellency, a Submiſſion to Authority, and a Recognition of the Benefits we receive. Now the Perfections of God are *tranſcendent*, and peculiar to himſelf: The moſt glorious Creature falls infinitely ſhort of him; he is the *original* Cauſe of all Being and Bleſſing, the Creator and ſupreme Lord of Heaven and Earth. And ſince the Excellencies of God are of a peculiar and ſuper-eminent Nature, our Acknowledgments of them ought to be ſo too. The Deſign of publick Worſhip is to make a *viſible Confeſſion* of our Dependence upon God; to own him, as the Maker of the World, and praiſe him for all the Advantages we enjoy; and to make our Acknowledgments of God *rational*, they ought to be proportioned to his Nature, and ſuch as we give to no other Being. Since no Perſon helped him to *create* the World, nor joins with him in the *Preſervation* of it, but all Things are made by him, and ſupported by his ſole Power, we cannot be ſaid to worſhip him aright, unleſs there be ſomething proper and *diſtinguiſhing* in our Adorations of him; unleſs our Service has ſome Circumſtances of *Advantages*, and extraordinary *Veneration*, which we never ſhew upon any other Occaſion.

[s] IF

[n] *Beveridge* on the Church Catechiſm. [o] Jer. xi. 13. [p] 2 Kings xxiii. 13.
[*] *Beveridge*, ibid. [q] Lev. xix. 31. and Deut. xviii. 10, 11. [r] *Jer. Collier*'s Sermons.

[s] IF the *Vulgar* ſhould ſee their *Prince* no better attended and obſerved than themſelves, they would be apt to overlook his *Quality*, and ſuſpect he never had any *Commiſſion* from Heaven; and therefore the *Splendor* of the Court is deſigned to keep up the *Reputation* of the Government, and to put Subjects in Mind of their *Inferiority*. The greateſt Part of Mankind muſt have *remote* Truths, eſpecially thoſe, which relate to the Perfections of ſpiritual Beings, conveyed by *ſenſible* Objects; their *Organs* muſt be ſtruck, as well as their *Underſtandings*; for if theſe inviſible Things are only repreſented in their naked Eſſences, the Impreſſion will not be diſtinct and durable enough, to affect their Minds, and govern their Practice.

THIS is a good Reaſon for the Inſtitution of the *publick* Worſhip of God; and as it is a Rule in Princes Courts, and that rationally ſettled, that Subjects, tho' of the firſt Quality, ſhould not be taken Notice of *in the Preſence*; ſo, if our Worſhip be not appropriated to God Almighty; if our religious Solemnities (which are done in *his Preſence*) are not entirely reſerved to his Honour; if we communicate the Adoration we offer him to any of his Servants; this weakens the Notion of a ſupreme Being, confounds the Difference between Finite and Infinite, and ſets the Creature and Creator almoſt upon Terms of Equality. Upon this Account, we find in the *next* Commandment (which ſome have thought only an *Appendix* to this) God declaring himſelf to be a *Jealous God*, that will allow of no *Rivals* in Adoration, that expects our Affections ſhould not be divided between him and his Creatures, but that our Religious Services ſhould be wholly devoted to him: And therefore, in reſpect to our *Inward* Homage and Adoration, our Worſhip of God imports the higheſt Eſteem, Honour, and Awe of him; an entire Dependence on his Wiſdom, and Submiſſion to his Will, whether in the *Active* or *Paſſive* Inſtances of Obedience: It requires, that we ſhould conſider him as the moſt excellent and perfect of Beings in himſelf, the moſt amiable and beneficial in Relation to us, and that every Thought of our Minds, and every Motion and Affection of our Hearts ſhould be perfectly, and at all Times, conformable to theſe Sentiments: And in Reſpect to our *outward* Homage, our Worſhip of him is expreſſed by acknowledging and invocating him; by offering up our Praiſes, our Prayers, and Thankſgivings to him; and by expreſſing a due Reverence to every Kind of *Matter*, which bears any ſpecial Relation to him, whether *Things*, or *Perſons*, or *Places* of Worſhip; in a Word, by ſhewing ourſelves ready on all Occaſions, both in the eaſy and difficult Inſtances of our Duty, to obey him, and to do all thoſe Things, without Reſerve or Reluctance, which he has in general commanded us; *Submitting ourſelves wholly to his Will and Pleaſure, and ſtudying to ſerve him, in true Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, all the Days of our Life.*

In what Manner it is to be performed.

THIS is the full *Extent* of the Command, both in its *negative* and *poſitive* Signification; and from hence we may obſerve, that [t] *all thoſe*, who deny the Being of a God, whether in *Speculation* or *Practice*, whether they really believe that there is no God, or live as if they did, without any Regard to his Honour or Worſhip; *all thoſe*, who believe and worſhip a *Multiplicity* of Deities, [u] or aſcribe the eſſential Properties of God to any created Being, as the *Heathen* World in many Places do; *all thoſe*, who, together with the Worſhip of the true God, admit other Beings into a Partnerſhip with him, paying religious Adoration to *Saints* and *Angels*, as the Church of *Rome* is known to do; [x] *all thoſe*, who frame in their Fancy an Idea unworthy of that moſt excellent Being, and to ſuch a *Phantom* of their own Creation yield their beſt Affections and higheſt Eſteem; and laſtly, *all thoſe*, who ſet their Hearts upon any *Creature* (whether themſelves or any other Thing) truſting in it, and relying on it, making it the chief Delight of their Eyes, and Concern of their Life, are guilty of a Violation of this Command. In ſhort, if we regard or eſteem, if we ſeek and purſue, if we confide and delight in Wealth, or Honour, or Pleaſure, Wit, Wiſdom, Strength, or Beauty, Ourſelves, our Relations, or any other Creature, *we have another God*, which is againſt the *negative* Meaning; and if we do not, with all our Hearts, reverence and love the moſt wiſe and powerful, the moſt juſt and holy, the moſt good and gracious God; if we do not truſt and hope in him, as the Foundation of all Good; if we do not diligently worſhip and praiſe him; if we do not humbly ſubmit to his Will, and obey his Laws, *we have not him for our God*, which is againſt the *poſitive* Intent of this moſt holy Law.

The Tranſgreſſors of this Command.

Second

[s] *Collier*'s Sermons. [t] *Wake*'s Commentary on the Church Catechiſm. [u] *Edwards*'s Body, Vol. II.
[x] *Barrow*'s Expoſition of the Decalogue.

Second Commandment.

Thou ſhalt not make to thyſelf any graven Image, &c.

THIS Commandment, which ſtates the *Manner* (as the former did the *Object*) of Religious Worſhip, conſiſts of two Parts, *viz.* a Precept, and its Sanction. 1. The Precept is expreſſed in *Negative* Terms, *that we ſhould not make, or worſhip any carved Image*; but it includes in it likewiſe a *poſitive* Duty, that we ſhould worſhip and ſerve the Lord, in a Manner ſuitable to his Divine Excellencies, and according to what himſelf has appointed. 2. The Sanction is of two Sorts; 1. By Way of *Commination*, denouncing a ſevere Puniſhment againſt the Trangreſſors of the Command, *viſiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third Generation of them that hate me.* And, 2. By Way of *Encouragement*, making a gracious Promiſe to the careful and conſcientious Obſervers of it, *ſhewing Mercy unto Thouſands of them that love me, and keep my Commandments.*

The primary Meaning of this Command.

WHENCE the Humour aroſe, and afterwards prevailed, in the heathen World, of repreſenting their Deities in *Corporeal* Shapes, and in yielding ſuch Expreſſions of Reſpect to their *Images*, as they conceived were agreeable to the Deities themſelves; and how far the Devil's *Malice*, [a] and ſome Men's *Fraud*, conſpiring with other Men's *Ignorance*, concurred in the Production of this Kind of *Idolatry*, we ſhall have occaſion to conſider at large in a proper Place: This only we need remark at preſent, that as the *Egyptians*, among whom the *Iſraelites* had lived a long while, were notoriouſly addicted to all Sorts of Idolatry, worſhipping the Sun and Moon, and [b] ſeveral Kinds of Birds, *which were in Heaven above*; the Images of Men and of brute Beaſts, *which were in the Earth beneath*; of Fiſhes, and Snakes, and Crocodiles, *which were in the Waters under the Earth*; ſo the Deſign of this Commandment was to reſtrain the *Iſraelites* from ſuch Practices, as they had beheld among the *Egyptians*, but whether it was intended to inhibit them the Uſe of all Images in general, is not ſo well agreed among the Learned.

[c] *TERTULLIAN* was of Opinion, that this Commandment forbad all Images whatever, more particularly all *protuberant* ones; and [d] *Origen* ſeems to denote the ſame Thing, when he tells us, that a *Painter* or *Statuary* was not permitted to live in the *Jewiſh* Republic, that no Occaſion might be given of drawing away Men's Minds from the Worſhip of God. [e] From the Time of the *Maccabees* to the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, the *Jews* indeed thought themſelves forbidden by this Law to make the Image or Figure of any living Creature, eſpecially of a Man; but that this was not its original Intent, is manifeſt from God's appointing the *Cherubims* over the Mercy-Seat, and the *Serpent* in the Wilderneſs to be made; which queſtionleſs he would not have done, could we ſuppoſe, that this Command previouſly prohibited the making the Likeneſs of any ſuch Thing. 'Tis allowed indeed, that God might *diſpenſe* with his own Command; but as we have no Intimation of any ſuch Diſpenſation, and can hardly believe that he would have diſpenſed with it ſo ſoon; [f] ſo it ſeems more reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the *Cherubims*, the *Brazen-Serpent*, the *Bulls*, and other Images in *Solomon*'s Temple, were no Breaches of the *ſecond Commandment*, but that himſelf waved the Obſervation of his own Precept, in theſe Particulars; and conſequently, that the ſecond Commandment was never intended to forbid the making of Images in general, but only the making of ſuch Images, as were deſigned to repreſent the *Divine Majeſty*; for ſo the Reaſon, which *Moſes* gives for the Obſervation of the Precept, ſeems to imply: [g] *Take heed unto yourſelves; for ye ſaw no Manner of Similitude, in the Day that the Lord ſpake unto you in Horeb,*

[a] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments.

[a] Omnis illa Idolatria orta eſt ex fallace Sacerdotum Gente, quæ, ut auguſtiora ſacra faceret, nihil apertè dicebat, ſed ſub ſymbolis abſcondebat. Cum autem ſymbolica illa ſignificatio ex arbitrio fingentium penderet, paulatim factum, ut rationes Symbolorum Oblivioni mandarentur, plebiſque animus in iis ſolis, quæ ſenſus percellebant, afficeretur, ac tandem crederet, ſub iis Figuris, aut vivis, aut mortuis, habitare numen. Sic cum Oſirin, Agriculturæ deditum Regem, Symbolicâ Juvenci Imagine deſignâſſent, tandem ejus animum in bove Api eſſe crediderant. Statuis etiam conſecratis crediderunt adeſſe Numina. Summâ itaque ratione vetuit *Sui*, aliorumque omnium ſimulacra fieri, Deus Opt Max. ne iis cultus Religioſus haberetur; nec minus prudenter fecerunt, qui, ſuperſtitione plebis Chriſtianæ animadverſâ, Imagines in Religionem temerè illatas eliminandas cenſerunt, cum iiſdem incommodis laborent. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

[b] Particularly the *Hawk* and the *Ibis*. *Tully, de Nat. Deor.* Lib. I. [c] De Spectaculis, c. 23. [d] Contra Celſ. Lib. IV. [e] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [f] *Thorndike*'s Weights and Meaſures, c. 19. [g] Deut. iv. 15.

Horeb, out of the Midſt of the Fire; leſt ye corrupt yourſelves, and make you a graven Image, the Similitude of any Figure, the Likeneſs of Male or Female; which plainly ſhews, that the Deſign of the Command was to forbid ſuch Images, as were made with a Purpoſe to repreſent God; ſince the Prohibition is founded upon their *not ſeeing any Similitude*, but *only hearing a Voice*.

The Folly, Sin, and Stupidity, of Image-making.

THE [h] Prophet *Iſaiah*, having ſet off the incomparable Power and Majeſty of God in great and lofty Strains, *as meaſuring the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand, and meting out Heaven with a Span; as comprehending the Duſt of the Earth in a Meaſure, and weighing the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Ballance; before whom all Nations are nothing, and are counted to him leſs than nothing, and Vanity*: Having, I ſay, in this, and more ſuch Language as this, endeavoured to deſcribe the Might and Majeſty of God, he then aſks the Queſtion, *To whom will ye liken God? Or what Likeneſs will ye compare unto him?* And thereupon proceeding to diſcourſe of the Folly and mad Preſumption of making Images for religious Uſes, he concludes at laſt, [i] *Have ye not known? Have ye not heard? Hath it not been told you from the Beginning? Have ye not underſtood from the Foundations of the Earth? It is he that ſitteth upon upon the Circle of the Earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are as Graſhoppers; that ſtretcheth out the Heavens as a Curtain, and ſpreadeth them out as a Tent to dwell in; that bringeth the Princes to nothing, and maketh the Judges of the Earth as Vanity; to whom then will ye liken me, or ſhall I be equal, ſaith the Holy One?* Nothing certainly can be more ſenſeleſs in itſelf, or more diſparaging to God, than to pretend to reſemble him by any corporeal Thing. [k] For, as it muſt be confeſſed, that there is a great Diſproportion between God, who is not only a *Spirit*, but an infinite and incorruptible Spirit, and an *Image*, which is both corporeal and corruptible; ſo that Diſproportion cannot but be thought to make it both impious and incongruous to form any ſuch *Repreſentation* of him; becauſe, in Effect, it is deſtroying the [l] *Spirituality* and *Incorruptibility* of his Nature, which we ſo take upon us to repreſent.

THE Man, who ſhould form the Image of a Serpent, a Toad, or any other deteſtable Creature, and exhibit it as the Similitude of a *King*, would certainly derogate much from his Eſteem and Majeſty; but infinitely more muſt he detract from the Dignity, and impair the Reverence due to that immenſe, almighty, all-wiſe, and all-perfect Being, who ſhall preſume to preſent any ſenſible, any finite, any corruptible Thing, as a Reſemblance of him, *changing* (as St *Paul* expreſſes it) *the Glory of the incorruptible God into an Image, made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four-footed Beaſts, and creeping Things*: And therefore we need leſs wonder, that they, who uſed ſuch Expreſſions of their Religion, ſhould have ſuch contemptible Opinions of the Deities they adored, as to ſuppoſe them liable to ſuch *unruly* Paſſions, and guilty of ſuch *abominable* Actions, as even human Nature deteſts; making them as vile in their Diſpoſitions and Doings, as they repreſented them in their outward Figures and Shapes. The wiſeſt of the Heathens, however, were of another Sentiment; they conceived, [m] that *their Gods were not viſible to the Eye, but only to be ſeen by the Thought*; and therefore they adviſe againſt making Gods of Silver or Gold; [n] *for of ſuch Materials*, ſay they, *cannot be made an Image like unto God*, and give us this Account of the Inſtitution of Image-Worſhip, "That the ancient *Romans* "did, more than an hundred and ſeventy Years, worſhip their Gods without Images, "and that thoſe, who firſt ſet them up for the People's Uſe, did it with a bad Intent, "*viz.* to diminiſh the Awe and Reverence due to the Gods, and poſſeſs them with "falſe and erroneous Conceits about the divine Nature; *rightly judging*, [o] as they "expreſs it, *that, in the Fooliſhneſs of Images, the Gods might eaſily come to be* "*deſpiſed*."

TOGETHER with the Folly of making ſuch Images, the Prophet *Iſaiah* has, in another Place, handſomely expoſed the Stupidity, as well as great Wickedneſs, of falling down before them, and worſhipping them. The Idolater, ſaith he, [p] *planteth an Aſh, and the Rain doth nouriſh it: Then ſhall it be for a Man to burn; for he will take thereof and warm himſelf; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh Bread; yea, he maketh a God, and worſhippeth it; he maketh a graven Image, and falleth down thereto: He burneth Part thereof in the Fire; with Part thereof he eateth Fleſh; he roaſteth*

[h] Iſa. xl. 12, &c. [i] Ibid. 21, &c. [k] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. [l] *Barrow*, on the Decalogue. [m] Effugit Oculos, cogitatione viſendus eſt. *Sen: Quaſt. Nat.* 13. [n] Finges autem non Auro aut Argento, non poteſt ex hâc materiâ Imago Dei fingi ſimilis. *Sen. Ep.* 31. [o] *Varro*, as he is quoted by St *Auſtin*, *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. IV. c. 31. [p] Iſa. xliv. 14, &c.

roaſteth Roaſt, and is ſatisfied; yea he warmeth himſelf, and ſaith, aha! I am warm, I have ſeen the Fire; and the Reſidue thereof he maketh a God, even a graven Image; he falleth down unto it, and worſhippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and ſaith, deliver me, for thou art my God; all this while, *never conſidering in his Heart, nor having Knowledge or Underſtanding to ſay, I have burnt Part of it in the Fire, yea alſo I have baked Bread upon the Coals thereof, I have roaſted Fleſh, and eaten it, and ſhall I make the Reſidue thereof an Abomination? Shall I fall down to the Stock of a Tree?*

In what Senſe Men did it.

'Tis not to be conceived, however, (according [q] to *Maimonides*) that any of theſe Men worſhipped an Idol with this Perſuaſion, that there was no other God but it: There never was, nor ever will be, any ſo *footiſh*, as to fancy, that the Figure, which, he knows, he made of Metals, or Wood, or Stone, either created the Heaven and the Earth, or, at preſent, governs them; but they therefore worſhipped theſe Images, becauſe they looked upon them as Things *intermediate* between God and them. In them they paid their Adorations to God; and the very *Formality* of their Idolatry conſiſted in having ſuch Devices to remind them of God, and in uſing ſuch Poſtures and religious Deportment before them, as he had made peculiar, and appropriated to his own Worſhip. *An Idol*, [r] as the Apoſtle tells us, *is nothing in the World*; of what Materials ſoever it be compoſed, it availeth nothing: But when it comes to be made an *Inſtrument* of Devotion, and employed in the Service of God; when before it Men bow, or proſtrate themſelves, or do any other Acts of religious Homage, it then becomes an *Abomination*, or (according to the Expreſſion, that God is pleaſed to uſe) *the Object of his Jealouſy*. And, [s] as it would be no very grateful Excuſe to tell a jealous Perſon, that the Woman he is jealous of, did not go ſo far as to commit Adultery with her *Paramour*, or, that if ſhe did, it was only becauſe ſhe fancied a Similitude between them; ſo all the Apology, that can be made for the Worſhip of Images, from their being good *Expedients* to *raiſe* our Imagination, and, by ſenſible Repreſentations, to *invigorate* our Devotion, will be but ſorry Evaſions, when they come to be compared with the Denunciations of him, who hath told us expreſsly, [t] *that he will not give his Glory to another, nor his Praiſe to graven Images, but will viſit the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them, that*, in this Manner, *hate him.*

The Meaning of the Sanction *and its* Equity.

2. BUT here it may be aſked, "How can God viſit the Sins of the Fathers upon "the Children, when, [u] in ſo many Places, he aſſures us, that *the Soul which ſinneth "it ſhall die*; that *the Son ſhall not bear the Iniquity of the Father, neither ſhall the "Father bear the Iniquity of the Son*, but that each Man ſhall have the Reward of his "Righteouſneſs, or bear the Puniſhment of his own Iniquity: For this the very "Heathens could infer, [x] that to puniſh one Man for the Sin of another, could not "be conſiſtent with the *Juſtice* of God." Now, in Anſwer to this, the common *Reply* is, [y] that God may *ſo* puniſh a Man for his Sins, that the *Temporal* Evil of it ſhall reach, not to himſelf alone, but to his Poſterity alſo; that, as in the Caſe of *High-Treaſon*, the *Father*, by forfeiting his Honour and Eſtate, and the *Prince*, by exacting the Penalty of the Law, bring the ill Conſequence of the Crime upon the whole Family, (nor is this thought unjuſt in the Courts of *human* Judicature) ſo in the Caſe of *Idolatry* (which is no leſs *Treaſon* againſt the Divine Majeſty) there is no Reaſon to complain, if the Judge of all the Earth deals after the ſame Manner with the Poſterity of wicked Men, though they be not guilty of their Anceſtors Crimes. "In our *Gothic* Conſtitutions, (ſays [z] a learned Author) the Throne being "the Fountain of *Honour*, and Source of *Property*, Lands, like Titles, come from "it, and are held as *Fiefs* of it, *i. e.* under perpetual Condition of Service: Which "Condition being violated by High-Treaſon, thoſe Privileges and Poſſeſſions, with "perfect Equity, become *forfeit*, and revert to the *Crown*, how much ſoever the "Forfeiture may affect an innocent Poſterity in thoſe their *Fortunes*, which aroſe "not from any natural Right, but from free *Grace*, and *arbitrary* Compact." Juſt ſo was the Caſe with the *Iſraelites*. They lived under a *Theocracy*; and God, who was their King, by an extraordinary Adminiſtration of his Providence ſupported them, and gave them great *temporal* Bleſſings, (to which they had no natural Claim) upon

[q] More Nev. c. 36. [r] 1 Cor. viii. 4. [s] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. [t] Iſa. xlii. 8. [u] *See* Deut. xxiv. 16. Ezek. xviii. 17 to 20, &c. [x] O miram Equitatem Dei! (ut habet Cotta apud Ciceronem contra Stoicos, qui, *eam vim eſſe Dei*, affirmârunt, *ut etiam ſiquis morte pœnas effugerit, expetantur eæ pœnæ à Liberis, à Nepotibus, à Poſteris*) O miram Equitatem Dei! ferretne tilla Civitas Latorem ejuſmodi Legis, ut condemnaretur Filius, aut Nepos, ſi Pater, aut Avus deliquiſſet? *De Nat. Deor.* Lib. III. [y] *Wake*'s Explanation of the Church Catechiſm. [z] *Warburton*'s Divine Legation of *Moſes*, Vol. II. Lib. V.

upon Condition of their Obedience: And therefore their violating this Condition by falling into *Idolatry*, (which was declared *Rebellion*, and *High-Treaſon* againſt their King) under this Oeconomy at leaſt, is enough to juſtify him, in withdrawing thoſe extraordinary Favours, and, by that Means, in *viſiting the Sin* of a wicked *Father upon* his innocent *Children*, in like Manner, as is done by *modern* States, in the *Taint* of Blood, and *Confiſcation*. But there is a farther Solution of this Difficulty: For [a] others have imagined, that, as no Man is abſolutely *innocent*, but has Faults of his own, and Tranſgreſſions enough to anſwer for, *if God will be extreme to mark what he has done amiſs*; ſo (to teſtify his Indignation againſt *Idolatry*) God takes occaſion to exact a Puniſhment on the Children of Idolaters, for their own *perſonal* Offences, which otherwiſe perhaps he would have either overlooked, or not ſo rigidly conſidered. In this Senſe the Children are ſuppoſed to bear the Puniſhment, not of their Parents Sins, but of their own; and the *Cauſe* of their ſuffering is their *perſonal* Guilt, though the Occaſion of their ſuffering, at ſuch a Time, in ſuch a Manner, in ſuch Meaſure, and with ſuch Circumſtances, ariſes from their Forefathers Impieties. It is, in this Reſpect (as [b] one happily compares it) as it is with a Man, who, being full of malignant Humours, happens to ride abroad in wet Weather, and ſo taking cold, falls firſt into a ſhaking Fit, and then into a dangerous Fever: For, as in this Caſe, the *peccant Humours*, which the Perſon had contracted, were the true *Cauſe* and *Root* of his Diſtemper, and his *taking Cold* the *Occaſion* only of its breaking out; ſo the *perſonal* Sins of the Son are the *Cauſe* of his Puniſhment, the *Father*, the Occaſion only of the inflicting of it: [c] Which is ſo far from inferring God's puniſhing one Man for another's Tranſgreſſion, that it plainly denotes no more, than that, *by the Occaſion of the Father's Sin, the Son may ſometimes be puniſhed, according to the Demerit of his own*; which [d] ſufficiently vindicates our Church, in uſing the Petition, in her common Liturgy, conformable to the Doctrine of this Commandment, *Remember not, Lord, the Offences of our Fore-fathers*: For, though theſe Offences ſhall never be charged upon us, yet they may move God to enquire into what we ourſelves have done amiſs, and to puniſh us for our own Tranſgreſſions.

THIS is the full Scope of the Doctrine contained in this *negative* Precept, which includes (as we ſaid) a *poſitive* Duty likewiſe. And, from a Survey of the whole, we may eaſily perceive, who are the *Tranſgreſſors*, and conſequently liable to the *Penalty*, and who the *Obſervers*, and thereby intituled to the *Promiſes*, of this great Command. [e] *Thoſe*, who make, or aſſiſt in the making or maintaining of any *Idol*, in building any Temple or Altar to it, in offering any Sacrifice or Incenſe, any Prayers or Oblations of any Kind, or in contributing any Thing towards its having any Signs of religious Honour and Worſhip performed to it, as the Heathens did formerly, and in many Places do ſtill: *Thoſe*, who make Uſe of any *corporeal Similitude* of God, or the Likeneſs of any other Creature, to repreſent him by in their religious Offices; that, in publick Places of divine Worſhip, ſet up the *Images* of *Saints* and *Angels*, and with great Semblance of Devotion [f] ſalute them, caſting themſelves before them, carrying them in *Proceſſion*, and making long *Pilgrimages* to them, as [g] thoſe of the *Roman* Communion are known to do: Or laſtly, *thoſe*, who, in their Thoughts, entertain any corporeal Conceptions of God; who think, that he, like Bodies, is confined to a certain Place, and can know or act nothing beyond his own Heaven; that *his Arm* (like theirs) *is ſhortened that it cannot ſave*, his *Ears* (like theirs) cannot *hear* the ſofteſt Whiſpers, and his *Eyes* (like theirs) are to be blinded by the Darkneſs of the Night, or impoſed upon by any ſpecious Appearances, as too many inconſiderate People of all Denominations ſeem to do: *Thoſe*, I ſay, who are guilty of theſe Notions or Practices, live in the Violation of this Command: As, on the contrary, *thoſe*, that, in the Preſence and Worſhip of God, ſtudy *to glorify him with their Bodies, and with their Spirits, which are his*; [h] that uſe ſuch Geſtures and Adoration before him, as a due Senſe and holy Fear of his Divine Majeſty and ſupreme Authority over them require; that make the *Solemnity* of their Worſhip chiefly conſiſt in the *Sincerity* of their Deſires, the *Purity* of their Affections, and *Contriteneſs* of their Hearts; that make it their Endeavour to *ſerve him*, and promote his Glory and Honour in the World, by defending and enlarging his Church, where only he is known and worſhipped upon Earth; by making all their Prayers and ſolemn

Who the Tranſgreſſors,

and who the Performers, of this Command.

[a] *Le Clerc*'s Commentary, and *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. [b] *Sanderſon*, in his third Sermon on 2 *Kings* iii. 21, 22. [c] *Towerſon*, ibid. [d] Ibid. [e] *Beveridge*'s Explanation of the Church Catechiſm. [f] *Barrow*, on the Decalogue. [g] *Towerſon*, ibid. [h] *Beveridge*, ibid.

ſolemn Addreſſes to him, as the Giver of all good Gifts; by praiſing and magnifying his Name in the great *Congregation*; by building and adorning *Places*, where to do it; by obſerving the *Times*, which he hath ſet apart for his Worſhip and Service; by celebrating the *Sacraments*, that he has ordained; by keeping his Laws themſelves, and perſuading others to do the like: *Thoſe*, that do theſe Things, I ſay, perform the *poſitive* Part of the Commandment; and, for ſo doing, ſhall receive of God a Recompence of ſpiritual and temporal Bleſſings, both to themſelves, and their Poſterity, for *a thouſand Generations*; ſo infinitely does God's Juſtice fall ſhort of *his Mercy, to thoſe that love him, and keep his Commandments!*

Third Commandment.

Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain, &c.

WE have here again, 1. A *negative* Precept, (which includes in it a *poſitive* Duty) and, 2. A *Commination* added to enforce it. [i] The Precept relates to the Act of *Swearing*; but becauſe ſome have taken it in ſo *ſtrict* a Senſe, as to exclude all Kind of Oaths whatever, it will be neceſſary, before we proceed to the Conſideration of the Sins forbidden in it, to premiſe ſomething concerning the *Lawfulneſs* of Oaths in general, and the *Conditions* requiſite to make them ſo.

The Lawfulneſs of Oaths.

[k] AN Oath is an Appeal to God, either upon a *Teſtimony* that is given, or a *Promiſe* that is made, confirming the *Truth* of the one, and the *Fidelity* of the other. It is an Appeal to God, who knows all Things, and will judge all Men; and is conſequently, a *religious* Act, wherein we give Praiſe and Honour to his infinite *Knowledge and Wiſdom*, by owning that he is privy to what we ſay; to his *Holineſs and Veracity*, that he loves Truth, and abhors Falſhood; and to his *Power and Juſtice*, that he both can, and will avenge the latter. [l] Thus, if we conſider the Matter upon the Principles of Natural Religion, Swearing is not only an Act of Worſhip and Homage done to God; but a powerful Means likewiſe for the Preſervation of *Juſtice*, and, upon this Score, has poſſibly been in Uſe from the Foundation of the World, as it certainly was practiſed in the Days of the *Patriarchs*, and long before the Delivery of the Law. At the Delivery of the Law, the Commandment only prohibited *falſe* and *profane* Swearing, without determining any Thing concerning the Lawfulneſs of an Oath; but the very *Prohibition*, in the natural Reaſon and Propriety of it, did imply, that the taking of an Oath, in a due and ſolemn Manner, was, all along, an *allowed* Action, as, we find afterwards, God expreſsly commanded it, as a Part of religious Worſhip; [m] *Thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God, and ſerve him, and ſhalt ſwear by his Name*; and the *Form* and Import of this Oath is more particularly deſcribed in another Place, [n] *Thou ſhalt ſwear, The Lord liveth in Truth, in Judgment, and in Righteouſneſs, and the Nations ſhall bleſs themſelves in him, and in him ſhall they glory*; which laſt Words ſeem very ſtrongly to imply, that this Precept refers to the State of the Goſpel; [o] ſo that an Oath, religiouſly taken, is repreſented as a Part of that Worſhip, which all Nations were to offer up to God, under the *new*, as well as the *old* Diſpenſation. The Goſpel indeed affords us no expreſs Command of this Duty. [p] Our bleſſed Saviour did not ſuppoſe, that any reaſonable Man would make a *Scruple* of taking an Oath, upon lawful Occaſions: He therefore only ſet himſelf to reprove and reſtrain that intolerable Cuſtom, which the *Jews* were then addicted to, of ſwearing by the Name of God, and ſeveral other Things in their ordinary Converſation; but the Author to the *Hebrews* ſhews us plainly the *Lawfulneſs* of Oaths, as well as their *Expediency*, when he tells us, [q] *that an Oath for Confirmation puts an End to all Strife*, which he is ſo far from taxing as a Fault, that he makes uſe of it, to prove the Immutability of God's Counſel, and the ſure Dependence we have upon his Promiſes, ſince he has condeſcended to confirm them to us by an Oath, and [r] *becauſe he could ſwear by no greater, he ſwore by himſelf.*

From Scripture.

AFTER

[i] By *the Name of the Lord*, in Scripture, is meant the Lord himſelf; and *to take*, or *lift up his Name*, is to ſwear by it, becauſe he, who did ſo, was wont, while he did it, to lift up his Hand to Heaven. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [k] *Burnet*, on the Articles, and *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [l] *Burnet*, ibid. [m] Deut. vi. 13. [n] Jer. iv. 2. [o] *Burnet*, ibid. [p] *Nourſe*'s Practical Diſcourſe on the Church Homilies. [q] Heb. vi. 16. [r] Ibid. *ver.* 13.

AFTER the Example of God himſelf, were it not needleſs to produce any other, we find that Oaths, upon fit and important Occaſions, were in frequent Uſe among the beſt of Men; [s] that *Abraham* ſwore to *Abimelech*, and required an Oath of his Servant, concerning the Marriage of his Son *Iſaac*; that [t] *a Covenant of the Lord*, which was nothing elſe but an Oath, in Confirmation of their mutual Friendſhip, paſſed *between David and Jonathan*; that, in Atteſtation of his Veracity, St *Paul* makes Uſe of the common Forms of Swearing, [u] *I call God for a Record upon my Soul*; and again, [x] *the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus, which is bleſſed for evermore, knoweth that I lye not*; that, in the Viſion of St *John*, an Angel is repreſented, as [y] *lifting up his Hand, and ſwearing by him, that liveth for ever and ever*; and, what is a more Home-Example than any) that our bleſſed Saviour, [z] when he was put upon his Oath by the High-Prieſt, [a] and adjured to tell whether he was the *Meſſias* or not, immediately ſpake out, and owned himſelf to be what he truly was, though he had been all along ſilent, and made no Reply to any Thing before. *From Examples.*

THESE are ſome of the *Precedents*, and Precepts we have in Scripture; but if even we were deſtitute of theſe, yet conſidering how inſtrumental to the Benefit of Mankind Oaths may be made; [b] how neceſſary for the Support of Juſtice, and the Preſervation of Peace and good Order in *Societies*; how neceſſary for the Deciſion of Controverſies, not only in ordinary *Judicatories*, but even among *States* and Sovereign Princes, for the Confirmation of their *Treaties* and *Alliances*, as well as the Contracts and Covenants among private Men; how neceſſary for the Defence of the Fatherleſs and Widows in their juſt Rights, againſt thoſe, that would otherwiſe defraud and oppreſs them; for the *Reſtraint* of Violence, for the *Detection* of *Villainies*, and bringing thoſe, that are guilty of any *Flagitiouſneſs*, to condign Puniſhments; Conſidering, I ſay, the great Serviceableneſs of Oaths, to the Ends of Juſtice and good Order, we cannot but ſuppoſe, (even though we had not all this Evidence from Scripture) that their firſt Inſtitution was from God; nor can they fail of being acceptable to him, when they are converſant about momentous Affairs, about what is right and lawful, what is poſſible and within our Power; and if they be but taken with Caution and Deliberation, in Simplicity and Sincerity, in Juſtice and Impartiality, and at the Call and Command of ſuch as have Authority; for theſe are the Scripture Conditions, *Thou ſhalt ſwear, the Lord liveth, in Truth, in Judgment, and in Righteouſneſs.* *From Reaſon.* *Under what Conditions.*

" BUT how ſhall we reconcile all this with the Words of our bleſſed Saviour, " [c] *Swear not at all, neither by Heaven, nor by the Earth, nor by Jeruſalem, nor by* " *the Head; but let your Communication be Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay; for whatſoever* " *is more than theſe cometh of Evil.* If Swearing were a Thing allowable, why does " the Apoſtle repeat the Prohibition, [d] *but above all Things, my Brethren, ſwear not,* " *neither by the Heaven, neither by the Earth, neither by any other Oath; but let your* " *Yea be Yea, and your Nay Nay, leſt ye fall into Condemnation:* If it be allowable, I " ſay, why did the *Primitive Chriſtians*, by the Force of theſe Prohibitions, and " even ſome *honeſt Heathens*, by the mere Dictates of the Law of Nature, ſo totally " abſtain from it?" Now, in Order to diſcern the Senſe of our Saviour's Prohibition, we muſt conſider, that it is no unuſual Thing in Scripture to expreſs that in *abſolute* Terms, which is yet to be underſtood in a *limited* Senſe. [e] Thus, when our Saviour tells us, [f] that *all who came before him, were Thieves and Robbers*, the general Expreſſion muſt be reſtrained to thoſe that gave out they were the *Meſſiah*, otherwiſe St *John Baptiſt*, and all the Prophets of old, muſt be comprehended under the Notion of *Thieves and Robbers:* Thus when St *Paul* ſays, [g] *all Things are lawful unto me*, it muſt neceſſarily be reſtrained to Things *not forbidden*, otherwiſe an Inference might be drawn from the Words, that St *Paul* thought Lying, and Stealing, and Fornication, *&c. was lawful to him:* And, in like Manner, the Words of our bleſſed Lord, *ſwear not at all*, muſt not be extended to the *utmoſt Latitude* they will bear, but reſtrained to the Scope and Deſign of his Diſcourſe, and the Sins he primarily intended *An Objection.* *Anſwered.*

[s] Gen. xxiv. [t] 1 Sam. xx. 8. [u] 2 Cor. i. 23. [x] Ibid. xi. 31. [y] Rev. x. 5.
[z] Among the *Jews*, the Form of giving an Oath to Witneſſes and others, was not by tendering a formal Oath to them, as the Cuſtom is among us, but by *adjuring them, i. e.* requiring them to ſwear upon Oath; as it is plain from *Lev.* v. 1. *If a Man hear the Voice of Swearing, and is a Witneſs whether he hath ſeen or known of ſuch a Thing, if he do not utter it, then he ſhall bear his Iniquity. If he have heard the Voice of Swearing, i. e.* if being adjured, or demanded to anſwer upon Oath concerning what he hath ſeen or heard, he do not utter the Truth, he is perjured. Now to this Adjuration of the High-Prieſt, our Saviour anſwered *thou haſt ſaid*; which Words were not an Evaſion (as ſome have thought) but a direct Anſwer, as if he had ſaid, *it is as thou ſayeſt, it is even ſo, I am the Son of God.* *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[a] Matth. xxvi. 63, 64. [b] *Nourſe*'s Practical Diſcourſes. [c] Matth. v. 34. [d] James v. 12.
[e] *Horneck*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [f] John x. 8. [g] 1 Cor. vi. 12.

The Meaning of our Saviour's Words.

to reprove. [h] That therefore our Saviour intended to limit this Prohibition to our ordinary Methods of Commerce and Diſcourſe, and not to extend it to *judicial* Caſes, is plain, both from the Word *Communication*, which, according to the uſual Forms of Speech, can hardly be applied to any *Depoſition* in a Court of *Judicature*, and from the Nature of the Oaths themſelves, *by Heaven, by the Earth, by Jeruſalem*, &c. which were frequent with the Jews in their common Diſcourſe and ordinary Negotiations, but never uſed upon ſuch publick Occaſions, for then their Cuſtom was to ſwear by *the great Creator of Heaven and Earth, as the Lord liveth, and God do ſo to me and more*, &c. [i] The Truth is, the Jews had got a very wicked and pernicious Cuſtom of Swearing *by Heaven, by the Earth*, and ſeveral other Creatures, which, becauſe God's Name was not expreſſed, they thought were *harmleſs* Forms, and ſuch as left no Guilt, nor laid any Obligation upon them: And therefore our Saviour, in theſe Words endeavours to convince them of their Miſtake; and to ſhew them, that their Excuſes and Pretences of not *taking the Name of God in vain*, when they made Uſe of ſuch *evaſive* Oaths, were *impertinent* and frivolous; that in ſwearing by the *Creatures*, they did in effect ſwear by the *Maker* of them; that in ſwearing *by Heaven*, they ſwore by him, whoſe *Throne* it is; in ſwearing *by the Earth*, they ſwore by him whoſe *Footſtool* it is; in ſwearing *by Jeruſalem*, they ſwore by him, who had taken that City into his peculiar Care and Protection; and in ſwearing *by their Heads*, they ſwore by their *Creator*, whoſe Power and Goodneſs appeared in every Thing about them. This is the Matter which Chriſt declares to the Sinners of this Age; and the Ground of his Aſſertion is plainly this,—that, in an Oath, not Pretences and Evaſions, but the Nature and Import of the Thing are conſidered by Almighty God. *Men always ſwear by a greater*, viz. a ſupreme Being; this is an eternal Rule, and whatever *trivial* Things are made the Expreſſions of an Oath, they do not alter the Nature of it, which has ſtill a Relation to God, who is the Maker and Preſerver of all the leſſer Things Men ſwear by, and is as much profaned and provoked by ſuch *diſguiſed* Oaths, as if he were particularly named in them.

Of the Apoſtle's.

THE Apoſtle's Words are much of the ſame Nature, and are therefore to be taken in the ſame Senſe: This however we cannot but infer from the repeated Prohibition, [k] that though Swearing itſelf be not diſallowed under the *Goſpel*, yet the Frequency of it certainly is; and therefore every good Chriſtian ſhould avoid it, if he can, altogether; if not ſo, as much as he is able. Candour and Ingenuity, Love of Truth, and Hatred of Falſity, is a proper *Badge* of Chriſtians; and therefore, as we profeſs to be ſuch, we ſhould uſe no Aſſeverations, much leſs any Oaths and Imprecations, in our Diſcourſe: *Our Yea ſhall be Yea, and our Nay Nay:* Simple *Affirmations* or *Negations* ſhould only paſs between us; for it becomes Chriſtians to be of ſuch Integrity and Faithfulneſs, that their *bare Word* ſhould be as valid as an Oath.

The primitive Fathers.

THIS is the whole of our Saviour's and of his Apoſtle's Senſe: And accordingly, if we look into the Words * of thoſe *Primitive* Writers, who are ſaid to deny the Lawfulneſs of Oaths, and obſerve the particular Scope and Intendment of their Diſcourſes, we ſhall ſoon perceive, that their Deſign is not to condemn all Swearing, but only the frequent Uſe of it. They ſaw how Oaths were abuſed, either by Mens raſhly or falſely Swearing; they expreſſed their Diſlike and Abhorrence of it; and adviſed their Hearers to ſhun all Swearing, as much as they could, and admit of no Oaths, but when there was an abſolute Neceſſity for them. This is all they meant; and this is that, which every good and conſcientious Man ſhould do at this Day; for it is indeed no more, than what ſome of the wiſeſt Heathens have preſcribed to their *Diſciples*, when they tell them, † *that the beſt Way to preſerve the Reverence due to an Oath, was not to uſe it frequently, or upon trifling Occaſions, to fill up the Vacuities of our Diſcourſe, or procure Credit to a Tale; but, as far as they might, to uſe it only in Things neceſſary, and when there was no other Way to ſecure themſelves, but by the Help of an Oath.*

The Prohibition itſelf, as extending to unlawful Oaths, as 1. *Perjury.*

I. THIS being ſufficient to prove the *Lawfulneſs* of Oaths, we come now to conſider what Kinds are accounted unlawful: And, of this Nature, what we conceive to be primarily intended in the Commandment, is the great Sin of Perjury.

1. PERJURY

[h] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [i] *Horneck*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [k] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. * St *Jerome* [Comment. in *Matth.* v.] *Chryſoſtome* [Homil. 15. in *Gen.*] & *Baſil* [Homil. in *Pſal.* xiv.] ſeem to aſſert, that Oaths are unlawful under the Goſpel. *Gregory Nazianzen*, (as it is related in his Life) as ſoon as he was baptized, made a Vow not to ſwear as long as he lived, and kept it even to the laſt. According to his own Judgment and Practice, he adviſed others to refrain from Oaths; as there are many Paſſages in *Epiphanius, Theodoret, Theophylact, Origen, Cyprian*, and *Athanaſius*, that ſeem entirely to condemn the Uſe of them. *Edwards*, ibid. † Hierocles in Pythag. Aur. Car.

1. PERJURY is the ſolemn Invocation of God to the Atteſtation of what we aſſert or promiſe of any Kind, at the ſame Time that we know, what we aſſert is a direct *Falſehood*, and what we promiſe we neither can nor intend to perform [l]; which is one of the higheſt Affronts, we can offer to *God*, and an Act of moſt injurious Conſequence to Men. [m] He that calls God to Witneſs to a *Lye*, either imagines, that the Divine Being knows not the Truth, and ſo *imputes Ignorance* to him; or, that he is not *diſpleaſed* with Falſehood, and ſo *denies his Holineſs*; or, that he is not able to *avenge* the Indignity, and ſo *derogates from his Power*: [n] So that the Sin is not only an horrible Abuſe of the Name of God, an open Contempt of his Judgment, and inſolent Defiance of his Vengeance, but a very near Approach to *Atheiſm* itſelf; ſince the Difference is but little between believing *there is no God*, and believing there is *one*, whoſe Omniſcience and Purity, and whoſe Power and Majeſty, deſerve no Regard at all. [o] In Reſpect of other Men, it is not only a Wrong to this or that particular Perſon, who ſuffers by it; but a Kind of Treaſon againſt human Society, as it ſubverts the Foundations of publick Peace and Juſtice, and the private Security of every Man's Life and Fortune; for ſo the wiſe King has expreſſed it; [p] *a falſe Witneſs againſt his Neighbour is a Maul, and a Sword, and a ſharp Arrow*; intimating, that among all the Inſtruments of Ruin and Miſchief, that have been deviſed by Mankind, none is of more *pernicious* Conſequence to human Society, than Perjury, or the Breach of Faith: And in Reſpect of the *Perſon himſelf*, beſides the Waſte that it makes in his Conſcience, [q] it brings Diſgrace and Infamy upon him, if he comes to be detected; or if he eſcapes the Cenſure of the World, entails a Curſe upon him, and his Poſterity, which will not eaſily be removed. For ſo in the Viſion of the flying Roll, [r] *I will bring the Curſe forth*, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, *and it ſhall enter into the Houſe of the Thief, and into the Houſe of him, that ſweareth falſely by my Name, and it ſhall remain in the Midſt of his Houſe, and it ſhall conſume it, with the Timber thereof, and the Stones thereof.*

The great Impiety of it.

2. WICKED and profane Swearing, in common Diſcourſe and Converſation, is another Thing prohibited in this Commandment. For [s] Oaths are ſolemn Things, and reſerved for great Purpoſes, to give *Confirmation* to our Words in ſome weighty Matters, and to put an End to *Controverſies*, which cannot otherwiſe be peremptorily decided, and are not to be uſed upon trifling Occurrences, without expreſſing great Impiety, and Irreverence towards God. And yet, [t] whether it be that Men think Oaths ſet off their *Paſſion* better, and make it more *terrible* and *impreſſive*, or that they fancy their Words and Sentences have not their due *Accent* and *Cadence* without them, or that they believe their Mirth and Jollity is not *modiſh* enough, except it be accompanied with them; or whether it be merely *Cuſtom*, and a Vice, that they play with, purely for *Company*'s ſake; but ſo it is, that no Sin is more frequently committed by Men of all Ranks and Diſtinctions, even tho' it has no Profit nor Pleaſure attending it, and may really puzzle a wiſe Man to give any tolerable Reaſon why it is ever committed at all; [u] tho' it be a great Incivility in Converſation, as it offends and grates upon all ſober and conſiderate Perſons, who cannot be preſumed (with any Manner of Eaſe and Patience) to hear God affronted, and his great and glorious Name treated with ſo much Contempt and Irreverence, upon every ſlight Occaſion; tho' it be ſo far from being any *Commendation* to him that uſes it, that it argues in him a perpetual *Diſtruſt* of his own Reputation, and is an Acknowledgment, that he thinks his bare Word not worthy of Credit; and ſo far from being an *Ornament* to his Diſcourſe, that it makes it look *ſwollen* and *bloated*, and more bold and bluſtering, than becomes a Man of *good Breeding*.

2. Profane Swearing.

The Folly of it.

BUT beſides theſe groſſer Profanations of God's Name, there are ſeveral other Kinds of Oaths, which, though they ſound not ſo heinouſly, are not without their Guilt and Condemnation: * Such as, 1. Swearing by any Creature, *by the Heavens, by the Light, by the Light that ſhines*, &c. which, according to our Saviour's Interpretation, is implicitly ſwearing by God himſelf; ſince all theſe were created by him, depended entirely upon him, and are nothing at all without him. [x] 2. Swearing by any Gifts or Endowments of the Body or Mind, *by the Life*, or Soul of ourſelves, or others, *by our Faith, by our Troth*, &c. becauſe our Saviour aſſured us, that if we ſwear by any Thing, which belongs to God, (as every Gift and Faculty we have cometh from him) it is ſwearing by God himſelf, tho' the Name of God be not expreſly

3. Other Kinds of unlawful Swearing.

[l] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [m] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [n] *Tillotſon*, ibid. [o] Ibid. [p] Prov. xxv. 18. [q] *Horneck*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [r] Zech. v. 4. [s] *Tillotſon*, ibid. [t] *Horneck*, ibid. [u] *Tillotſon*, ibid. * *Horneck*, ibid. [x] *Edwards*, ibid.

expreſsly mentioned. [y] 3. Uſing ſuch *minced* and *diſguiſed* Expreſſions, as the Wit (ſhall I ſay, or rather Folly) of Mankind hath deviſed to evade the *Scandal* of bare-faced Profaneneſs. For all theſe, however *palliated*, are nevertheleſs *Oaths*, and will accordingly be charged upon us, at the great Day of Accounts, when Enquiries ſhall be made, what Obſervance we have paid to that Precept of the Apoſtle, *Above all Things, my Brethren, ſwear not, neither by the Heaven, neither by the Earth, neither by any other Oath.*

BESIDES theſe Oaths, whether open or diſguiſed, there are ſeveral other Ways of taking *the Lord's Name in vain*, as [z] when Men, 1. in their *Prayers*, run on without ever attending to what they are about, pray for what they ought not, or uſe vain Repetitions of God's Name, without Need, and againſt Reaſon. 2. In their *Promiſes*, undertake to do that, which afterwards they neglect to perform, not for Want of Power, but for Want of Will, and a due Regard to their Oath. 3. In their *Vows*, oblige themſelves to what, they either are not able to fulfil, or may not lawfully fulfil, or might much better, and more prudently have been let alone: And, 4. In their ordinary *Converſation*, [a] are frequently pronouncing the Name of God, by Way of *Admiration*, *Exclamation*, or *Expletive*, but without any due and ſuitable Reverence. To theſe Inſtances we may adjoin [b] all *Curſing* and Imprecations, which have Malice added to their Profaneneſs; all *lewd* and Atheiſtical Diſcourſes; all *Blaſphemy*, and ſpeaking reproachfully of God; all *Murmuring* and Repining at his Providence; all *Ridiculing* and Profaning his holy Word; all *Deſpiſing* and Expoſing his Miniſters, on Account of their Function; all *Irreverence* in his publick Service, in the Uſe of his Prayers and Sacraments; and, in ſhort, all *Contemptuous Treating* of any Thing, wherein his Name and Honour are concerned.

The Duties implied in the Commandment.

SUCH are the Things, which this Commandment *forbids*; and the Duties, which it implies, are the very Reverſe to theſe; *Hallowing* and Sanctifying God's bleſſed Name; never mentioning it, in our common Diſcourſe, without ſome Deference and Note of Diſtinction; never expreſſing it in our Prayers, without the profoundeſt Humility and Veneration; never employing it, on any *judicial* Occaſion, but with the greateſt Seriouſneſs and Solemnity; and always remembering to fulfil the Obligation punctually, which we bring upon ourſelves by ſo ſacred a *Tye*, at all Times, and in all Places, ſpeaking honourably of God's Word, his Sacraments, his Miniſters, and whatever relates to him; and [c] uſing our utmoſt Endeavours, that all Minds may entertain good and worthy Thoughts of him; all Tongues may bleſs and praiſe him; and all Creatures yield Adoration to his Name, and Obedience to his Will.

The Commination annexed to the Command, ſuitable to the Cuſtoms of all Nations.

II. BUT to proceed now to the Sanction of the Command, which is a *Commination* added to enforce it; *God will not hold him guiltleſs*, i. e. he will look upon him as a very guilty Perſon, and accordingly purſue him with great Severity, both in this Life, and that which is to come. To expreſs the Lawfulneſs of an Oath, and the great Guilt and Penalty incurred by the Violation of it, the Wiſdom of moſt Nations has appointed very *ſignificant Ceremonies*, which the Juror is obliged to obſerve, when he comes to the Reception of it. [d] The ancient *Phœnicians*, in taking an Oath, held a *Lamb* in one Hand, and a *Stone* in another, to intimate their Wiſhes, that God might *ſtrike them dead*, as they were ready to do the Lamb, if they ſwore not according to Truth. The old *Romans*, upon the like Occaſion, took up a *Stone*, and caſt it from them, imprecating to themſelves, that God might caſt them away, as they did that Stone, if there was any Falſity in what they ſwore. The *Jews*, in taking, or adminiſtering an Oath, [e] *ſlew a Calf*, and cut it aſunder, and the Perſon, that was to ſwear, walked thro' the *diſſected* Parts, to convince the Spectators, that he wiſhed God, in like Manner, might cut him aſunder, in Caſe he falſified his Oath. *Lifting up their Hands to Heaven*, in the Act of Swearing, (we [f] find it practiſed among the Angels themſelves) was an ancient Cuſtom among many Nations, in order to ſhew, that they engaged all the Powers of Heaven againſt them, if the Things they confirmed were not true; and the Cuſtom among us of *Swearing upon the holy Goſpel*, is no bad Repreſentation of the tremendous Nature of Oaths. In that Book are contained all the Benefits and Privileges of our *Redemption*, all that we can hope for from the Merits and Sufferings of Jeſus Chriſt, the Pardon of Sin, the Promiſes of Grace here, and of Salvation hereafter: So that he, who affirms, in his Oath, what is not true, renounces all Claim and Title to the *Promiſes*, and publickly

[y] *Gardener*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [z] *Wake*'s Explanation of the Church Catechiſm. [a] *Gardener*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [b] *Wake*, ibid. [c] *Barrow*, on the Lord's Prayer. [d] *Horneck*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [e] Jer. xxxiv. 18. [f] Dan. xii. 7. *and* Rev. x. 5.

lickly devotes himſelf to all the *Curſes* and Threats contained in that Book: And what then can the forſworn Wretch expect, but to fall under the ſpeedy Vengeance of God, if his Declarations of this Kind be not true? [g] *I will come near you to Judgment, and will be a ſwift Witneſs againſt the Sorcerers, and againſt the Adulterers, and againſt falſe Swearers.* *The great Guilt and Danger of Perjury,*

THE like heavy Sentence has the *Royal Pſalmiſt* denounced againſt every vile Wretch, that indulges himſelf in *profane Talking*, in Curſing and Execrations. [h] *He delighted in curſing*, ſays he, *and it ſhall happen unto him; it ſhall come into his Bowels like Water, and like Oil into his Bones; it ſhall be unto him as the Cloak that he has upon him, and as the Girdle that he is always girded withal:* And therefore, to conclude with thoſe excellent Sayings of the wiſe Son of *Syrach*, [i] *Accuſtom not thy Mouth to ſwearing, neither uſe thyſelf to the naming of the Holy One; for he, that uſeth much ſwearing, ſhall be filled with Iniquity, and the Plague ſhall never depart from his Houſe; and if he ſwear falſely, he ſhall not be innocent, but his Houſe ſhall be full of Calamities: There is a Word, that is cloathed about with Death; God grant that it be not found in the Heritage of Jacob!* *and profane* [h] *Swearing and Curſing.*

Fourth Commandment.

Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy, &c.

THIS Commandment conſiſts, 1. Of a Precept; and, 2. A Reaſon enforcing it; and the moſt material Points, in our treating of it, will be to ſhew, 1. How far it is of *moral* Obligation; and, 2. In what *Manner* it is be obſerved, and *ſanctified*.

1. OF all the Commandments in the Decalogue, this is the only one, wherein we are bid to *remember* our Duty: [k] The Reaſon is, becauſe all the other Precepts were written, at firſt, upon the *Table* of our Hearts, and *engraven*, as it were, in our very Nature; ſo that, having a connatural Senſe of them upon our Minds, we cannot ſo properly be ſaid to *remember*, as to *feel* them, being conſcious to ourſelves of our Duty and Obligation to obſerve them; whereas this is a Precept of a *poſitive* Nature, not imprinted in Man's Heart, but given to him after he was made, and might therefore be *forgotten*, without ſuch a Call and Admonition as this to remind us of it. The Diſpute, indeed, among Divines, has been very great, concerning the *Nature* of this Commandment, ſome affirming, that it is intirely *ceremonial*, and peculiar to the State of the *Jewiſh* Church, while others have aſſerted the *moral* and perpetual Obligation of it, as equally incumbent upon every Chriſtian now. A middle Opinion, however, has prevailed; and 'tis now become the general and received Doctrine, that this Precept is of a *mixed* Nature, partly *moral*, and partly *ceremonial*; that, as to its *Subſtance*, viz. that God ſhould be ſolemnly and publickly worſhipped, and, at ſome ſet Time more eſpecially, it includes a *moral* Duty, but, as to its *Circumſtances*, viz. the Determination of the *Time* and *Manner* of performing this Worſhip, it is purely *ceremonial*, and obliges Chriſtians no farther, than by Parity of Reaſon it may be ſuppoſed to do it. *The Nature of this Precept.*

[l] THAT we ſhould frequently, and with a grateful and joyful Senſe, reflect upon the glorious Works of God, eſpecially that great and fundamental one, the *Creation* of the World, wherein the Wonders of his Goodneſs, and Wiſdom, and Power, were ſo illuſtriouſly diſplayed; that we ſhould not be unmindful of the *ſpecial* Favours of God's Providence to our Country, our Relations, ourſelves, eſpecially ſuch ſignal ones, as that Delivery vouchſafed the *Iſraelites* from *Egyptian* Slavery; that we ſhould not ſpend ourſelves and our Time in perpetual carking and labouring about worldly Affairs, but aſſign ſome competent Portion of it, both for the Relaxation of our Minds, and our Attendance on the Concerns of our immortal *Souls*; that we ſhould allow fit Times of Reſpite and Refreſhment to ſuch, as Divine Providence has placed about us, in the Condition of *Servants*, that both their Lives may be made more comfortable, and themſelves enjoy the Opportunity of ſerving God, our common Maſter, and regarding the Welfare of their Souls, no leſs precious than our own; and laſtly, that we ſhould ſhew ſome Mercy and Kindneſs even to our very *Beaſts*, allowing them *The* Moral *Part of it.*

 ſome

[g] Mal. iii. 5. [h] Pſal. cix. 17, &c. [i] Eccluſ. xxiii. 9, &c. [k] *Beveridge*'s Explanation of the Church Catechiſm. *Barrow*, on the Decalogue.

ſome Eaſe and Refreſhment from the painful Drudgeries they undergo for our Sakes: Theſe are, all of them, *Things*, which Reaſon evidently dictates, and which common Senſe muſt needs admit, as Duties of Piety, Juſtice, and Humanity: And, to ſecure the Performance of theſe, even common *Prudence* ſeems to ſuggeſt, that *ſet* Times ſhould be appointed, wherein they may be diſcharged, in a Manner pleaſing and acceptable to God. And accordingly, if we conſult the Practice of the World, we find, that in all wiſe and civil Societies, ſome Proviſion has ever been made, by the Appointment of *feſtival* Times, for the Obſervation of ſuch Duties; that the Founders of all Laws (according to [m] *Seneca)* did inſtitute *feſtival* Days, that Men might publickly be conſtrained to Chearfulneſs; and *that the Gods*, (according to [n] *Plato) pitying Mankind, born to painful Labour, appointed, for an Eaſe and Ceſſation from their Toils, the Returns of feſtival Seaſons.*

The Ceremonial.

THUS the Worſhip and Service of God, an Intermiſſion of Labour, to attend it, and the Appointment of proper Times, to perform it in, are the *moral* Parts of the *Sabbath*, which every one, both *Jew* and *Gentile*, is bound to obſerve: The *circumſtantial* Determination of the *Meaſure* and *Manner* of the Performances; that a *ſeventh* Day preciſely, rather than a *ſixth* or an *eighth*, ſhould be aſſigned, and a total Ceſſation from Labour, both for Man and Beaſt, preſcribed; this is a Matter of *poſitive* Inſtitution, whoſe only Foundation was in the Will of God, and whoſe Obligation extended to the *Jews* only; for ſo the Account of it ſeems to imply, [o] *The Children of Iſrael ſhall keep the Sabbath, and obſerve it throughout their Generations, for a perpetual Covenant; it is a Sign between me and the Children of Iſrael for ever:* [p] For as the *Covenant* between God and the *Iſraelites* included *none*, but ſuch as were of their Nation and Religion; ſo the Sabbath, being *a Sign* of that Covenant, was to extend no farther (as to the *ceremonial* Part of it at leaſt) than the Covenant did, and was therefore confined to themſelves only.

No Obligation on Chriſtians as to the Day.

[q] So little did the Apoſtles and firſt Diſciples of Chriſt think themſelves obliged by the *ceremonial* Part of this Law, that, immediately after his Aſcenſion, they forbore to keep the *Sabbath*, any longer, upon the ſame Day with the *Jews*. They held it very reaſonable, indeed, to follow the Example of God himſelf, in ſetting apart one Day in the Week to reſt from wordly Labours, the better to attend upon the Duties of *Religion*, as, after ſix Days, he reſted from the Works of the Creation; they thought it a great Diſparagement to the Holineſs and Perfection of their Religion, if they did not allot as much Time for God's publick Worſhip, as the *Jews* did; and, though they did not fulfil the *Letter* of the Commandment, they accounted themſelves bound by the *Intent* and Equity of it; and therefore they appointed one Day in *ſeven* to be *kept holy*; to be employ'd in Prayers and Praiſes, in hearing and meditating on God's Word, in receiving the *Sacraments*, and exerciſing all the pious Acts of Charity and Devotion: But they thought fit to alter the Day, from the *Jewiſh* Sabbath, to the *firſt Day of the Week*; and this they did upon very good Grounds and Authority.

The Jewiſh *Sabbath, why changed.*

THE *Jewiſh* Sabbath was at firſt inſtituted in Memory of God's *Creation* of the World, but afterwards we find this Reaſon omitted, and another made mention of; [r] *Remember that thou waſt a Servant in the Land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty Hand, and a ſtretched-out Arm; therefore the Lord thy God commands thee to keep the Sabbath-day*; from whence it is evident, [s] that the Sabbath was to be kept for another Reaſon, beſides that of the Creation, even in *Memory* of God's delivering his People out of their Bondage, and Slavery in *Egypt:* Which Deliverance, being a Type of our Redemption by Chriſt, makes it no obſcure Intimation, that when our Redemption ſhould be accompliſhed by him, the Sabbath ſhould be kept in Memory of that. [t] To change an Inſtitution, which, in a great Meaſure, was but *ceremonial*, was certainly as much in our Saviour's Power, (who for this Reaſon calls himſelf *the Lord of the Sabbath)* as it was in God's to appoint it at firſt: And if our Saviour had Power to abrogate the *old*, and inſtitute a *new* Day, we have Preſumption enough to ſuppoſe that he did ſo, not only [u] from his *riſing* from the Dead, * from his *appearing* to his Diſciples, and [x] *ſending* down the Holy Ghoſt, by which Events he conſecrated this *new* Day; but (what is our beſt Evidence in this

[m] Legum conditores feſtos inſtituerunt dies, ut ad hilaritatem homines publicè cogerentur, tanquam neceſſarium laboribus interponentes Temperamentum. *Sen. de Tranq. Ani.* [n] De Leg. 2. [o] Exod. xxxi. 16, 17. [p] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. [q] *Nourſe*'s Practical Diſcourſe of the Church Homilies. [r] Deut. v. 15. [s] *Beveridge*, on the Church Catechiſm. [t] *Taylor*'s Practical Catechiſm. [u] Matth. xxviii. 1. Luke xxiv. 1. * John xx. 26. [x] Acts ii. 1.

his Affair) from the conſtant Practice of ſuch, as muſt be allowed to underſtand their Maſter's Mind in this Particular beſt, his Apoſtles and immediate Succeſſors, who always made the Day, which is now become the *Chriſtian Sabbath*, the moſt ſolemn Time of their publick Worſhip and Devotions.

ON the Sabbath, immediately before the Reſurrection, the Women that attended *Chriſt* from *Galilee*, are ſaid [y] *to reſt*, indeed, *according to the Commandment*, and, in ſeveral Places, we find, that the Apoſtles frequented the Synagogues on the *Jewiſh* Sabbath; but, after the Knowledge of the Lord's Reſurrection, 'tis never more ſaid, that they *did it according to the Commandment*, but only [z] *according to Cuſtom*, or, *as the Manner was*. [a] They complied, no doubt, with the *Jews*, for ſome Time, in many Things, that were really abrogated, to try if they could win them by *prudential* Condeſcenſions; but when this Time was, in a good Meaſure, expired, and Ignorance of the Liberty, procured by *Chriſt*, from the *ceremonial* Part of the Law, became leſs excuſable, then the *Jewiſh* Sabbath was, by Degrees, declared an *antiquated* Rite, and the *Chriſtian* Sabbath univerſally received in its Stead: So *univerſally*, that we can ſcarce forbear thinking, that it was one of thoſe Precepts, which our bleſſed Saviour, after his *Reſurrection*, or, at leaſt, the Holy Ghoſt, after his *Deſcent*, left in the Hands of the Apoſtles, to be tranſmitted to ſucceeding Ages, according to that known Maxim of St *Auſtin*, [b] *That what is held, and always was held, by the Univerſal Church, and was never inſtituted by any Council, is rightly believed to have been delivered by Apoſtolick Authority*.

AND as there is no Obligation upon us to keep our Sabbath upon the ſame *Day* with the *Jews*; ſo neither are we tied to their ſtrict and rigorous *Manner* of obſerving it. Our bleſſed Saviour gives us the true Notion of our Duty, with reſpect to this Commandment, when he tells us, that [c] *the Sabbath was made for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath*. [d] God intended it for our Good, and to be the moſt profitable Part of our whole Time; and therefore we ſhould be careful ſo to employ it, as may beſt promote our true Intereſt and Happineſs. And as the Concerns of our Souls are of infinitely greater Moment to us, than thoſe of this Life, it ſhould, on this Day, be our chief Care and Buſineſs to provide for them; yet not ſo as to forget, that, whilſt *we are in the Body*, neceſſary Proviſion muſt, at all Times, be made for it; and, likewiſe, as long as we converſe among Men, there will be frequent Need of our charitable Help and Aſſiſtance, which muſt at no Time be neglected, when we have it in our Power to afford it them. In another Place, our Saviour tells the *Jews*, [e] *My Father hitherto worketh*, (meaning on the Sabbath-day) *and I alſo work* thereon; and therefore, as God ceaſeth not, on the Sabbath-day, to exerciſe the Works of Providence, but then, as at other Times, looketh after the Support and Suſtenance of all his Creatures; on that Day, as well as any other, *openeth his Hand, and filleth all Things living with Plenteouſneſs*: So ſhould we, on our Sabbath, provide thoſe Things which are neceſſary for ourſelves and Families, and all thoſe that have their Dependence upon us. For Works of Charity, and of Neceſſity, in us, anſwer to the Works of Providence in God, and his carrying on the *one* upon the Sabbath, is a ſufficient Warrant and Encouragement to us, that we ſhould never intermit, or neglect the other. 'Tis Part of our *Chriſtian Liberty* then, *wherewith Chriſt has made us free*, that we are not obliged to the Obſervation of the Sabbath with all that Strictneſs, that was incumbent on the *Jews*; but yet the Equity of the Precept requires thus much of us, that we ſhould not follow the Works of our *ordinary* Employ, much leſs run into a Courſe of Riot and Exceſs on the Day, which God has *ſanctified*. Pride or Wantonneſs, or extravagant Eating or Drinking, and what commonly attends it, [f] *fooliſh Talking or Jeſting, which*, the Apoſtle ſays, *are not convenient*, do ill become a *Chriſtian* at any Time; but the *Unſeemlineſs* of them is greateſt, and their Guilt is much

Or, as to the Manner *of obſerving it.*

[y] Luke xxiii. 56. [z] Acts xvii. 2.

[a] 'Tis true, that, for ſome Time, in the *Eaſtern* Parts, *Saturday* was kept holy; yet this was merely for the Sake of the *Judaizing* Converts, and, at the ſame Time, the *Lord's-Day* was alſo obſerved: But, in the *Weſtern* Churches, *Saturday* was not obſerved at all, as a *Feſtival*; yea, it was ſometimes made a *Faſt-Day*, and *Sunday* was the only Day, that was kept holy, as a Day that ſucceeded in the Place of the *Jewiſh* Sabbath, and in Remembrance of Chriſt's Reſurrection. Purſuant to this, we may obſerve, that the Apoſtles did not only make *this* the Day of their religious Aſſemblies, *Acts* xx. 7. But that *Ignatius*, the Contemporary, as well as Succeſſor of the Apoſtles, in his Epiſtle to the *Magneſians*, exhorteth them *to lay aſide the Obſervation of the Sabbath, and to keep the Lord's-Day for a Feſtival, wherein our Life roſe with Chriſt*: And *Juſtin Martyr*, the neareſt to him and the Apoſtles, tells us, that, *upon Sunday, Chriſtians aſſembled together out of all Cities and Villages for Divine Service, which conſiſted in reading the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament, preaching, praying, and other ſuch religious Exerciſes*, Apol. 2. See *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. [b] *Quod univerſa tenet Eccleſia, nec conſiliis inſtitutum, ſed ſemper retentum eſt, non niſi Authoritate Apoſtolicâ traditum rectiſſimè creditur.* [c] Mark ii. 27. [d] *Nourſe's* Practical Diſcourſe on the Church Homilies. [e] John v. 17. [f] Eph. v. 4.

much aggravated, if Men chuſe the *Lord's-day* to indulge themſelves in them: For whether it be conſider'd as a *Memorial* of God's Goodneſs in the *Creation*, or of his infinite Mercy in the *Redemption* of us, the Expoſtulation, which *Moſes* makes upon a like Occaſion, will be very appoſite to ſuch impious Prophaners of it; [g] *O ye fooliſh People and unwiſe, do ye thus requite the Lord, who bought you, and him, who made you, and eſtabliſhed you?* Which leads us, in the next Place, to obſerve,

The Jewiſh *Manner of obſerving it, as to* Reſt.

2. IN what Manner it is to be obſerved and ſanctified. The *Jewiſh* Sabbath was ordered to be kept with great Strictneſs from Work and bodily Labour; [h] *Thou ſhalt not do any Work, thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy Man-ſervant, nor thy Maid-ſervant, nor the Cattle, nor the Stranger that is within thy Gates*; and the Profanation of it (which conſiſted in doing any little Thing, even to the kindling of a Fire in order to dreſs their Meat) was accounted a Sort of *Sacrilege*, and the Offender was commanded to be *ſtoned* to Death. Nay, ſo great was the *Reſt* enjoined them on this Day, that they ſeemed not only to be reſtrained from all Kind of Labour, but even from moving from their Places; [i] For, *abide ye* (ſays God, when he appointed the Obſervation of it) *every one in his Place*; *let no Man go out of his Place on the ſeventh Day:* For though there is no Doubt, but that this was [k] to admit of ſome Relaxation, otherwiſe it would have hindered them from reſorting to the ſolemn Aſſemblies; yet it is apparent enough, from the End of its Inſtitution, [l] as well as the Practice of the *Jews* hereupon, that there was ſomething more than ordinary intended, even as to their not ſtirring from their Habitations.

Why enjoined: viz. *for the Sak: of* Reſt,

Now if it be enquired, for what Reaſon God enjoined the *Jews* ſo very *ſtrict a Reſt* on the Sabbath-day, the Reply may be, in the Words of *Juſtin Martyr* [m], *that he did it, becauſe of their irregular Diſpoſitions, and the Hardneſs of their Hearts.* They were a People extremely addicted to all the Methods of thriving in the World; to this Purpoſe they inured their *Domeſticks*, their Dependents, and Animals fit for Service, to very hard Labour all the Week. [n] Nay, ſince every *ſeventh* Year brought with it a general *Releaſe* from Servitude, the Covetouſneſs of their Maſters, as they ſaw that Year approaching, would have quite deſtroyed their Servants with perpetual Toil, had it not been for the happy Intervention of this Day of Reſt, every Week: And, [o] therefore, in Compaſſion to theſe, as well as to take off the others Thoughts from the World, and turn them, in ſome Meaſure, upon *ſpiritual* Objects, God ſtrictly prohibited them all bodily Labour or Drudgery on the *Sabbath*, and even ſuch diſtant *Appearances* of them, as are not neceſſary to be obſerved by Perſons, under different Circumſtances, and poſſeſſed of a better Diſpoſition. This Reflection will be farther confirmed, if we obſerve how often the *Jews* are reprimanded by the Prophets for the *Profanation of the Sabbath*, for *polluting it*, and for *exacting their own Labours in it*; as if the Work of the ſix Days had not been ſufficient to ſatisfy their worldly Ends, and to provide for the common Occaſions of Life. There is a Paſſage to this Purpoſe, in the Prophet *Amos*, which plainly ſhews, that the People thought either the Returns of the Sabbath too frequent, or the Manner preſcribed for the Obſervation of it too ſevere: *Hear this*, ſaith the Prophet [p], *O ye, that ſwallow up the Needy, even to make the Poor of the Land to fail, ſaying, when will the new Moon be gone, that we may ſell Corn; and the Sabbath, that we may ſet forth Wheat, that we may buy the Poor for Silver, and the Needy for a Pair of Shoes?* And from hence we may gather, that the Deſign of God, in giving ſo ſtrict an Injunction concerning the Sabbath, was to cure this worldly and avaritious Spirit in the *Jews*, or at leaſt to prevent their cruel Uſage of the poorer Sort; and, by ſuch *Intervals* of Eaſe and Relaxation, to enable them to live with ſome Sort of Comfort in their mean Condition.

and religious Offices.

BUT the Ceſſation from Labour was not all. [q] The *Jews*, tho' they had no expreſs Order, in this Commandment, concerning any *natural* or *moral* Services, they were to perform to God; yet were themſelves *ſagacious* enough to underſtand ſuch Duties couched in the *Sanctification* of the Day. Accordingly, in every Place of their Habitation, they ſettled *Synagogues* and *Oratories*, whereunto they reſorted at ſuch Times,

[g] Deut. xxxii. 6. [h] Exod. xx. 10. [i] Exod. xvi. 29. [k] This Precept, the *Jews* ſay, is not violated, if a Man did not go above two thouſand Cubits from the City, where he dwelt, which they called *a Sabbath-day's Journey*. This was the Diſtance between the Ark and the Camp, when they *marched*, and probably the ſame Proportion was obſerved, when they *reſted*, and is commonly computed to be about the Space of a *Mile*. Now, if (according to their Manner of arguing) they were allowed to go from their Tents to the Tabernacle, to worſhip upon the Sabbath-day, which was the Diſtance of two thouſand Cubits; it could be no Breach of the Sabbath to go ſo far, upon that Day, on any other Occaſion, *Lewis*'s Antiquities of the *Hebrew* Republick. [l] Acts i. 12. [m] Διὰ τὰς ἀνομίας, καὶ τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν. *Dial. cum Tryph.* [n] *Le Clerc*'s Commentary. [o] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [p] Amos viii. 4, &c. [q] *Barrow*, on the Decalogue.

Times, to offer up their Devotions to God; to hear the Scribes read and expound the Law; and to join in the Offices of Prayer and Thankſgiving; and for their Encouragement herein, the Prophet is directed to acquaint them, [s] *If thou turn away thy Foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy Pleaſure on my holy Day, and call the Sabbath a Delight, the Holy of the Lord, honourable, and ſhalt honour him, not doing thine own Ways, nor finding thine own Pleaſure, nor ſpeaking thine own Words*, (which is the Form preſcribed for the Obſervation of the Sabbath-day) *then ſhalt thou delight thyſelf in the Lord, and I will cauſe thee to ride upon the high Places of the Earth, and feed thee with the Heritage of Jacob thy Father; for the Mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.*

The Chriſtian's Obligation to obſerve the Lord's Day.

WE, indeed, who live under an eaſier *Diſpenſation*, are happily exempted from the rigid Obſervation of the Sabbath; [u] *We are not to be judged by any Man*, as the Apoſtle tells us, *for Meat, or Drink, or in Reſpect of an holy Day, or of the New Moon, or of the Sabbath-days, which are a Shadow of the Things to come*; [x] but ſtill, as to all Things, relating to the Honour of God, and the Advancement of true Piety and Holineſs, we are under greater and ſtricter Obligations, than the *Jews* themſelves were: So that, though we Chriſtians are not bound to keep the Sabbath upon the ſame *Day* with them, or in the ſame *Manner*, that they did; yet, ſince we have one Day in the Week, appointed for a religious Reſt, we ought to anſwer the Ends of it, and make it a Day of Reſt from our ordinary Labours, for our better attending upon the *ſolemn* Worſhip of God, and employing ourſelves in the Exerciſe of all Things, *which pertain to ſpiritual Life and Godlineſs.*

And Manner of do ingit.

[y] How zealous and punctual the primitive Chriſtians were, to ſanctify this Day with their publick Devotions, we have the general Suffrage of all Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory. They did not think it enough, to read, and pray, and praiſe God at home, but made Conſcience of appearing in the publick Aſſemblies, from which nothing but Sickneſs, and an abſolute Neceſſity, did ever detain them. Yea, and when Perſecution at any Time forced them to keep cloſe, yet, if it were poſſible, they would aſſemble in the *Night*, or early in the *Morning*; and no ſooner was there the leaſt Mitigation, but they preſently returned to their *open* Duty, and publickly met all together, ſo that a Sabbath, without publick Worſhip, ſeemed *unſanctified*. When therefore this Day of the Lord approaches, (to conclude with a few Directions concerning it) that we may thus *keep it holy*, and make it a *religious Reſt*, (according to the preſent Intendment of the Law) it will become us [z] to riſe as early to the Service of God, as we were wont on other Days, to our Worldly Employments; to betake ourſelves *in ſecret* to the Supplication of the divine Aid and Benediction; to raiſe our Affections to a ſuitable Degree of Love and Reverence, by Reading and Meditation; and to allow as little Time, as may be, to other neceſſary or convenient Avocations from ſuch Exerciſes, until we repair from our Cloſets to the Church. When we are come to the Houſe of the Lord, (which ſhould always be at the Beginning of Service, and with our whole Family attending us) proſtrating ourſelves before the Divine Majeſty, to implore his Bleſſing upon our Endeavours, we muſt join in the *publick Worſhip*, in Prayers and Praiſes with all Fervour, in hearing the Word read and preached, with all Diligence and Attention; and, in receiving the holy Sacrament, if it be adminiſtered, with all affectionate Thankfulneſs. When the publick Worſhip is done, and we are returned from the ſolemn Aſſembly, we muſt not think ourſelves diſcharged from any other Duty: Our Children and Servants require then our Care, who, on this Day eſpecially, are to be inſtructed in the Principles of Religion, have their Proficiency enquired into, and themſelves adviſed, and encouraged ſeverally, according to their Needs and Capacities, in their reſpective Duties. When this is done, we muſt ſpend the reſt of the Day in religious and charitable Offices; in a loving and Chriſtian Communion with one another; in a thankful Enjoyment of the good Creatures of God; and finally, ſhut up the whole with Prayer and Thankſgiving; with imploring Forgiveneſs for all the *Failings* of the Day, and begging that our *imperfect* Services may be accepted for the perfect Righteouſneſs, and meritorious Interceſſion of Chriſt Jeſus.

[s] Acts xv. 21. [t] Iſa. lviii. 13, 14. [u] Col. ii. 16, 17. [x] *Nourſe*'s Practical Diſcourſe on the Church Homilies. [y] *Cave*'s Primitive Chriſtianity. [z] *Newcomb*'s Catech. Sermons, Vol. I. and *Towerſon*, on the Commandments.

SECT. II.

TABLE II. Fifth Commandment.

Honour thy Father and thy Mother, &c.

THIS is the firſt Commandment of the Second Table, and is very properly ſet here in the Front of all; for as *Honouring of God* was the firſt Commandment of the former Table, ſo is it fit, that the *Honouring of our Parents* ſhould have the Preheminence in the latter; ſince, next to God himſelf, (according [a] to the Senſe of the wiſeſt Law-givers and Inſtructers) our Parents are chiefly to be reſpected and obeyed. And therefore the Senſe and Meaning of *honouring our Parents*, together with the Nature of the Promiſe annexed to the Duty, will be the two Things to be conſidered, in the Explanation of this Precept.

Duties of Children to Parents.

I. [b] HONOUR ſignifies a great many Things, and takes its Senſe, eſpecially, from the Perſon it relates to: To *honour* God is one Thing, to *honour* the King another, and to *honour* our Equals or Inferiors is a different Thing from all the reſt: And therefore the Word muſt not be taken in the ſame Senſe, wherever we meet it, but the *Party*, to whom it is addreſſed, muſt determine its Meaning and Extent. Since then the Intent of the Commandment is to ſecure the Duty of Children to Parents, all the ſeveral Duties of Love, of Reſpect, of Obedience, and of Support, which Children owe to their Parents, are comprehended in the Word *Honour*.

Love, and how to be promoted.

1. FIRST then, we are commanded to *love* our Parents. [c] But becauſe, properly ſpeaking, it is not in our Power (whatever we may think) to love or hate, to hope or fear, when or what, or whom we will, but according as we apprehend the Thing or Perſon deſirable and lovely; by being commanded *to love* our Parents, we are more eſpecially to take ſuch Courſes and Conſiderations, as may increaſe our natural Affection to them, and to avoid all ſuch Things, as may any Ways diminiſh it. How far the Conſideration of their being, under God, the *Authors* and Originals of our Life and Exiſtence, may contribute to the exciting of this Affection, is not ſo eaſy to determine; becauſe Life, according as it is happy or miſerable, is differently to be repreſented: But *Parental* Love, which exerts itſelf in a conſtant Care and Preſervation of us, is a real Good, which deſerves to be repaid with all the Love we can. 'Tis this, that ſupplies all the Wants of helpleſs *Infancy*, ſecures from all the Hazards of heedleſs *Childhood*, and giddy and unthinking *Youth*; that ſhapes the Body, keeps the ſeveral Limbs in Order, and makes the Perſon beautiful and comely. 'Tis this, that informs the *Mind*, and regulates the *Manners*, that trains up the *Reaſon*, that exerciſes the *Memory*, that inſtructs them to argue and underſtand their little Affairs, and takes Care to educate, and fit them for great Matters. 'Tis this, that brings them firſt to God in Baptiſm, and keeps them afterwards in the Ways of Goodneſs and Religion, by inſtilling into them wiſe and virtuous Principles, by reminding them conſtantly of their ſeveral Duties, encouraging them in Good by Favours and Rewards, and reclaiming them from Evil by Reproofs and Corrections [d].

THESE and a thouſand more are the Ways, which Parents take to make their Children happy; beſides thoſe endleſs and innumerable Labours, Watchings, and Sollicitations, which conſume their whole Life, to make an handſome Proviſion for them of the good Things of this Life. So that, whatever Benefits can be the Ground and Foundation of Love in Children, the Care and Love of Parents abundantly afford them; and therefore they are obliged to take the Remembrance of theſe frequently into Conſideration, in order to excite and ſtir them up to love their Parents, who have done ſo great Things for them; who, next under God, were not only the Authors of their Being, but of their Well-being likewiſe, and preſent Happineſs.

2. AN-

[a] Ἀθανάτους μὲν πρῶτα Θεὺς, &c. *Pythag. Aur. Car.* Πρῶτα Θεὸν τίμα μηδάποτε δὲ σεῖο γονῆας. *Phocyl.* [b] *Edwards's* Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [c] *Fleetwood's* Relative Duties. [d] Ibid.

2. ANOTHER Duty, which Children owe to their Parents, is *Reſpect*, i. e. all external Honour and Civility, whether in Words or Actions; by Virtue of which, they are obliged to be ſubmiſſive in their Behaviour, and mannerly and dutiful in their Speeches and Anſwers to them; to ſay Things honourable and commendable of them, to pry as little into their Failings and Infirmities as they can themſelves, and to extenuate and conceal them as much from others. And for this there is ſo much Reaſon and Decency in Nature, that it ſhocks us unavoidably to hear one reproach his Parents with Vices or Infirmities, though what he ſays be true, unleſs it be done with great Concern and Tenderneſs, with Grief and Pity; but when it is done with Contempt and Pleaſure of telling, we cannot help abhorring ſuch Impiety: For the Hearts of all Men go along with *Noah*, in laying Puniſhment upon *Cham*, for his unnatural and profane Deriſion, and love the Memory of thoſe Sons, that would not ſee themſelves, nor ſuffer others to be Witneſſes of, the *Miſcarriages* of their Father. *Reſpect,*

THAT therefore Children may diſcharge this Part of their Duty better, and in every Geſture, Word, and Action, ſhew all due Honour and Reſpect to their Parents; as it is partly in their Parents Power, ſo ſhould it be their Care and Concern to promote it. And to this Purpoſe, they muſt be careful how they live and behave in the Sight of their Children; for if they make themſelves *vile* and cheap in their Eyes by too much *Familiarity*, by light and indiſcreet Carriage, they will in vain expect the Reverence and Reſpect, that is due to their Character. The Foundation of Reſpect is ſome ſuppoſed *Excellence* and *Worth*, and, in Conſequence of this, ſome Kind of *Superiority*; but when Parents either admit their Children to an Equality, or make them *privy* to their Follies and Indiſcretions, they do, in Effect, invite Contempt. And therefore all due Care ſhould be taken, that the *domeſtick* Differences, the idle and unſeemly Quarrels and Debates, the ſimple and unkind Words and Actions, which too commonly paſs between Parents, ſhould be concealed and hidden from Children; for they obſerve and treaſure up theſe *Follies*, and ſecretly, at leaſt, ſide with the one, and learn to hate and deſpiſe the other, or entertain, too ſoon, a mean Opinion of both, which deſtroys all Manner of Eſteem and dutiful Obſervance. *how to be procured.*

3. ANOTHER Duty which Children owe their Parents, and without which, all their Honour and Reſpect is mere Shew and Formality, is Obedience to their lawful Commands. I ſay, *lawful Commands*, [c] otherwiſe we have our Saviour's Warrant not to obey them, [f] *If any one love Father and Mother, more than me, he is not worthy of me*; which, in another Place, we find expreſſed thus, [g] *If any one hate not his Father and Mother, he cannot be my Diſciple:* The Meaning of which is, that God is to be loved and obeyed above all, and that we may very juſtly withdraw our Obedience from our Parents, rather than abandon our Duty to God. Thus, if Parents ſhould be ſo wickedly inclined, as to command their Children to lye, to ſteal, to do Violence and Injuſtice, *&c.* the Children are not at Liberty to obey, becauſe they have an antecedent Obligation, and are tied by God to Truth, and Honeſty, and Juſtice. [h] *Children obey your Parents in all Things; for this is well-pleaſing unto the Lord*, ſays St *Paul*, in one Place; but then he explains himſelf in another, [i] *Children obey your Parents in the Lord; for this is right, i. e.* according to God's Commandment and Will; for to obey them againſt God, can neither be *right* nor *pleaſing*, and ſo we ſhould have underſtood him, had he not given us this Explication. *Obedience, when to be refuſed.*

AND as we are not bound to obey our Parents, when they command us any Thing contrary to the Laws of *God*, ſo neither are we, when their Injunctions are contrary to the Laws of the *Land:* The Reaſon is, becauſe the Authority, which enacts theſe Laws, is *ſuperior* to that of our Parents; nor may any one's *private* Good be conſidered in Competition with the *publick*. If a Father therefore ſhould command his Son to betray his Country, to ſet the *Capital* on fire, or be any Way inſtrumental to the Overthrow of the Conſtitutions of the Kingdom, he muſt not ſo far *honour* his Father, as to obey any ſuch Commands: But then, even when he diſobeys, he muſt do it with great Modeſty and Tenderneſs; not with Upbraidings and Reproaches, not with high and ſcornful Refuſals, but by declining and avoiding ſuch Commands, with all the gentle Arts, and Methods of Submiſſion poſſible; *for even in a righteous Cauſe, the Language of Children muſt be humble to their Parents.*

AND as our Obedience to Parents is to ceaſe, where the Authority of God, or the Government has laid a Prohibition, ſo it is ſuppoſed not to be required, where the Thing, under Command, carries an *Invincible Antipathy* to our Inclinations. The common

[c] *Edwards's* Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [f] Matth. x. 37. [g] Luke xiv. 26. [h] Col. iii. 20. [i] Eph. vi. 1.

common Inſtance of this Kind is in the Caſe of *Marriage*, which being a State and Condition, upon which the Happineſs or Miſery of Life depends, cannot be enterprized with any Hopes of Felicity, without a real Affection on the one Side, and a good Aſſurance of it on the other. But now when a Parent, overlooking all this, will enjoin a Child, upon mere Motives of Advantage, to marry, where there is no Foundation of Love, nor Proſpect of Content, 'tis hardly to be thought, that ſuch Inſtances are to be complied with. Parents, indeed, are ſuppoſed to have a great Hand in this Affair: [k] The Examples in Scripture, as well as [l] the Laws of moſt Nations favour their Direction in this Caſe; and therefore they are to take all due Care, to ſee their Children well diſpoſed of, according to their Age, Quality, and Tempers, and not let the Proſpect of Fortune and Eſtate preponderate all other Conſiderations of Form and Favour, Birth and Education, Virtue and good Qualities; and when they have done this, the Children are to obey, as far as poſſibly they can, and give up the little Objections of *Fancy* to the more *mature* Deliberations of their Parents: But when, on the contrary, Parents offer to their Children what they cannot poſſibly like, and what all wiſe and conſiderate People cannot but diſapprove, there is no Doubt to be made, but that, in ſuch a Caſe, Children may refuſe, and, if their Refuſal be made with Decency and Humility, that it will not fall under the Head of *ſinful* Diſobedience.

And how to be promoted.

WITH Reſerve to theſe, and ſuch like Caſes then, our Obedience to Parents is founded upon their greater Knowledge and Experience, the Senſe of their Love and good Intentions towards us, and their earneſt and daily Sollicitude for our Welfare. And therefore, if Children, when any ſevere Injunction, that thwarts their natural Inclinations, comes from their Parents, would but reaſon thus with themſelves: [m] "Theſe are the Counſels and Commands of People, that have lived a great while "longer in the World, than I: I am but of *Yeſterday*, and know little; but ſure "my Parents have not lived ſo long for nothing: Their Age has taught them Expe"rience, and the Wiſdom and Knowledge, which commonly attends it, has qua"lified them for *Counſellors:* And as they are fit to adviſe me, ſo I have all the "Security imaginable of their Affection and good Will, nor can I ſuſpect the leaſt "Deſign, they can have upon me, unleſs it be to do me good, and to prevent my "falling into any Miſcarriage, which I find affects them, rather more than it does "myſelf. They have made me their Pride and Glory: They have placed all their "Happineſs and Content in my Welfare; and therefore I cannot but believe that "theſe Counſels and Commands are the beſt, that (conſidering all Circumſtances) "they can give, and the ſafeſt for me to follow:" If Children, I ſay, would but reaſon thus with themſelves, and, at the ſame Time, reflect upon the Ties and Obligations they have, to be obedient to their Parents, the Reaſonableneſs, the Pleaſure, and Security of being ſo, the Approbation of all good People, and the Bleſſing of God, that goes along with it, they would ſoon bring themſelves to a ready Diſpoſition of Obedience, even tho' there were ſome Things, not ſo agreeable to their own Deſires in what their Parents might enjoin.

Support.

4. THERE is one Duty more included in the Commandment, and that is the Support and Suſtenance of our Parents, or our adminiſtring to them in their Wants and Weakneſſes. [n] For conſidering the Care and Pains, which our *Father*, and the ſleepleſs Nights and homely Offices, which our *Mother* underwent for us; how tender they both were of us in our *Infancy*, when we were incapable of helping ourſelves, and how liberal of their Subſtance, to give us an Education, and ſettle us in a Station of Life, to the utmoſt of their Abilities; we cannot but think it incumbent on us, to requite their Care, and [o] *make them a ſuitable Return* (as the Apoſtle words it) when either Poverty, which is an *heavy Load*, and requires our Support, or old Age, which is a *ſecond Childhood*, and requires our Attendance, comes upon them. Upon the whole, [p] Parents, in Reſpect to their Children, do bear the ſignal *Stamp* and Image of God himſelf, not only as he is their *Maker*, but as he is their *Preſerver* and Benefactor;

[k] The Examples of the Patriarch *Iſaac*, Gen. xxiv. and *Jacob*, Gen. xxviii. who were directed by their Parents in their Marriage; and that Text in *Numb.* xxx. 3, 4. *If a Maid vow a Vow unto the Lord, and bind herſelf by a Bond, and her Father ſhall hold his Peace at her, her Vow ſhall ſtand; but if her Father diſallow her, in the Day that he heareth her, not any of her Vows ſhall ſtand*, ſeems to intimate, that the Parent's Conſent ſhould be obtained, in order to the Marriage-Vow, which is the moſt ſolemn of all. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [l] The Laws of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, two of the wiſeſt People in the World, and the Canons and Judgments of the beſt Writers, make the Conſent of Parents requiſite: Nay, the Canons of our own Church ſay expreſsly, [*Canon* 101.] that it is not lawful for any Children (unleſs arrived to the Age of 21) to make a Marriage-Contract, without the Conſent of their Parents, and, in Caſe they are dead, of their Guardians and Governors. [m] *Fleetwood*'s Relative Duties. [n] *Tomſon*, on the Commandments. [o] 1 Tim. v. 4. ἀμοιβὰς ἀποδιδόναι. [p] *Edwards*, ibid.

factor; and therefore we may obſerve [q], that as the Duties to other Men are termed Kindneſs, or Charity, or Courteſy, or Liberality, *&c.* thoſe towards our Parents in every Language (I ſuppoſe) are ſtiled *Piety*, which implies ſomething *Divine* in the Object of them, and denotes, that the Offences of Children, in this Reſpect, are grievouſly inhanced; that to ſlight our Parents is more than *Unkindneſs*; to refuſe them Succour, is more than *Uncharitableneſs*; to be unmannerly to them, is more than *Diſcourteſy*; and, in their Neceſſity, to be illiberal, is more than ſordid *Avarice*; 'tis an high Impiety, and Flagitiouſneſs againſt Heaven; [r] *For he that forſaketh his Father is a Blaſphemer; and he that angereth his Mother is curſed of God; but he that honoureth his Father ſhall have long Life.* Which brings us,

II. To the Nature of that *Encouragement*, which God has annexed to the Performance of this Commandment, *that thy Days may be long in the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* Now that this Promiſe was peculiar to the Children of *Iſrael* is evident, from its being limited to the Land of *Canaan*, where they only were to inhabit; and therefore, from hence, it cannot in the leaſt be concluded, either that *obedient* Children ſhall always inherit long Life, or that they, who arrive at old Age, have therefore been obedient Children, ſince every Day's Experience ſhews the contrary: But the Encouragement which Children have from hence is this,—That if long Life be moſt convenient for them, (all Circumſtances conſidered) they may expect it; but if it will not prove a Bleſſing, (as of itſelf it ſeldom does) then is not God unfaithful to his Promiſe, if the beſt and moſt obedient Children are *tranſlated* betimes, into that *better and heavenly Country*, whereof the Land of Promiſe was confeſſedly but a poor *Type* and *Shadow:* And therefore we find the Son of *Syrach* exhorting Children to honour and obſerve their Parents from Motives of an higher Conſideration, than what are promiſed the *Jews:* [s] *My Son, help thy Father in his Age, and grieve him not, as long as he liveth; and if his Underſtanding fail, have Patience, and deſpiſe him not, when thou art in thy full Strength; for the relieving of thy Father will not be forgotten; in the Day of thy Affliction it ſhall be remembered, and make thy Sins melt away, as the Ice in the fair warm Weather.* By Parity of Reaſon, we might reduce to this Commandment our Obligation to honour all thoſe, who perform ſuch *beneficial* Offices to us, as we receive from our *natural* Parents; thoſe, who afford us Maintenance or Education; thoſe, who inſtruct and adviſe us; ſuch as our Governors and Magiſtrates, whether *Civil* or *Eccleſiaſtical*, our Patrons and Benefactors, our Tutors and Schoolmaſters, but eſpecially our faithful Friends: But as we ſhall have a proper Opportunity to treat of theſe *Relative* Duties ſeparately, we ſhall only obſerve, at this Time, what this Commandment is more immediately ſuppoſed to imply, *viz.* the *reciprocal* Duties of Parents towards their Children.

The Encouragement to this Duty.

1. Now, one great Duty incumbent upon Parents, after the tender and careful Nurſing of their Children, (which is properly the Mother's Buſineſs, and muſt not, without Sickneſs or Inability, be neglected) is to teach and inſtruct them in the Laws of God, and in the Ways of Religion. [t] This Duty God has particularly charged upon his own People, ſpeaking of the Laws which he had given them; [u] *Thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy Children, and thou ſhalt talk of them when thou ſitteſt in thine Houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the Way, when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up:* And that this Work ought to be begun very early, even upon the firſt Budding and Appearance of Reaſon and Underſtanding in them, the Prophet hath informed us, [*] *Whom ſhall he teach Knowledge? Whom ſhall he make to underſtand Doctrine? Them that are weaned from the Milk, and drawn from the Breaſt; for Precept muſt be upon Precept, Precept upon Precept, Line upon Line, Line upon Line, here a little, and there a little.* Nor is the Goſpel, in this Particular, leſs preſſing than the Law: [x] *Fathers, provoke not your Children to Wrath, but bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, i. e.* in a literal Senſe, bring them up in the Chriſtian Religion: [y] Teach them their Duty, what they are to believe, and what to practiſe: Inſtruct them in the Knowledge of God, and of Jeſus Chriſt: Shew them in what Condition they are by Nature, and to what they are advanced by Grace: Let them know, that without believing in Chriſt, they can reap no Benefit from his meritorious Undertakings; that without Holineſs there can be no Happineſs; and that therefore they muſt be careful to keep a *good Conſcience* towards God and Man, and, by a blameleſs Converſation, to *adorn the Doctrine* of the Goſpel. [z] Above all, inform, and endeavour to convince them, that there is a Life after Death, wherein Men ſhall

Duties of Parents to their Children.

Inſtruction.

[q] *Barrow*, on the Decalogue. [r] Eccluſ. iii. 16. [s] Ibid. *ver.* 12, *&c.* [t] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[u] Deut. vi. 7. [*] Iſa. xxviii. 9, 10. [x] Eph. vi. 4. [y] *Fleetwood*, on the Relative Duties. [z] *Tillotſon*, ibid.

receive from God a mighty and eternal Reward, or a terrible and endleſs Puniſhment, according as they have done, or neglected their Duty in this Life; and [a] therefore urge it upon them, as an undeniable Truth, that if they live unholy Lives, they ſhall die miſerably; and that, though their Lives be never ſo long and proſperous, yet, if they die in their Sins, it would be better, far better, for them they had never been born.

AND as it is the Buſineſs of Parents, to inſtil into their Childrens Minds the Principles of Religion; ſo ſhould it be their Care to frame their Lives, according to the Rules and Precepts of it: [b] To train them up in the Exerciſe of Obedience and Modeſty, of Diligence and Sincerity, of Tenderneſs and Humanity, as the general *Diſpoſitions* to Religion; to accuſtom them to the Government of their Paſſions and Tongues, as the *Foundation* of it; and to inure them to the Practice of Piety and Devotion towards God, of Sobriety and Chaſtity with Regard to themſelves, and of Juſtice and Charity towards all Men, as the *principal Parts* of it.

Reproof and Correction.

2. ANOTHER Duty, incumbent upon Parents, is to *reprove* and correct their Children, when they do amiſs: For ſo the wiſe King has determined the Matter; [c] *The Rod and Reproof giveth Wiſdom, but a Child, left to himſelf, bringeth his Mother to Shame*; where he mentions the *Mother emphatically*, becauſe ſhe, many Times, is moſt faulty on the Side of fond *Indulgence*. The Apoſtle, indeed, enjoins Parents, [d] *not to provoke their Children to Wrath*; but where there is a manifeſt Hazard of their falling into wicked Courſes, there they are not to ſtand conſidering, whether what is proper to reclaim them, and prevent their Ruin, ought to be applied. [e] Such a Reſtraint, Reproof, Admonition, or Correction, as is in Reaſon and all Probability likely to procure the Amendment of Children, tho' it will certainly provoke them to all the Anger and Impatience poſſible, is not here adviſed to be forborne; but only ſuch a conſtant, rigorous, and *auſtere* Treatment, as makes Children look upon their Parents as their *Tyrants*, and accordingly reſent their Uſage of them. 'Tis ſaid indeed of *Adonijah*, the Son of *David*, [f] *that his Father had not diſpleaſed him at any Time, in ſaying, why haſt thou done ſo?* But, as *David* himſelf had ſufficient Reaſon to repent of ſuch Indulgence, his Example can be but a bad Precedent to other Parents, unleſs their Children behave ſo, as not to need any Check or Reproof. His Son *Solomon* was a great deal wiſer than his Father; and he adviſes Parents never to regard the Cries, the Pain, and Grief of their Children under their Puniſhments, when there was juſt Occaſion, and when they were in Danger of Miſcarriage; [g] *for he that ſpareth the Rod*, ſaith he, *hateth his Son, but he that loveth him, chaſteneth him betimes; he chaſteneth him, while there is Hope, and lets not his Soul ſpare for his crying.*

Errors in too much Lenity.

THERE is a Lenity then to our Children that is *culpable*; and, in caſe of a wilful and heinous Sin, eſpecially if it be *exemplary*, and of publick Influence, we muſt not uſe Mildneſs. [h] To rebuke gently, upon ſuch an Occaſion, is rather to countenance the Fault: It ſeems to argue, that we are not ſenſible enough of its Enormity, and have not a due Diſlike and Deteſtation of it: It looks like old *Eli*'s Reproofs to his Sons, even when they were become *ſcandalous* to every-body elſe; [i] *Why do you ſuch Things; for I hear of your evil-dealing by all the People? Nay, my Sons, for it is no good Report that I hear, you make the Lord's People to tranſgreſs:* And, as this was a Rebuke of no Proportion to their Crimes, God accordingly reſents it, in the Revelation he made to *Samuel*; [k] *I will judge his Houſe for ever, for the Iniquity which he knoweth, becauſe his Sons made themſelves vile, and he reſtrained them not; nor ſhall the Iniquity of Eli's Houſe be purged with Sacrifice or Offering for ever.*

Too much Severity.

THERE is an Error, on the other Hand, which Parents often incur in the Education and Government of their Children, and that is, too much *Rigour* and Severity. In the Matter of Reproof and Correction, Parents are allowed indeed to do that with their Children, which they may not do to other People; but 'tis always upon this Preſumption, that what they do will tend to their Benefit. For this Reaſon the Laws of God and Man have left Children to their Parents Diſcretion, and will not puniſh them for doing that to *them*, which would be puniſhed, if done to Strangers; but neither do the Laws of God and Man allow Parents to do any Thing truly *injurious* to their Children, nor does Nature indulge them in ſuch Power. [l] She only gives them Power to do them all the Good they can, and allows them the Liberty of hurting and afflicting them only for a Time, in order to their Amendment: And therefore where

[a] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [b] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [c] Prov. xxix. 15. [d] Eph. vi. 4. [e] *Fleetwood*, on the Relative Duties. [f] 1 Kings i. 6. [g] Prov. xiii. 24.—xix. 18. [h] *Tillotſon*, ibid. [i] 1 Sam. ii. 23, 24. [k] Ibid. iii. 13, 14. [l] *Fleetwood*, ibid.

where a Parent's Conſcience tells him, that the Affliction, he is laying upon his Child, is neither deſigned, nor likely to do him any Good, it tells him, at the ſame Time, he has no Authority to do it; it tells him, he is *unnatural* in doing it; and tho' no human Laws take Cognizance of ſuch Severity, (unleſs the *Commonwealth* be found to ſuffer by it) yet the Man cannot chuſe but know, that he is cruelly injurious all the while, and uſurps a Power, which does not naturally belong to him. A Parent therefore muſt be very careful, that he miſtake not the Silence of God's Word, nor the Permiſſion of human Laws, nor the Dictates of his own ſevere and rugged Temper for the Power and Authority, which Nature gives him; for he may be *unnatural* to his Children, tho' God's Word preſcribes him no *Rule*, how far he may go; tho' human Laws will allow of what he does, and his own Temper prompts him to it.

ABOVE all, he muſt have a ſtrict Guard upon himſelf, that, when the Nature of any Crime calls for *Chaſtiſement*, he does not correct his Child in a *Paſſion*; for this will look more like *Revenge*, than Good-will, and exaſperate the *Offender*, rather than reform him. [m] The firſt Experiment, proper to be made upon Children, ſhould be to allure them to their Duty, and, by reaſonable Inducements, to gain them to the Love of Goodneſs, by Praiſe and Reward, and ſometimes, by Shame and Diſgrace; and where this will do, there will be no Occaſion to proceed to Severity, eſpecially to great *Severities*, which are very unſuitable to human Nature. A Mixture of prudent and ſeaſonable Reproof and Correction (when there is Occaſion for it) may do well; but Whips are not *the Cords of a Man:* Human Nature may be *driven* by them, but it muſt be *led* by ſweeter and more gentle Methods.

3. ANOTHER Duty of Parents to their Children, is to make Proviſion for their Maintenance and Support; but in what Meaſure and Proportion they are to do this, it is not ſo eaſy to determine. The Benefit of a moderate Fortune ſeems to be recommended in that Requeſt of *Agur*'s; [n] *Give me neither Poverty nor Riches; feed me with Food convenient for me; leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay, Who is the Lord? Or leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the Name of my God in vain.* By the *Food that is convenient* for us, he means all the Neceſſaries and Accommodations of Life; but theſe (as to their Quantity at leaſt) muſt be ſuppoſed to differ, according to the State, the Children are in, and the Condition they are born to. [o] If Children are in a State of Infancy, wherein they can provide nothing for themſelves, there is no Doubt but that the Proviſion of Parents ought to be as large, as the Neceſſities of their Children. [p] If Children have ſome natural *Defect*, either in their *bodily* or *rational* Faculties, tho' they are arrived even to *Maturity* of Age, yet are they as much Children, as thoſe of younger Years, and have conſequently, an equal Intereſt in their Parents Care and Proviſion: If Children have arrived to Years of *Ability* and Diſcretion, ſo as to be able to provide for themſelves, there is no Doubt to be made, but that their Father may oblige them to it, and ſubtract ſo much of his Maintenance from them, as they for themſelves are in a Condition to acquire. [q] The pooreſt Parents in the World are obliged to provide for their Children according to their beſt Abilities; but then, as they can provide for them no otherwiſe, but by inuring them to Labour and Induſtry, they muſt be careful to accuſtom them to it from their Youth up, that they may be enabled to undergo *Fatigue*, and to gain an honeſt Livelihood by the *Sweat of their Brow*. The richer and better Sort of People are to make Proviſion for their Children, according to the *Rank* and Condition whereunto they are born; and Perſons of high Extraction are to conſider, not only what is neceſſary for a Son, but what is requiſite for the Son of ſuch a Father, and one deſcended from ſuch a *Family*.

Support and Maintenance.

[r] NOR ſhould the Parent's Care only provide for his Children during his own Life, but, as much as in him lies, *afterwards*; eſpecially, when the Neceſſities of his Children (which is the Ground of providing for them) are, after his Deceaſe, like to be greater than they were before. And therefore every Parent ſhould, before he dies, either train up his Children in ſome uſeful Calling and Employment, whereby they may be able to provide for themſelves, (which indeed is an excellent *Portion*), or if that will not ſuffice, or be not ſo ſuitable to their Rank and Condition, provide for them ſuch competent Eſtates, as may ſupport the Dignity of their Family, when they die, and conſiſt with the Rules of Juſtice and Charity to acquire, while they live.

4. ONE Duty more, which Parents owe their Children, is to *ſet them a good Example*. [s] Example is the moſt lively Way of Teaching: And, becauſe Children are much

A good Example.

[m] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [n] Prov. xxx. 8, 9. [o] *Fleetwood*, on the Relative Duties. [p] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. [q] *Fleetwood*, ibid. [r] *Towerſon*, ibid. [s] *Tillotſon*, ibid.

much given to Imitation, it is likewiſe a very delightful Way, and beſt adapted to their *Capacity*, as being ſooneſt underſtood, and fitteſt to make a laſting Impreſſion upon them; and therefore [t] *above all Things*, as the antient Moraliſt expreſſes it, *Parents ought to behave blameleſsly, and ſhew themſelves an evident Example to their Children; that they, looking upon their Lives, as in a Glaſs, may be drawn off from all baſe Actions and Words, and know how to dreſs and compoſe their own Lives by that Mirror.*

An Exhortation to theſe Duties.

THESE are ſome of the chief Duties, which Parents owe to their Children, a ſufficient Maintenance and Proviſion, ſeaſonable Reproof and Correction, a religious Inſtitution, candid Uſage, and a good Example: And to engage the Performance of theſe, let Parents conſider, that ſuch a Form of Education will not only be a great Bleſſing to their Children, and the very beſt Inheritance they can leave them; but a ſtanding Comfort and Conſolation to themſelves, both in this Life, and in that which is to come. *A wiſe Son*, ſays *Solomon*, *maketh a glad Father*. Nothing, certainly, can yield a greater Satisfaction to a Man, than to ſee one, that is ſo near and dear unto him, take good Courſes; and, under God, to be able to impute the Virtue of his Conduct, and the Goodneſs of his Reputation, to the Care he took of him, and the Inſtructions he gave him, when he was young. This certainly muſt fill the Father's Heart with Joy and comfortable Reflections, every Time he looks upon his Son, or hears him mentioned with Praiſe; and when, at any Time, he himſelf comes to want his Aſſiſtance, in the Time of Sickneſs, or Decline of Life, ſurely there is no greater external Comfort in the World, than a good and dutiful Child. [u] He then will be the Light of his Eyes, and the Cordial of his fainting Spirits; and, as he is decaying and withering away, in him he ſhall flouriſh again, and have the Pleaſure to ſee his Youth, as it were, renewed; for ſo the Son of *Syrach* has expreſſed the Comfort, which a good Father has of a well-educated Son; [*] *tho' he die, yet he is as if he were not dead; for he hath left one behind him, that is like himſelf: While he lived, he ſaw and rejoiced in him, and when he died, he was not ſorrowful*; and the Reaſon is, becauſe he was conſcious, that good Children, who, by their Parents Inſtitution became *ſuch*, were not only a preſent Satisfaction, but would be an unſpeakable Matter of Joy to their Parents, in the Life which is to come.

WHEN we come to appear before God, at the Day of Judgment, to be able to ſay to him, *Lo! here am I, and the Children which thou haſt given me*; how will this comfort our Hearts, and make us lift up our Heads with Joy! On the contrary, [x] when God ſhall ariſe terribly to Judgment, and ſhall ſay unto us, *Behold the Children, which I gave you; they were ignorant, and you inſtructed them not; they made themſelves vile, and you reſtrained them not; nay, inſtead of being Teachers and Examples of Holineſs, you were their chief Encouragers and Patterns of Vice. Unnatural Wretches! that have thus deſtroyed thoſe, whoſe Happineſs, by ſo many Bonds of Duty and Affection, you were obliged to procure. Behold the Books are open, and there is not one Prayer upon Record, that ever you put up for your Children; not an Hour ſeriouſly ſpent, in acquainting them with the Knowledge of their Duty; but, on the contrary, it appears that you have many Ways contrived their Miſery, and helped forward their Damnation:* When God, I ſay, ſhall bring this heavy Accuſation againſt us, and our Conſcience, at the ſame Time, bear Teſtimony to the Truth of it, in what a lamentable Condition muſt we be! That therefore, neither our Children may be made miſerable by our Fault, nor we, by the Neglect of ſo natural and neceſſary a Duty, let us all conſider ourſelves, as reſponſible to God for their Education, and, in the Senſe of that terrible Day of Accounts, make it the Matter of our Care and Aſſiduity, *to train them up*, in their tender Years, *in the Way which they ſhould go, that, when they are old, they may not depart from it.*

Sixth Commandment.

Thou ſhalt not kill.

TO *kill*, in the Senſe of this Commandment, is to take away another Man's Life: And, becauſe there are ſome Caſes, wherein another Man's Life may be taken away, without the Violation of this Precept, it may not be improper to ſay Something concerning theſe, before we come to examine into the Nature, the Extent, and ſundry Aggravations of the Crime, that is here forbidden.

IT

[t] Πρὸ πάντων δεῖ τὸν πατέρας ἐναργῆς ἑαυτὸς παράδειγμα τοῖς τέκνοις παρέχειν, &c. *Plut.* Περὶ παιδαγωγῆς. [u] *Tillet-ſon's* Sermons, Vol. I. [*] Eccluſ. xxx. 4, 5. [x] *Tillotſon*, ibid.

Exempted Caſes. Killing *in Execution of Juſtice.*

IT has been the Opinion of ſome, in all Ages of Chriſtianity, that there is a certain Cruelty in all *Capital* Puniſhments, which is inconſiſtent with the Spirit of the *Goſpel*; and that God has ſo abſolutely reſerved to himſelf the Diſpoſal of Man's Life, that the *Civil Magiſtrate*, without an expreſs Commiſſion from him, is not to interfere in it. [a] But when we conſider, that God, in that very Law, which himſelf delivered to the *Jews* by the Hand of *Moſes*, did appoint ſo many *capital* Puniſhments, even for Offences againſt *poſitive* Precepts, we cannot think, that theſe are contrary to Juſtice or true Goodneſs, ſince they were dictated by God himſelf, who is eternally the ſame, and unalterable in his Perfections. The Precedent, which God ſet in the *Moſaick* Law, ſeems to be a full Juſtification of the like Puniſhments under the Goſpel; for the *Charity*, which the Goſpel ſo ſtrongly recommends, does not take away the Rules of Juſtice and Equity, by which we are allowed to maintain our juſt Poſſeſſions, or recover them out of the Hands of violent *Aggreſſors*; only it obliges us to make Uſe of them, in a ſoft and gentle Manner, without Rigour, and without Reſentment. We owe to human Society, and to the Safety and Order of the World, our Endeavours to put a Stop to the Vice and Wickedneſs of Mankind; and this a good Man may do, with great inward Tenderneſs to the Souls of thoſe, whom he proſecutes. And as it is probable, (conſidering the Degeneracy of human Nature) that nothing, beſides ſuch a *Method*, could ſtop the *Progreſs* of Injuſtice and Wickedneſs; ſo nothing can be ſo likely a Means to bring the *Criminal* to repent of his Sins, and fit him to die a Chriſtian, as to condemn him to die for his Crimes; inſomuch, that it may be affirmed with ſome Certainty, that a Man, who can harden himſelf againſt the Terrors of Death, when they come upon him, ſo ſolemnly, ſo ſlowly, and ſo certainly, would ſcarce be brought to any Manner of Reformation by a longer Continuance of Life.

[b] IF then *Government* be the Inſtitution of God, and if the *Ends* of Government cannot be attained, without a Power in the Magiſtrate to inflict *Capital* Puniſhments; which many Times are real Bleſſings to thoſe, on whom they fall; then is there a clear and juſt Foundation for the Claim and Exerciſe of ſuch a Power; in the Caſe of all ſuch Crimes, which the Safety and other Ends of Government require ſhould be puniſhed with Death. For this Reaſon the Magiſtrate, under the Goſpel, as well as under the Law, is *the Miniſter of God, and an Avenger, to execute Wrath upon him that doeth Evil:* [c] And therefore, when he condemneth a Man according to the Directions of the Law, he does it only as *God's Miniſter*, and they who put the Sentence in Execution, do it only in Obedience to the *Authority, that is ſet over them*; nor is either of them guilty of breaking this Command, which looks upon *Killing* as an *exempted* Caſe, where the *Authority* is competent, the *Manner* legal, and the *Perſon*, that is killed, deſerves to die.

An Enemy in Time of War.

2. ANOTHER exempted Caſe is the *Killing* an Enemy in a juſt War. [d] That God has not forbidden *Sovereigns* (in Caſes of Neceſſity, and where amicable Means will not prevail) to maintain the Safety, and Welfare of the Societies, intruſted to their Care, even by armed Violence, againſt ſuch, as wrongfully invade them; [e] nay, that he has allowed Sovereigns to aſſiſt ſuch other *Princes*, as are unjuſtly invaded, and may be devoured by *ambitious* and incroaching Neighbours, is plain from the Laws of Humanity and Self-Preſervation, as well as his Permiſſion and Encouragement given to Wars, in the *Jewiſh* Polity, which he himſelf inſtituted. And that, in ſuch Caſes, a Soldier's Employment is no *illegal* Profeſſion, is manifeſt from the Anſwer, which *John Baptiſt* gives them, wherein he does not require them to relinquiſh their Courſe of Life, (which he certainly would have done, had it been unavoidably ſinful) *but only to do Violence to no Man, to accuſe no Man falſly, and to be content with their Wages.* [f] There are ſome Wars indeed ſo apparently *unjuſt*, that no Subject can abet them with a good Conſcience; but, for the Generality, it is not neceſſary for the Soldier to be convinced of the Juſtneſs of the War, wherein he is engaged: 'Tis enough for him to know, that it is not abſolutely unjuſt, and that he is commanded by his Prince to aſſiſt him in it; and though, by this Means, he may ſometimes be engaged in an unjuſt Quarrel, yet the Blame thereof will not fall upon him, who is neither concerned, nor qualified to judge of it, but upon the Prince, by whoſe Authority the War is levied: Only he is to take Care, that, as his Prince's Commiſſion is his only *Warrant* to concern himſelf with War, ſo his *private* Revenge ſhould not puſh him on to do more Miſchief, than his Prince intended he ſhould do: And if he behaves

[a] *Burnet*, on the Articles. [b] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [c] *Beveridge*'s Explanation of the Church Catechiſm. [d] *Barrow*, on the Decalogue. [e] *Burnet*, ibid. [f] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments.

behaves in this Manner, his killing and ſlaying, upon a juſt Provocation, and according to the eſtabliſhed *Laws of Arms*, will not fall under the Deſign and Meaning of this Prohibition.

In one's neceſſary Defence.

3. ANOTHER exempted Caſe is, when we are conſtrained to kill another in the neceſſary Defence of our own Lives: [g] For *Self-Preſervation* (as we ſuggeſted before) is an inviolable Principle of Nature; and this dictates, that we may repel an Invader, an Aſſailant, an Aſſaſſin, any Man, that intends to bereave us of our Life; and if, in repelling and reſiſting him, it happens that we kill him, the Thing is done in Proſecution of that natural Principle of Self-Preſervation, which makes it not an unlawful Act to take away that Man's Life, who would otherwiſe certainly take away ours by Violence. And as we are permitted to do it, in the neceſſary Defence of our own, ſo may we lawfully do it, in Defence of an innocent Neighbour's Life, againſt any unjuſt Invader. We may kill the Aggreſſor, if we know he comes with an Intention of Murther; and for this [h] we have the Warrant of the Law of God, as well as a Licence from the Law of Reaſon and Nature to ſecure us; and that partly becauſe, in the Caſe of a ſudden Onſet, either upon ourſelves or others, we can have no Recourſe to the ordinary Means of Defence, I mean the *Patronage* of the Magiſtrate; and partly becauſe thoſe, whom God has entruſted with the Power of *Vengeance*, give private Perſons, on ſuch Occaſions, a Licence to ſlay the Invader, and deliver *the Sword* of Juſtice into their Hands.

Chance-Medley.

4. THERE is one exempted Caſe more, which we call *Chance-Medley*, when a Man kills another, without having any Enmity againſt him, or Deſign to do him any Harm: Upon which Occaſion, God appointed [i] Cities of Refuge for the Manſlayer to flee unto; but ſtill with this Reſtriction, that he was to abide there, in Nature of a Priſoner, and not have his perfect Liberty [k] *till the Death of the High-Prieſt*, to put him in Mind, that, though he was not properly guilty of Murther, yet, by being *acceſſary* to another Man's Death, (tho' it was only for Want of due Cure and Conſideration in him) he had contracted ſo much Guilt, that he could not be fully pardoned, but by the Death of JESUS CHRIST, the true *High-Prieſt*. So that from the Whole we may infer, that, he who kills another by Chance or Miſadventure, meaning no Harm; he who kills another in a Way not irregular, as a Miniſter of Juſtice; he who kills another in a lawful War, as a Soldier authorized by a ſovereign Power; or, laſtly, he who kills another in his own juſt and neceſſary Defence, does not lie under the Cenſure of this Law; ſince what he does, he only does as the Inſtrument of God, who is inconteſtably the Lord of Life and Death.

What it properly is.

'TIS not ſimply *killing* then, but killing in a *private* Capacity, and without any legal *Commiſſion*, that is the Subject-Matter of this Prohibibion; in what *Manner* ſoever it be done, whether [l] *precipitately*, or after Deliberation; [m] upon what *Motive* ſoever it be done, whether Hatred, Envy, or Revenge, our preſumed Safety, or pretended Reparation of Honour; and by what *Means* ſoever it be done, whether by direct Violence, or fraudulent Contrivance; in an open, or clandeſtine Manner; immediately by ourſelves, or by Means of others; by adviſing, encouraging, or any wiſe becoming *Inſtrumental* or acceſſary thereunto.

THIS is properly the Sin, which is forbidden; and, though it may admit of Aggravations, according to the Circumſtances of the Dignity, Relation, or Office, that the Sufferer enjoyed, while he lived (as to kill a Father, Mother, or Children, is a more horrid and unnatural, to kill a Magiſtrate, Judge, or publick Miniſter, but eſpecially a King or Prince, is a more flagitious Tranſgreſſion of this Command, than to ſlay a private Perſon, who ſtood in no ſuch Eminence or Relation): Though it admits of Aggravations, I ſay, from theſe and ſeveral other Circumſtances; yet, in itſelf, and abſtractly conſidered, 'tis certainly great and grievous enough.

The Heinouſneſs of it.

'TIS an heinous Offence *againſt God*, as being not only a Violation of his Command, but a Wrong done to his Property, [n] by robbing him of a Child, a Servant, a Subject; one whoſe Life was precious to him, and to whom he had a tender Regard,

[g] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [h] Exod. xxii. 2, 3. [i] Ibid. xxi. 12, 13. Numb. xxxv. 6, &c. [k] Numb. xxxv. 28. [l] Our *Law* diſtinguiſhes between *Manſlaughter* or *ſimple Homicide*, (which is killing another in Heat of Blood, or out of a ſudden Anger) and that which, in a more reſtrained Senſe, is called *Murther*, which (according to our Lawyers) is killing a Man with *Malice prepenſed*, or Forethought: But in *Divinity*, both theſe Methods of killing are *Murther*, and properly ſo called. For though it be true, that this latter Way is more heinous of the two, becauſe Deliberation adds to the Guilt; yet the former is an *unlawful* Killing, and no leſs than *Murther*; becauſe it is a *voluntary* taking away a Man's Life, without juſt Cauſe and Reaſon, without any Neceſſity compelling him to it, and without any Licence from publick Authority. Theſe Things make it an unlawful and ſinful *Shedding of Blood*, though it be not accompanied with Deliberation, and premeditated Malice. *Edwards*, ibid. [m] *Barrow*, on the Decalogue. [n] Ibid.

Regard, as having created him after his own Image: And therefore excellent are thoſe Words of *Philo*, in the Beginning of his Diſcourſe upon this Commandment: [o] *Murther has indeed the Name of Manſlaughter*, ſays he, *becauſe Man is the Perſon ſlain, but it is, in Reality, Sacrilege, and one of the greateſt Sacrileges, becauſe there is not any Thing more ſacred than Man, or what is a more expreſs Image of the divine Reaſon and Perfection.* 'Tis a Sin againſt *Nature*, [p] which has eſtabliſhed a common *Relation* between us; deſigned us for Society, and, in order thereunto, made it one of its *fundamental* Laws, that we ſhould love, and protect, and do good to one another, which Murther totally deſtroys; a Sin againſt the *Civil Society*, by depriving it of one of its *Members*, and, by its evil Example, encouraging others to do the like; a Sin againſt the *Magiſtrate*, by invading his Right and Prerogative, who alone, under God, has the Power of Life and Death; a ſignal Offence againſt the *Relations* of him, who is cut off, who, perhaps, in him loſe all their Support and Comfort of Life; and an irreparable Injury to the *Perſon* himſelf, who by this Stroke loſes, not only the Advantages of this World, but (if ſurprized in his Sins) a Poſſibility of Repentance, and conſequently, all Happineſs in another. And [q] ſurely no one, that has the Bowels of a Man, can think on this without Horror, *viz.* that by this Means, and perhaps without any Provocation, Men are deprived not only of the preſent Life without Remedy, but condemned to endleſs Torment and Perdition.

God's Abhorrence of it,

'Tis Part of the Catholick Law, which God gave the Patriarch *Noah*, [r] *Surely your Blood of your Lives will I require: At the Hand of every Beaſt will I require it, and at the Hand of Man, and at the Hand of every Man's Brother, will I require the Life of Man.* [s] Beaſts indeed are not capable of Sin, becauſe whatever they do, they do it by the Force of that *Natural Inſtinct*, which directs them in all their Actions; and yet, ſo ſacred a Thing is the Life of a Man in the Eyes of God, and ſo ſevere his Reſentment againſt every Thing, that invades it; that, [t] *if an Ox*, (or, by Parity of Reaſon, any other Creature) *gored a Man, that he died, the Ox itſelf* (according to the Law of his own Inſtitution) *was to be ſlain, and the Fleſh thereof caſt away, as an Abomination*; and that even [u] his Altar, which, in other Caſes and Crimes, was a Sanctuary to fly unto, yielded no Shelter and *Protection* to the wilful Murtherer. His Sin was purſued by the avenging Hand of God; which, in all Ages, more viſibly and apparently concerned itſelf in making * wonderful *Diſcoveries* of it, and in bringing the Actors therein to condign Puniſhment. For this, of all other Sins, is the moſt *clamorous*, and calleth loudeſt to Heaven. [x] *The Voice of thy Brother's Blood crieth unto me from the Ground*, ſays God to *Cain*, [y] as if Heaven itſelf had been filled with the Outcries of the Murther, to ſollicit and importune the divine Juſtice to avenge it.

And Uneaſineſs of its Guilt.

WHAT is it then that the Man of Blood promiſes himſelf by committing a Crime of ſuch a *complicated* Guilt? The Gratification of a malicious and revengeful Temper, or the Acquiſition of a little Wealth; are the uſual Baits, which the Devil throws in his Way. But what are theſe to that Dread and Diſtraction of Mind, which will neceſſarily ſeize the Wretch, when he comes to reflect in cold Blood, and his Conſcience begins to murmur and remonſtrate? [z] Other Sins may, in ſome Meaſure, be *palliated*, and the Guilt of them alleviated by Excuſes; but no Man can flatter or excuſe himſelf ſo, as to quiet his Mind, after the Commiſſion of Murther. The Burthen of this confounds and breaks the Mind and Conſcience to Pieces, and fills it ſo full of Horror and Diſturbance, by frightful Remembrances, and continual Repreſentations of the murthered Perſon's Ghoſt, and Cries of his Blood for Vengeance againſt him, that it has, ſometimes, extorted a *Confeſſion*, even when there has been no other Evidence of the Fact; and, many Times, forced the *Guilty* to put an End to the Terrors, he was not able to endure, by becoming his own *Executioner*. So uneaſy is the State of the Murtherer, that, rather than bear the Laſhes of his own Mind, he ventures upon the Pains of Hell!

Self-murther.

How the Opinion has prevail'd, whether from falſe Notions of Courage and Liberty, or [a] from the Examples of ſome great Men of Antiquity, who have unhappily thought

[o] Ὄνομα μὲν ἀνδροφονία κατὰ τὸ κτείναντος ἄνθρωπον ἐπιφημίζεται· τὸ δ' ἀληθὲς ἔργον ἐστὶν ἱεροσυλία, &c. De Spec. Legibus. [p] *Wake*, on the Church Catechiſm. [q] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. [r] Gen. ix. 5. [s] *Towerſon*, ibid. [t] Exod. xxi. 28. [u] Ibid. *ver.* 14. * We have a very odd Diſcovery of this Nature in our Chronicles, which tell us, that, in the ſecond Year of King *James* the Firſt's Reign, when a Woman had killed a Perſon, and buried him under a Dunghill, one of the Town dreamed, that this Man, his Neighbour, was ſtrangled, and buried under ſuch a Dunghill; whereupon the dead Body was found, the Woman apprehended, and at her Execution confeſſed the Fact. *Baker*. [x] Gen. xiv. 10. [y] *Towerſon*, ibid. [z] *Newcomb*'s Catech. Sermons. [a] Among the ancient *Greeks*, *Self-murther* was very frequent, yea their greateſt Philoſophers, ſuch as *Empedocles*, *Chryſippus*, *Cleanthes*, *Zeno*, &c. are Inſtances of it, and among the old *Romans*, *Cato*, and many others. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II.

thought themſelves Maſters of their own Lives; but ſo it is, that ſome have been averſe to believe, that the Sin of *Self-murther* is included in this *Commandment*, and that the rather, becauſe they find no particular Prohibition againſt it in the Word of God. Now the true Reaſon, in the firſt Place, why Self-murther is not expreſsly forbidden in Scripture is this,——[b] That whatever Sins and Offences God, as a Law-giver, prohibits, he prohibits with a *Penalty*; he affixes ſuch a Puniſhment to ſuch a Crime; and he, who commits the Crime, is to undergo the Puniſhment in *this World*, whether it be Reſtitution, Loſs of Limb, or Loſs of Life itſelf. Now this can never happen in the Caſe of *Self-murther*, becauſe it prevents all Puniſhment, (the Man is dead, before you can take Cognizance of his Offence) and therefore prevents all Laws concerning it. In a Word, as no Law can be enacted, to any Purpoſe, without a Penalty, ſo, where there can be no Penalty, there can be no Law: But now *Self-murther* prevents all Penalty; and therefore, as it wants no particular Prohibition, it can only be included under general Commands, and forbidden as a Sin, whereof God alone can take Cognizance in the other World.

Why not expreſsly forbidden.

Included in the Sixth Commandment.

Now that *Self-murther* is included in the *Sixth* Commandment, is evident both from its plain and *literal Senſe*, and the *Reaſon*, which is given to enforce it, in another Place. [c] The Commandment prohibits Murther; and 'tis certainly as much Murther, to kill ourſelves, as to kill another Man. The Reaſon, which the Scripture gives, why we are not allowed to do it, in both Caſes, is the ſame, becauſe [d] *in the Image of God made he Man:* For if I muſt not ſhed the Blood of another Man, becauſe he is *made in the Image of God*, I muſt not ſhed the Blood of my *ownſelf*, becauſe I alſo am a Man, and *made in the Image of God*, as well as he. Nay, the more unnatural the Sin is, or the greater Obligations we have to preſerve the Life of the Perſon, whom we kill, the greater is the Breach of this Commandment. [e] To murther a kind Friend, or a bounteous Benefactor, is a greater Evil, than to murther one, who is a Stranger to us; to murther a Parent or a Child, a Wife or an Huſband, is ſtill a greater Evil, becauſe they are ſo much nearer to ourſelves; and if the Nearneſs of the Relation increaſes the Sin, No-body is ſo near to us, as ourſelves, and therefore there is no ſuch *unnatural* Murther, as this.

Its Heinouſneſs.

BESIDES all the Guilt then, which attends *ſimple* Murther, as being a Breach of God's Command, a Deſtruction of his Image, an Offence againſt the Community, and an Injury to the Kindred and Dependents of the Sufferer; there is ſomething in this Sin, not only abhorrent to the Principle of Self-Love and Self-Preſervation, but monſtrouſly cruel and deſtructive: Since, by making Repentance impoſſible, (unleſs Men can be ſuppoſed to repent of a Sin, before they have committed it) it takes an effectual Courſe to ruin and undo both Soul and Body together. What *Allowances* God may make for ſome Mens Opinions of the Lawfulneſs of this Deed, and for the *Diſtraction* of other Mens Thoughts and Paſſions, through a ſettled *Melancholy*, or ſome violent and over-bearing Temptation, we cannot tell; our Buſineſs is not to *limit* the ſovereign *Prerogative* and Grace of God, but to declare the Nature of the Thing, according to the Terms of the Goſpel, which certainly denote, that to murther ourſelves is the moſt unnatural Murther, a damning Sin, and ſuch as no Man can repent of in this Life; [f] and therefore unleſs God forgive it without Repentance, (and this the Goſpel of Chriſt gives us no Authority for) it can never be forgiven. The Goſpel-Grace, which only forgives *Penitents*, cannot ſave ſuch Men; and therefore that Man is very bold, and preſumes very far upon unpromiſed and *uncovenanted* Mercy, who will venture to commit a Sin, which the Grace of the Goſpel cannot pardon.

The final State of thoſe that commit it.

IF however we will determine the Queſtion more *peremptorily*, the different Fate of ſuch, as deſtroy themſelves, ſeems, in a great Meaſure, to depend upon the Difference of the Cauſe, from whence the Fact ariſes; [g] inſomuch, that thoſe, who out of Pride and Haughtineſs, Fear of Miſeries to come, or Impatience under preſent Sufferings, Diſtruſt of God's Providence, or Deſpair of his Mercy, lay violent Hands upon themſelves, give us not the leaſt Hope of their Salvation, becauſe their Act was both *voluntary* and *vicious*, and not to be amended by Repentance; whereas we are to conceive much better of ſuch, as owe that Violence to a *diſtempered* Body and a *diſordered* Mind. For, conſidering the Mercy and infinite Goodneſs of God, it is moſt congruous to think, that no Man ſhall anſwer for any Miſcarriage, that is wholly cauſed by the Power of a Diſeaſe, or the Diſtraction of the Brain; the Reaſon is,

[b] *Fleetwood*, againſt Self-murther. [c] *Fleetwood*, ibid. and *Kidder*'s Demonſtration, p. 137. [d] Gen. ix. 6.
[e] *Sherlock*, on Death. [f] Ibid. [g] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II.

is, becauſe whatever Fault is committed in ſuch a Caſe, is not a Man's free and voluntary Act, and, conſequently, not to be charged upon him.

[i] WHETHER it be our Climate, our Diet, our Complexion, or Manner of Life, that produces more Matter for *Melancholy* to feed upon; but ſo it is, that this Nation of ours furniſhes, almoſt every Day, more Examples of violent and unnatural Deaths, than any other of its Extent, perhaps under the Face of Heaven. And therefore I cannot, with Decency, part with this Subject, without ſuggeſting ſome farther Conſiderations againſt it: That how well ſoever we may think of thoſe ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*, who either fell by their own Hands, or, in their Writings, defended the Practice; yet, if we examine their Character, we ſhall find, that they either were *Atheiſts*, or Men that believed in ſo many Gods, as almoſt came to the ſame Thing, and that, conſequently, their Example is no Precedent to us, who believe in the one true God, the ſole Author and Giver of our Lives, and, upon that Account, cannot ſuppoſe ourſelves at Liberty to throw them away at Pleaſure, and without his Direction: That whatever Pretence, [k] their *Withdrawing from Life* (as they uſed to call it) might make to *Magnanimity* and Courage; it was, in Reality, no more, than an Effect of Fear and Cowardice, and [l] a Mark of a poor impatient Spirit, that ſunk under the common Calamities of Life, and knew not how to bear Misfortunes: That, as we are *Men*, we are born to Sorrow, *as the Sparks fly upwards*, and muſt not therefore expect more from Life, than what is in it; that, as we are *Chriſtians*, we have the Promiſe of God, that [m] *he will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the Temptation alſo make a Way to eſcape, that we may be able to bear it*; that, as the *Soldiers of Chriſt*, we are to bear Afflictions manfully, [n] and not deſert the Station which our great Commander has given us to maintain; and as *Poſſeſſors* of immortal Souls, to make the Conſideration of their Fate deter us from doing any Thing, that may endanger their eternal Welfare. *Farther Conſiderations againſt it.*

AN ignorant *Heathen*, that thought this Life the only one, he was to experience, and Death the Expiration of his *Being* and Sorrows together, might think of diſpatching himſelf without much Inconſiſtency; but [o] that a *Chriſtian*, who believes a God, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Life of the World to come; that the *Divine Wrath is revealed againſt all Unrighteouſneſs*; that without Repentance there is no Pardon, and that after Death there can be none: That ſuch a Man as this, profeſſing the Faith of Chriſt *crucified*, and covenanting with God, in Baptiſm, to *take up the Croſs*, and bear it, if Need be, even unto Death, ſhould, in the Impatience of his Soul, and preſſed by ſome Calamity a little more than ordinary, deliberately chuſe to throw this Burthen off, by committing what he knows to be a Sin, of which he knows he can never repent, and venture the moſt dreadful Conſequences of *that*, to everlaſting Ages, is what Nobody would ever reaſon themſelves into a Belief of, did not the frequent Practice of ſome unhappy People convince us, that it *might* be done, by letting us ſee it *was*. [p] Did but Men ſeriouſly conſider this, however, it is impoſſible that the greateſt Shame, Infamy, Want, or Suffering, or whatever it is, that makes Men weary of Life, ſhould be thought ſo intolerable, as to make them force their Paſſage into the other World, to eſcape it, when ſuch a *violent* and *unnatural* Eſcape will coſt them their Souls, and conſign them to the Wrath of God, and Miſeries inconceivable, as long as God endures. *More eſpecially Chriſtian.*

ANOTHER Practice, which falls under this Prohibition of *Murther*, and yet has run away with the Vogue of ſomething gallant and honourable, is *Duelling*: For when Men have ſuch a Reſentment of Injuries and Affronts, as to revenge themſelves with their Swords, and to venture killing, or being killed, in the Deciſion of their Quarrel, they certainly have the Hearts of *Murtherers*; they would kill if they could, at leaſt would venture killing their Brother, to appeaſe their Reſentment: And therefore if ſuch Men fall in the Quarrel (as too frequently they do) without Time to aſk God's *Duelling.*

[i] *Fleetwood*, againſt Self-murther. [k] Εὐλόγως τὶ φάσιν ἐξαξειν ἑαυτὸν τῆ βίῳ τὸν σοφὸν. *Laërt. in Zen.* and to the ſame Purpoſe *Seneca: Exerce te ut mortem excipias, & ſi ita res ſuadebit, accerſas. Intereſt nihil, an illa ad nos veniat, an ad illam nos.* Epiſt. 70. [l] Si Rationem rectiùs conſulas, nec ipſa quidem animi magnitudo rectè nominatur, ubi quiſque, non valendo tolerare vel quæque aſpera, vel aliena peccata, ſeipſum interemerit: Magis enim mens infirma deprehenditur, quæ ferre non poteſt vel duram ſui corporis ſervitutem, vel ſtultam vulgi Opinionem; majorque animus meritò dicendus, qui vitam ærumnoſam magis poteſt ferre, quam fugere, *Aug. de Civit. Dei*, Lib. I. c. 22.

Rebus in anguſtis facile eſt contemnere vitam,
Fortiter ille facit, qui miſer eſſe poteſt. —— MART. *Epig.*

[m] 1 Cor. x. 13. [n] Vetat Pythagoras injuſſu Imperatoris, *i. e.* Dei, de præſidio & ſtatione vitæ diſcedere, CIC. *de Senect.* [o] *Fleetwood*, ubi ſupra. [p] *Sherlock*, on Death.

Pardon with their last Breath, they die under the Guilt of Murther unrepented of. Tho' they do not kill, but are killed, they die with a mortal Hatred and Revenge, and [s] *he that hateth his Brother*, says St *John*, *is a Murtherer*; *and as we know that no Murtherer hath eternal Life abiding in him*, we cannot but conclude, that whatever fine Names, or plausible Descriptions the Laws of Honour may have made of such Actions, he that kills another in a Duel, tho' he gets a Pardon of his Prince, will be arraigned, at the last Day, among the *Murtherers*, who *shall have their Portion in the Lake, which burneth with Fire and Brimstone*.

Excuses. I KNOW very well what is usually pleaded in Defence of this Practice; "That "'tis impossible to live in the World without Injuries, but base and inglorious not to "resent them; that to decline a *Challenge* favours of *Cowardice*, and to put up Affronts "is unbecoming a Man of Honour: 'Tis a Sign of a low and abject Spirit; and no "Man that has any generous Blood in his Veins, (unless he would have him tram-*Answered.* "pled upon) would ever advise his Friend to do it." [t] Thus a false Notion of Honour and Bravery deludes the *Duellists* into a dreadful Action, which, by long Impunity, is become reputable, and the Refusal to engage in it ignominious; as if every Affront unrevenged drew upon a Man, that wears a Sword, the Imputation of Cowardice; [u] or, as if that could be an honourable Atchievement, which the *Civil* Magistrate punishes, as a *Capital* Crime, and Almighty God threatens with Damnation.

BUT whatever high Pretences of Honour the Practice of *Duelling* may make, 'tis much to be feared, that Drinking, Gaming, and Whores, are those rotten Bones, (as * an ingenious Author expresses) which, for the most Part, lie hid under this *painted Sepulchre* and Title of Honour: Or, if this be not the Case, it may not be improper to consider, that this Custom of Fighting is of *heathenish* Extract, and [a] derived from those barbarous Nations, who, in any dubious and controverted Matter, were appointed by their Governors to decide it by single Combat; but that, as *Christianity* prevailed, the Custom was laid aside, as *savage* and inhuman, and such as died in the Enterprize, were denied Christian Burial; that, according to the Sentiments and Decision of the best Judges of Honour and Generosity, † there is no Disgrace in refusing a Challenge, or turning it off with a just Contempt; that when *Augustus* was challenged by *Mark Antony*, he returned him in Answer, that *if* Antony *was weary of Life, and had a mind to die, there were Ways enough to Death without Duelling*; and that, in short, instead of being a Disparagement to a Person of Honour, to pardon Injuries and Affronts, 'tis an Argument of a great and generous Mind, and a true Proof of Christian Gallantry, so to do. The Sentiment of the [x] heathen Moralist is very just upon this Occasion, "We ought to despise Calumnies and Injuries, *says he*, "whether they be offered to us deservedly or not: If *deservedly*, they are no Dis-"honour and Reproach; if *undeservedly*, then are they a Shame and Reproach to "him, that offered them, not to him that bears them." But Christian Morality carries the Point much higher: [y] *Be angry and sin not, let not the Sun go down upon your Wrath, neither give Place to the Devil: Be not overcome of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good*; for this is the Will of God concerning us, [z] that *being reviled, we should bless*; *being persecuted, we should suffer*; *being defamed, we should intreat*, and not let go our Patience and Meekness of Temper, tho' some reproachful and abusive Tongues may endeavour to make us *the Filth of the World, and Off-scouring of all Things*.

To refuse a Challenge not dishonourable.

Causeless Anger, and reproachful Language.

OUR blessed Master, in the Explication he gives us of this Prohibition, has extended the Sense of it still farther; [a] *Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old Time, thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill, shall be in Danger of the Judgment: But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his Brother without a Cause, shall be in Danger of the Judgment, and whosoever shall say to his Brother,* [b] RACA, *shall be in Danger*

[s] 1 John iii. 15. [t] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [u] *Spectator*, No. 85. and 98. where the Sin and Madness of this Practice is handsomely exposed. * Dr. *Waugh*'s Assize Sermon at *Kingston*, 1717. [a] *Hale*'s Sermon, on Duels, page 95. of his Remains. [a] The *Northern Inhabitants* used to try their Rights to their Estates and Goods by single Combat: The *Germans*, about the Tenth Century, purged their Innocence, and ended their Quarrels this Way; for he that was worsted, was always held the guilty Person: And, upon the *Conquest* here, the *Normans* renewed this Way of Trial, but it was soon disused, and deemed unchristian. † To this Purpose we read, that the *French* King *Francis* I. gave the Emperor *Charles* V. the Lye, and challenged him to fight; but the Emperor (and we know what a Warrior, and Man of Arms and Honour he was) refused it. Nor do we want a later Instance in the Marshal *Turenne*, who, though a professed Soldier, and Man of Honour, refused the Challenge to a single Combat, given him by the Prince *Palatine* of the *Rhine*. [x] *Seneca*. [y] Eph. iv. 26. [z] 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. [a] Matth. v. 21. 22. [b] The Word *Raca* is used to signify a *silly, vain, contemptible* Fellow, and denote some Imperfection in Mind or Body; and the Word *Fool*, in Scripture-Language, does usually represent to us a *very wicked* and *abandoned* Sinner; which Term of Reproach is more heinous than the other, as it is a worse Evil to be *wicked*, than *unfortunate*, and to lead a bad Life, than to have a weak Understanding. *Gardiner*'s Sermons.

Danger

Danger of the Council, but whoſoever ſhall ſay, thou FOOL, *ſhall be in Danger* [c] *of Hell-Fire:* Whereby he gives us to underſtand, that all unreaſonable and exceſſive *Paſſion*, all abuſive and cenſorious *Language*, all *Looks* and Geſtures of Scorn and Ridicule, and whatever elſe it is, whereby we mean to expoſe and vilify our Neighbour, falls under the ſixth Commandment, *thou ſhalt not kill.*

[d] THE Foundation of Miſchief and the Seeds of Violence are laid in the firſt Emotions of the Soul; nor is there much Ground to believe, that they, who indulge the *Beginnings* of Paſſion, will be diſpoſed, out of any true Principle, to prevent the fatal *Conſequences* of it. But admitting they were ſo diſpoſed, yet, when the Fire is kindled, every Thing helps to blow it up, and it may not afterwards be in their Power to get it under, would they never ſo fain. [e] *The Beginning of Strife* (as *Solomon* wiſely obſerves) *is, as when one letteth out Water:* As long as the Dams and Banks are well fenced, it runs in the proper Channel; but when once theſe give Way, a Stream, otherwiſe ſmall, bears down all before it, and makes a vaſt Inundation. Thus one Reſentment opens the Paſſage to a greater, and one Word draws on another, till at laſt all end in Revenge and Blood. They, therefore, that attend to the Conſtitution of Mankind, and how the ſenſual Part and Paſſions of the Soul puſh us upon all Manner of Extravagance, cannot but ſee the Neceſſity of keeping a ſtrait Rein, and that the only Way to govern theſe, is to prevent their flying out at firſt. And they, who reflect upon *Anger* in particular; how this, above all other Paſſions, blinds the Reaſon, and carries the Man out of himſelf; what Furies and Devils it makes, where it hath got Poſſeſſion; what Heart-burnings and Contentions, what Tumult and Confuſion it creates; muſt needs allow, that the Peace and Safety of the World could never be ſecured, but by cruſhing this venomous *Cockatrice* in the Egg. Religion therefore had not anſwered its End, nor been a competent Guard to human Society, without leaving Men anſwerable for the very Tendencies and Occaſions, and for wilfully taking the firſt Steps towards ſuch pernicious Wickedneſs. For the Hands of Men could not be tied up from Cruelty, without tying up their Tongues from Exaſperation and Bitterneſs; nor could their Tongues again be with-held from *Evil-ſpeaking*, without a Reſtraint from *Evil-thinking*, laid upon that Part, [f] *out of whoſe Abundance* it is that *the Mouth ſpeaketh.*

IT is to be obſerved however, [g] that, as *Anger* is one of the Paſſions implanted in us by Nature, whoſe firſt Motions ſeem to be mechanical, and to depend upon the Temper of the Body, and Complexion of the *animal Spirits*, it cannot be altogether ſinful; nay, that there are ſome *Caſes*, wherein the Honour of God and the Love of Virtue are concerned, in which to be angry is not only an innocent, but a commendable Accompliſhment. The Example of *Moſes*, that Man of Meekneſs, [h] *whoſe Anger waxed hot* at the molten Calf, which the *Iſraelites* had made to diſhonour God and themſelves, in the Wilderneſs: The Example of our bleſſed Saviour, the exact Model of all Perfection, who was not only *grieved*, but *looked upon the Phariſees with Anger, becauſe of the Hardneſs of their Hearts*, juſtify ſome Reſentments of this Kind, where the Glory of God, and the Good of others is the Occaſion; and that Precept of St *Paul*'s, *be angry and ſin not*, ſeems to imply, that they may be warrantable, even with Regard to *private* Injuries and Affronts, provided always, that due Care be taken to reſtrain their *Exceſſes*, and to conquer and ſubdue them by Times. *Anger, when lawful.*

UPON ſome Occaſions, and in ſome Degrees then, our Anger may be lawful; and therefore it is not an Anger of this Kind, that our Saviour brands with the Imputation of *Murther*, but 'tis an Anger, that is *without Cauſe*, and [i] ſuch as Men fly out into upon little or no Provocation; when for meer Trifles, for any Thing, for nothing; for groundleſs Suſpicions, and jealous Whimſies of their own, they work themſelves up to all the Extravagances of Rage and Paſſion: when they ſwell and grow *cholerick*, [k] becauſe their Honour and Reputation is touched, or other ſecular Intereſt not promoted, *When not ſo.*

[c] Among the *Jews* there were three Degrees of publick Infamy, according to the Nature of the Puniſhments inflicted on Men for their Crimes. If an Offender was brought before *the Court of three and twenty*, (which in the Text, is called *being in Danger of the Judgment*) and there condemned, he was accounted *infamous*, but his Diſgrace was in a lower Degree: If he were brought before the *Sanhedrim*, or great Senate of the Nation, conſiſting of LXX Elders, (which is *being in Danger of the Council*) and they by them adjudged to Death; his Diſgrace was greater: But if, laſtly, he was condemned to be burnt in the Valley of *Hinnom*, or *Tophet*, where was a perpetual Fire to conſume all the Filth, and whatever was offenſive and naſeous in *Jeruſalem*, and which the *Jews* themſelves looked upon as an Emblem of Hell, the Infamy was the greateſt of all. In Alluſion therefore to theſe three Degrees of Infamy among the *Jews*, our Saviour ſhews, that there will be different Kinds of Puniſhment for the ſeveral Degrees of Anger and Virulence, in the World to come. *Hornick*'s Sermons, and *Whitby*'s Annotations.

[d] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III. [e] Prov. xvii. 14. [f] *Stanhope*, ibid. [g] Ibid.
[h] Exod. xxxii. 19. [i] *Hornick*'s Sermons. [k] *Stanhope*, ibid.

moted, as they expected; when they diſorder themſelves, becauſe their vain Deſires are not cockered, or ſomething that gratifies their Luſts is with-held from them; when they fret and become uneaſy, that ſuch a Perſon has not given them the Title and Reſpect, they looked for; when they are ruffled with the Reproofs of a *Teacher*, or the Admonitions of a *Friend*, and grow hot and outrageous, becauſe every one in Company cannot give into their Sentiments, or conform to their Humour: When, in theſe or ſuch like Caſes, a Man feels himſelf to be provoked above Meaſure, and ſuffers his Reſentment to reſt upon his Mind, and ſettle into ſecret *Grudges*, he then is guilty of the *Murther of the Heart*, and lives *in Danger of the Judgment*.

Reproachful Words, when lawful.

IT is to be obſerved again, with Relation to our *Saviour*'s Words, that Terms of *Diſparagement* and *Reproach* are not *univerſally*, and upon all Occaſions, unlawful. From the Mouth of a *Superior* they are often of Uſe, ſometimes of Neceſſity, to awaken ſtupid Men, and to make them, at once, both ſenſible and aſhamed of their Folly; to expoſe the Abſurdity of pernicious Opinions, and the flagrant Enormity of wicked Practices. Thus the very Term of *Fool* is applied, by *David* and *Solomon*, to the obſtinate Sinner, Times without Number; as that of *Raca* is, by St *James*, [l] *to ſuch as reſted upon Faith, without Works*: [m] *A Child of the Devil*, is the Appellation which St *Paul* gives *Eliphaz* the Sorcerer; [n] *a Generation of Vipers*, is the *Baptiſt*'s Character of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and a greater than all theſe, even the Pattern and Perfection of all Meekneſs, is not, upon ſome Occaſions, aſhamed to call them [o] *Fools*, and *blind*, *Hypocrites*, and *Children of Hell*. Theſe Inſtances make it plain, that Words of Reproach are, in ſome Cases, *allowable*, where Charity is at the Bottom, and an high Authority in the Reprover gives ſuch Language Countenance. But ſuch Examples are not to be drawn into Precedents, without great Caution, and almoſt abſolute Neceſſity: Otherwiſe, when we intend not the Party's or the Publick's Good by thus rouſing and expoſing him, but do it purely to vent a Rage, which boils over, and to do all the Miſchief, that ill Words can do; when, upon every ſlight Provocation, or preſumed Affront, we run into ſuch contumelious and reproachful Language, as is contrived only to ſpit the Venom of a furious undiſciplined Mind, out of a filthy and licentious Tongue, *ſhooting out our Arrows, even bitter Words*, (without any Regard to Truth) to gall our Enemy, and wound his Reputation; we then become guilty of the *Murther of the Tongue*, and live *in Danger of the Council, and Hell-Fire*.

When not ſo.

The Murther of the Soul.

I MENTION but one Sin more, which ſeems to come within the Compaſs of this Prohibition, and that is, the Murther of our Neighbour's *Soul*. [p] For tho' the Soul be naturally immortal, and ſo incapable of ceaſing to be; yet, ſince it may be robbed of its Comforts, and made more miſerable, than if it were not at all; ſince, by the intoxicating Pleaſures of Sin, it may loſe all its Feeling, and be deprived of its ſpiritual Life; it may at leaſt, in a *metaphorical Senſe*, be ſaid to be *murthered*; and God, who, in his Commandment, has taken ſuch Care for the Security of the Body, cannot be ſuppoſed to have excluded or omitted the Safety of the Soul, which is by much the better and more valuable Part, as well as liable to greater and more imminent Dangers. For there are many Ways, whereby the Souls of Men may be undone, [q] by poiſoning them with wicked Principles; by ſuggeſting evil Counſels; by tempting them to Wickedneſs; by ſetting them bad Examples; by with-holding ſuch good Advice, as is neceſſary for their Preſervation; by uſing, in ſhort, any Means to induce them to Sin, and by not uſing all of thoſe Means, which are in our Power, to reclaim them from it. 'Tis the Admonition of St *Paul*; *Take heed, leſt by any Means, this Liberty of yours (viz.* in Things of an indifferent Nature) *become a Stumbling-Block to them that are weak. For if any Man ſee thee, which haſt Knowledge, ſit at Meat in the Idol's Temple, ſhall not the Conſcience of him that is weak, be emboldened to eat thoſe Things, which are offered to Idols? And through thy Knowledge ſhall the weak Brother periſh, for whom Chriſt died? But when ye ſin ſo againſt the Brethren, and wound their weak Conſciences, ye ſin againſt Chriſt.* [r] Nor if thoſe, who do Things, in themſelves innocent, are ſaid *to lay a Stumbling-Block* in the Way of ſuch, as, thro' Weakneſs, may take Occaſion from thence to do Things forbidden; if they are accuſed *of ſinning againſt Chriſt, of ſinning againſt their Brethren, of wounding their Conſciences*, and of *deſtroying their Brethren, for whom Chriſt died*: How much

[l] James ii. 20. [m] Acts xiii. 10. [n] Matth. iii. 7. [o] Ibid. xxiii. 15, 16. [p] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. [q] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [r] Ibid.

much more deſervedly may this Accuſation be brought againſt ſuch, as lay *Stumbling-Blocks* in the Ways of others, by doing Actions, and propagating Notions notoriouſly and confeſſedly ſinful; and how juſtly may they be charged with being *Coadjutors* to *Satan*, who was *a Murtherer from the Beginning*, in compaſſing the Deſtruction of the Souls, as well as *Copartners* with him, in thoſe Things, which other Men commit, through their Inſtigation?

THESE are ſome of the Sins, together with the Springs, and Paſſions, that engage us in them (ſuch as Pride and Covetouſneſs, Luſt and Jealouſy, Malice and Revenge) forbid in this Commandment; and the *poſitive* Duties, which it requires of us, [t] are, to do all we can for the Safety and Preſervation of our own and our Neighbours Life; if they are ſick, to adviſe and aſſiſt them with our Money and our Service; if they are well, to prevent their Quarrels, and make up their Differences; if they are needy, to feed and cloath them; if we have injured them, to make them all reaſonable Satisfaction; if they have injured us, freely to forgive them; if they are good Men, to encourage them in the Ways of Virtue; if they are bad, to endeavour to reclaim them; [u] *putting on Bowels of Mercies* (as the Apoſtle's Exhortation is) *Kindneſs, Humbleneſs of Mind, Meekneſs, Long-ſuffering, forbearing and forgiving*, and [u] *reſtoring one another in the Spirit of Meekneſs, conſidering ourſelves, leſt we alſo be tempted.* *Poſitive Duties included.*

Seventh Commandment.

Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery.

THE Word *Adultery*, in this Commandment, muſt be underſtood * in its moſt *extenſive* Signification, as including all Acts of Uncleanneſs, under this *groſſeſt* and moſt pernicious Inſtance of it: And therefore, after we have conſidered the Nature and Flagitiouſneſs of this in particular, we ſhall take a *Curſory* View of the *reſt*, and ſo proceed to treat of them all together.

ADULTERY is properly a Violation of the Marriage-Bed, when either one, or both of the married Parties commit *Folly in Iſrael*, either with a Perſon married to another, or with one, that is not married. *Cuſtom* indeed, which gives a Currency to Words, has, in a Manner, appropriated the Title of *Adultery* to the Falſeneſs of the Wife, and the Wickedneſs of him, who deludes her to it; but, [x] ſince the Terms of the *Matrimonial Covenant* are equally obligatory, and the Wife, according to the divine *Charter*, has no leſs *Power over her Huſband's Body*, than her Huſband has over her's; the Huſband's Offence muſt be equally chargeable with the Violation of the Contract, which was mutual; and, conſequently, with the Sin of Adultery; though it cannot be denied, but that the *Conſequences* of the Wife's Perfidiouſneſs are much more fatal. *Adultery, what.*

IT can hardly be thought, but that the Solemnity of the Rite of *Marriage*, which was inſtituted by God in the State of Man's Innocence, ſhould make every Infraction of it deteſtable, did not the ſhameleſs Iniquity of the Age ſeem to make nothing of it, unleſs it be, now and then, to furniſh out a Subject for Banter and Ridicule. But, (to conſider the Thing, *with relation to the married Parties*) [y] Is it nothing, nay rather, is it not a Crime of a very flagitious Nature, to deſpiſe the *Inſtitution* of Almighty God, and to make a *Separation* there, where he intended the ſtricteſt *Unity*? Is it nothing, to violate that Faith, without which the Peace of Families, and, in them the Peace of human Societies, cannot ſubſiſt? Is it nothing, to rob one another of that Comfort and Communion, which they have ſo mutually, and ſo inſeparably made over, that there's no transferring it elſewhere? Is it nothing, to give the greateſt Occaſion to Grief and Uneaſineſs, the greateſt Temptation to Malice and Revenge, where Love and Tenderneſs only ſhould interfere; and where the greateſt Honour ſhould be ſhewn, there to expoſe each other to Reproach and Infamy, to their Rival's Scorn, as well as the Drunkard's Jeſt? And, laſtly, is it nothing, *on the Man's Part*, to divert his Subſtance from its proper Channel, to the Maintenance of a ſtrange Woman, and the Product of her Luſt; *And, on the Woman's*, to make a Baſtard-Brood inherit *The Heinouſneſs of it.*

[t] *Wake*, on the Church Catechiſm. [u] Col. iii. 12, *&c.* [u] Gal. vi. 1. * The *original* Word, which our Tranſlators reſtrain to *committing Adultery*, comprizes all Kinds of Lewdneſs; and even μοιχᾶσθαι, in the *Greek*, imports, not only *Adultery*, in the ſtricteſt Senſe, but Fornication likewiſe. *Edwards's* Body of Divinity, Vol. II. and *Horneck's* Sermons, Vol. II. [x] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. [y] Ibid.

inherit the Eſtate of the *legitimate*, and, by her looſe Conduct, to bring thoſe, that are legitimate, under the general Suſpicion and Neglect of their Father; to ſay nothing of the Profanation of the greateſt *Myſtery* of our holy Religion, even the Union of Chriſt and his Church, which is *repreſented* by Marriage? Men may extenuate this Sin, as they pleaſe, ſcorn the Shame, and ſtupify the Senſe of it, as *Solomon* brings in the adulterous Woman, * *wiping her Mouth, and ſaying, what Evil have I done?* But he, that conſiders Things without Prejudice, muſt needs conclude, that the Crime muſt be very black, and the Falſhood very foul, which is the unhappy Parent of ſo much Injuſtice, Fraud, and Cruelty, Breach of Oath, and Breach of Modeſty, and what brings Ruin and Deſtruction upon ſo many worthy Families.

NOR is the Sin leſs, if we conſider it, *with Relation to ſuch as tempt others to violate their conjugal Faith.* For, beſides that they give Occaſion to all the Evils, which are the Conſequents of the married Perſon's Falſhood; they not only injure the Woman, [z] by engaging her in a Courſe of Injuſtice and Perjury, wherein ſhe may continue to the End of her Days perhaps, and then certainly to the Ruin of her immortal Soul; [a] but do the greateſt Wrong to the Man, by depriving him of that Love and Affection, to which both divine and human Laws have given him an unalienable Right, and wherein perhaps he places the chief of his Contentment and Felicity.

The Danger of it. The Misfortune is, that, though this be one of the greateſt, and moſt irreparable Wrongs, that can be done to any Man, yet ſuch is the Humour of this wicked Generation, that it is leaſt of all commiſerated. The *Adulterer* applauds himſelf, and makes it a Matter of his *Triumph* and happy Acquiſition; and the World is generally malicious enough to impute it to ſome hidden *Default*, and throw the Blemiſh upon the Sufferer's Reputation; and therefore well it were, if (where all Senſe of Injury fails) the Fear of Puniſhment, which, by the *Jewiſh* Law, was [b] *Capital*, with us is *Penal*, [c] in the primitive Times was hardly *pardonable*, and, [d] even among Heathen Nations, has been attended with Circumſtances, more terrible than Death itſelf; nay, well it were, if the *Terrors of the Lord*, who has threatened to maintain the Honour of his own Inſtitution, and all bold Contemners of it [e] *to exclude from the Kingdom of Heaven*; would reſtrain Men from a Sin, which involves them in endleſs Snares and Troubles, the Sufferance of Affronts, Agonies of Fear, and Amazements of Diſcovery; which waſtes the Subſtance, blaſts the Reputation, very often ſears the Conſcience under a State of *final* Impenitence here, and (without great Regret, and a very ſevere Repentance) [f] *leads down to the Chambers of Death and Hell hereafter:* So true is that of the wiſe Man, [g] *whoſo committeth Adultery, lacketh Underſtanding: He that doth it, deſtroyeth his own Soul: A Wound and Diſhonour ſhall he get, and his Reproach ſhall not be wiped away.*

Other Kinds of Uncleanneſs. IT will not, I hope, be expected, that we ſhould deſcend to a *minute* Examination of the Sin of *Polygamy*, *Fornication*, *Concubinage*, *Rape*, *Inceſt*, *Self-Pollution*, ſuch *exceſſive* and preternatural Luſt, as either is tranſacted between any Perſon and a Beaſt, or between two Perſons of the ſame Sex; for which the Names of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* are only remembered, as juſtly deſtroyed, by the divine Vengeance, for their horrid *Obſcenity*. What can hardly be mentioned without a *Bluſh*, cannot well be explained with *Decency:* And therefore (to comprize them all under the general Head of *Uncleanneſs*, and treat of them in Scripture-Language, which is ſingularly chaſte and modeſt) [h] *Let Fornication and all Uncleanneſs not once be named among you, as becometh Saints; neither Filthineſs, nor fooliſh Talking, nor Jeſting, which are not convenient. For this ye know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean Perſon, hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of Chriſt and of God: Let no Man deceive you with fair Words,* (let *Wits* ſay what they will, in Defence or Mitigation of this Crime) *ye know, that, becauſe of theſe Things, cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Diſobedience.*

The Judgments of God upon them. For did not he, before the Law, deſtroy the *Cities of the Plain*, and [i] *ſet them forth for an Example*, making them, in ſome Senſe, a Figure and Repreſentation of Hell, even *becauſe they gave themſelves up to Fornication, and going after ſtrange Fleſh?* Did not he, under the Law, command the Rulers and Princes of *Iſrael* to be [k] *hung up againſt the Sun*, becauſe they themſelves *committed Whoredom with the Daughters of Moab*, or connived at thoſe that did ſo? And does not he, under the Goſpel, declare,

* Prov. xxx. 20. [z] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [a] *Fidder*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II.
[b] Lev. xx. 10. [c] *Cave*'s Primitive Chriſtianity. [d] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. [e] 1 Cor. vi. 9, *&c. and* Gal. v. 19, 21. Heb. xiii. 4. [f] Prov. v. 5. [g] Ibid. vi. 32, 33. [h] Eph. v. 3, *&c.*
[i] Jud. *ver.* 7. [k] Numb. xxv. 1, *&c.*

declare, (charging us at the ſame Time *not to be deceived*) that [l] *neither Fornicators, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abuſers of themſelves with Mankind, ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God?*

Their Repugnancy to Chriſtianity.

[m] THE *Jews* indeed, with their falſe *Gloſſes* and *Interpretations*, adulterated this very Command, and gave a great Latitude to Luſt and Laſciviouſneſs; among the *Gentiles*, not only their *Poets* repreſented their Gods in a lewd and wanton Dreſs, but even [n] ſome of the greateſt and graveſt of their *Philoſophers* favoured Incontinence both in Men and Women; and 'tis too well known, that the *Mahometan* Religion is the great *Miſtreſs* and *Patroneſs* of Uncleanneſs, inſomuch, that the chief Part of its Heaven and Paradiſe is placed in *carnal* Embraces: But the Religion, we profeſs, is of a quite different Complexion; it allows of none of theſe Things, but enjoins the moſt ſpotleſs Purity both of Body and Soul. *We are not called to Uncleanneſs, but unto Holineſs*, and are therefore required, not only [o] *to abſtain from fleſhly Luſts, which war againſt the Soul*; but to [p] *mortify our Members, which are upon Earth, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affection, and evil Concupiſcence*; not only [q] *to flee Fornication*, and to have no Familiarity with any immodeſt Perſon, but even to carry our Niceneſs ſo far, as not to *touch a Garment polluted with the Fleſh*; to keep our Body in Subjection to the Spirit, and carefully to avoid all Temptations and *Incentives*, that may have a contrary Tendency: And for this Reaſon the *Catholick* Exhortation is, [r] *let us walk honeſtly, as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenneſs, not in Chambering and Wantonneſs; but put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make no Proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfil the Luſts thereof.*

Some particular Arguments againſt them.

THAT *Luſt* and Intemperance [s] emaſculate Mens Minds, enfeeble their Bodies, propagate Sickneſs and Infirmities to their Poſterity, and are Enemies, in ſhort, to all ſerious Counſels and generous Actions, are Arguments, which *Heathen Moraliſts* have ſometimes made uſe of againſt ſuch Enormities: But the Apoſtle has advanced Conſiderations, that are entirely new, and ſuch as the World knew nothing of, before the Coming of Chriſt. [t] *Every Sin*, ſays he, *that a Man doeth, is without the Body, i. e.* all other Sins (ſuch as Theft, Murther, *&c.*) are acted outwardly, have ſomething without for their Objects, and the Body only for their Inſtrument; *but he that committeth Fornication*, or any other Act of Carnality, *ſinneth againſt his own Body*, [u] or (as it is better rendered) *ſinneth in his own Body*, i. e. the Body itſelf is the individual Part, which is injured and abuſed; whereupon he argues, * *Know ye not, that your Bodies are the Members of Chriſt?* (by that *Myſtical* Union, which is between him and his Church) *Shall I then take the Members of Chriſt, and make them the Members of an Harlot? God forbid: Know ye not, that your Bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt?* And ſhall we take the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt, and make them Dens of impure Luſts? *God forbid.* Other People, that are not acquainted with the Nature of the Chriſtian Covenant, may think it left to their Liberty to diſpoſe themſelves and their Bodies as they pleaſe; *but ye are not your own, but bought with a Price, therefore glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are God's.*

Inward Luſt forbid.

OUR bleſſed Saviour has carried the Senſe and Import of this Commandment, even to the hidden *Deſires* and *Purpoſes* of the Heart, when he tells us, [x] *ye have heard what has been ſaid by them of old Time, i. e.* The *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who, by their Traditions and narrow Explications, contracted the *Seventh* Commandment, vainly ſuppoſing, that where there was no *outward* Act of Lewdneſs, there could be no *Adultery*; *but I ſay unto you, that whoſoever looketh on a Woman to luſt after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart, i. e.* [y] "Whoſoever allows his "Eyes the Liberty of *gazing* upon a Woman, with an Intention of kindling, in "himſelf, or her, laſcivious and unchaſte Deſires; or whatſoever Woman *adorns* her-"ſelf, out of a Deſign of raiſing an unlawful Paſſion in the Breaſt of a Beholder; he "or ſhe, though they only indulge themſelves in luſtful Wiſhes, and Imaginations, "without proceeding to any unlawful Act, are *Adulterers* in the Eſteem of God, "and will accordingly be puniſhed."

IT muſt be obſerved, however, with Relation to theſe Words, and their Explication, that as bare Looks cannot well be avoided, and the Paſſions, which God hath implanted in us, are not *originally* ſinful, no nor the firſt riſing of an impure Thought, ſuppoſing

[l] 1 Cor. vi. 9. [m] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [n] Thus *Tully* defends *meretricious Amours*, in his Oration *P. M. Cœlio*. *Plutarch* has his ἐρωτικὸς, or *Love-Diſcourſe*, not befitting ſo grave an Author; and *Plato*'s Ἔρως παιδικὸς, or, *Love for Boys*, though it be dreſſed up ſometimes in a Kind of chaſte and *Socratic* Way; yet, at others, it appears open and barefaced, and is, indeed, unſufferable. *Edwards*, ibid. [o] 1 Pet. ii. 11. [p] Col. iii. 5. [q] 1 Cor. vi. 18. [r] Rom. xiii. 13, 14. [s] *Wake*'s Expoſition of the Church Catechiſm. [t] 1 Cor. vi. 18. [u] For εἰς is here oppoſed to ἐκτὸς, *without*. * 1 Cor. vi. 15, *&c.* [x] Matth. v. 27. 28. [y] *Gardiner*'s Sermons.

ſuppoſing it be inſtantly ſuppreſſed; ſo what our Saviour here ſpeaks of, is not any *natural* Deſire, or *unavoidable* Infirmity, but a *luſtful* Inclination, blown up into a Flame by our own *Encouragement* and fond Indulgence. [z] When a Man, for Inſtance, purpoſes to ſollicit a Woman to that, which God accounts an *Abomination*, or wiſhes to enjoy the dangerous Love of a Perſon, to whom he has no *Matrimonial* Relation; when his Deſires languiſh, becauſe he cannot gratify the baſe Luſt, which the Naughtineſs of his Heart, and the Temptations of the wicked one ſuggeſt; when he feeds himſelf with impure Imaginations, with obſcene Pictures and Images of the Perſon, upon whom his Heart is ſet; he then becomes a *ſecret* Adulterer or Fornicator, and muſt expect the ſame Condemnation, with thoſe, that are *outwardly* ſo. 'Tis the Act of the *Will*, which makes any Thing ſinful; and therefore, when a looſe Heart ſends out the Eye to *pimp* for its debauched Deſires, (as [a] one expreſſes it) and a roving Imagination pleaſes and entertains itſelf with the Speculation of a Vice, which it wiſhes for an Opportunity of practiſing; in this Caſe, Fornication and Adultery are really committed in the Heart: So far as the Sinner dares go, he goes; he has the Enjoyment of a *corrupt* Fancy, and the *Defilement* ſticks upon his Conſcience: His *Spirit*, the beſt Part of him, is debauched; and no Thanks to any Virtue in him, if his Body is not ſo too.

Preſervatives againſt it.

IF therefore we would preſerve ourſelves from the Violation of this Command, we muſt, in the firſt Place, follow the Wiſe Man's Advice, [b] *keep our Hearts with all Diligence*, becauſe *out of them are the Iſſues of Life*; then, fortify our Minds with proper Conſiderations, how great, how dreadful, how heinous, how dangerous, Adultery, Fornication, Laſciviouſneſs, and all Manner of Uncleanneſs is; and ſo, keep a ſtrict guard upon our Eyes, and, according to holy *Job*'s Expreſſion, [c] *make a Covenant with them*, leſt, at any Time, they draw us into theſe Commiſſions: Avoid, with Abhorrence, all unclean Thoughts, all obſcene Books, or Pictures, or whatever elſe may raiſe unchaſte Ideas in the Mind: [d] *Let no corrupt Communication proceed out of our Mouths*: Stop our Ears to all lewd *Talk*, amorous *Songs*, or indecent *Jeſts*, and ſhun the Company of ſuch, as are addicted to them; avoiding, at all Times, Eaſe and Idleneſs, Luxury and Drunkenneſs, and whatever tends to nouriſh and inflame the Paſſions; and betaking ourſelves *conſtantly* to Prayer, to Working, and Faſting, and whatever other Severities are of Uſe, [e] *to crucify the Fleſh, with its Affections and Luſts*, [f] *to keep under the Body, and bring it into Subjection, leſt, by any Means, we ſhould become Caſt-aways.*

Eighth Commandment.

Thou ſhalt not ſteal.

The Foundation of Property.

IN *this* Commandment, our *Civil* Rights and Properties are guarded againſt all open or ſecret Invaſions, as in the *two* foregoing ones, our *Perſons*, and the Perſons of ſuch, as are related to us, are ſecured againſt *Violence* and *Luſt*. But becauſe ſome have made it a Queſtion, whether there is any ſuch Thing as Right and Property in the World, it may not be amiſs to premiſe; that, [g] whereas Almighty God, *by the Word of his Power*, at firſt created, and ſtill preſerveth, all Things; all Things that are, muſt needs be *his*, and ſubmitted to his Diſpoſal: And therefore whatever any Man has, whether Houſes, or Lands, or Cattle, or Money, the Goods and Riches (as Men call them) of this Life; or howſoever he came by them, whether by Inheritance, Gift, or Purchaſe, by his Wit or Valour, by any Office or Calling, by his Care or Induſtry, or any other lawful Way, they muſt be ſuppoſed to come *originally* from God: And though God reſerves to himſelf his own *Propriety* in them, ſo that he may take them away again, when he pleaſes; yet, whenever he gives any Man the Poſſeſſion of them, he thereby gives him ſuch a *Right*, and Title to them, as makes them *his own*, in Reſpect of all other Men; inſomuch, that no Man has any Thing to do with them, but only he; and he alone is to give an Account of the Uſe of them to God, from whom he received them, and under whom he holds them.

As

[z] *Horneck*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [a] *Gardiner*'s Sermons. [b] Prov. iv. 23. [c] Job xxxi. 1. [d] Eph. iv. 29. [e] Gal. v. 24. [f] 1 Cor. ix. 27. [g] *Beveridge*, on the Church Catechiſm.

As therefore God is the great *Proprietor* of the World, and our Poſſeſſions are the Fruit of his *Donation*; ſo, to ſecure and confirm to every one the *civil* Right and Uſe of what he has put in his Hand, he has been pleaſed to make and publiſh this Law, to be obſerved by all Mankind, *Thou ſhalt not ſteal:* That is to ſay, [h] thou ſhalt not take from another Man any Thing that is his, or what God has given him: Thou ſhalt not take it by Force or by Fraud, openly or clandeſtinely; for we muſt not underſtand the Prohibition to relate only to what we commonly call *Theft* or *Robbery*, but to every unlawful and indirect Way, whereby we intrench upon our Neighbour's Right; whether it be by Forgery, Perjury, or the Subornation of Witneſſes in the Courts of Judicature; by lying, diſſembling, or concealing the Truth; by defrauding, cheating, or over-reaching in any Contract or Bargain; [i] by borrowing, or otherwiſe contracting Debts, we never intend to pay; by engaging for others above what we are able, or is fitting for us to anſwer; by oppreſſing the Needy, and extorting from ſuch, as, we know, we have Power to over-bear; by with-holding the *Wages of the Hireling*, and any Ways wearing thoſe out by Delays, that have a juſt Claim upon us. To this we may add the whole *Myſtery* of ruining Eſtates and Families, by the exorbitant Rates of procuring, continuing, and advancing of Money and Intereſt; the Trade of *Pawns*, as it is commonly manag'd, and the Exactions depending thereupon; and laſtly, all ſuch *Trades*, as live upon the Vices and Extravagancies of Men, together with all other wicked and injurious Ways of Gain. Theſe, and whatever other Practices are ſubſervient or acceſſary to the foregoing Methods of Injuſtice and Wrong, are Violations of this Command, and fall under the Denomination of *Stealing*. *The different Kinds of Theft.*

[k] *Let no Man go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any Matter*, is the Exhortation of the Apoſtle, and the Reaſon he aſſigns is this, *becauſe the Lord is a Revenger of all ſuch.* And well may he be a *Revenger* of a Crime, which is not only a *Violation* of his Authority, and a Contradiction to the eſſential Properties of his Nature; but a bold *Uſurpation* of his Prerogative, and *Invaſion* of his Province of beſtowing his own where he pleaſes. The Diſturbance and Overthrow of human Order and Happineſs, the Ruin and Deſtruction of mutual Truſt and Confidence, (whereof *Juſtice* is the main Pillar and Support) are Reflections, that perhaps ſeldom enter into the Thoughts of ſuch, as make *haſte to be rich*; but well it were, if they would conſider their own Intereſt in the Purſuit, and the wiſe Man's Aſſertion concerning the Event of it; [l] *He that haſteth to be rich, hath an evil Eye, and conſidereth not, that Poverty ſhall come upon him.* To better their Condition, and improve their Fortune; *to build their Neſts on high*, and raiſe themſelves above the Contingency of Want, is perhaps the chief Deſign of ſuch, as purſue any unjuſtifiable Methods of Gain; and yet, whether it is, that God, in his righteous Judgment, permits them to fall into the Hands of *Cheats* and *Oppreſſors*, and, as they [m] *have ſpoiled many People*, themſelves to be defrauded and circumvented by others; or that there is a *ſecret Curſe* attending all unjuſt Gains, which (as the Prophet expreſſes it) *enters into the Houſe of the Thief, remains there, and conſumes the very Timber and Stones thereof*; but ſo it is, that the holy Scriptures have aſſured us, that [o] *he, who oppreſſeth the Poor, to increaſe his Riches, ſhall ſurely come to want*; and that, [p] *as the Partridge ſitteth on Eggs, and hatcheth them not; ſo he, that getteth Riches, and not by Right, ſhall leave them in the Midſt of his Days, and at the End ſhall be a Fool: A Fool*, when amidſt his ill-gotten Poſſeſſions, he ſhall find his Conſcience expoſed to perpetual Trouble and Diſquiet, while every Thing, he ſees about him, throws Guilt in his Face, and awakens ſome dire Reflection in his Breaſt: *A Fool*, when upon his Bed of Sickneſs, his *laſt Will* and *Teſtament* ſhall preſent him with a *Catalogue* of uncancelled Crimes, and almoſt every Penny, he bequeaths, put him in mind of his approaching Doom: And laſtly, *a Fool*, when, on the great Day of Accounts, his ſly Tricks and Stratagems of Injuſtice ſhall be expoſed, and himſelf forced to acknowledge the hard Bargain of all unjuſt Acquiſitions in this Life, ſure to incur the Penalty of Damnation in the other: For ſuch is the Will and Decree of God, that [q] neither *Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Oppreſſors, nor Extortioners, ſhall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven*; whereupon the Poſition of the wiſe Man muſt needs be a true Inference and Concluſion, that [r] *better is a little with Righteouſneſs, than great Revenues without Right.* *The Folly and Wickedneſs thereof.*

As therefore we would not provoke God, injure our Neighbour, or undo ourſelves, it concerns us nearly *to be true and juſt in all our Dealings*, not willing to wrong, or *The contrary Duties.*

[h] *Beveridge*, on the Church Catechiſm. [i] *Wake's* Expoſition of the Church Catechiſm, and *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. [k] 1 Theſ. iv. 6. [l] Prov. xxviii. 22. [m] Hab. ii. 8, &c. [n] Zech. v. 3, 4. [o] Prov. xxii. 16. [p] Jer. xvii. 11. [q] 1 Cor. vi. 10. [r] Prov. xvi. 8.

be acceſſary to the wronging of any; [t] *to render unto all their Due; Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Cuſtom to whom Cuſtom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour*; to be careful to provide a competent Subſiſtence for our Families, and, in order thereunto, to be diligent in the Purſuit of ſome honeſt and uſeful Calling; to be frugal and ſaving of what God has given us, moderate and prudent in our Expences, punctual in the Payment of our Debts, and charitable in our Relief of the Poor; in all our Intercourſes, in ſhort, with other Men, to adhere to that Standard of Righteouſneſs, which our great Maſter has given us, [*] *of doing to others, as we would they ſhould do unto us*; or, if in any other Inſtance we have tranſgreſſed againſt it, to have Recourſe to that other Rule, which his Apoſtle has ſet us; [t] *let him that ſtole, ſteal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his Hands the Thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

Ninth Commandment.

Thou ſhalt not bear falſe Witneſs againſt thy Neighbour.

The Senſe of the Words.

THE Word *Witneſs*, in its *primary* Senſe, [u] is a *judicial* Term, importing the Teſtimony, which is given, in Courts of *Judicature*, for the Deciſion of Controverſies, in Matters of *capital*, or high Concernment: And *to bear falſe Witneſs againſt our Neighbour* is, to *depoſe* any Thing upon Oath, or [x] by Way of ſolemn Affirmation, in *legal* Proceedings, to the Prejudice of his Life or Fortune, when we know very well, that ſuch our Depoſition is contrary to the real Sentiments of our Minds, and given with a Purpoſe to impoſe on thoſe, whom it may concern. But ſince there is a farther Meaning of the Words, wherein they are often uſed to ſignify all *extrajudicial* Teſtimonies (in Matters of leſs Moment, and common Converſe) in ſome Degree affecting the Intereſt and Reputation of our Neighbour; after we have conſidered, what is the principal Intendment of the Precept, *viz. the forbidding falſe Evidences in judiciary Proceedings*, we ſhall examine into ſome farther Inſtances, wherein it is equally violated.

The Sin of falſe witneſſing in judicial *Caſes.*

[y] I. THE Uſe, or rather the Neceſſity of *Witneſſes*, in Caſes of *judicial* Enquiry, is abundantly manifeſt, from a natural *Unwillingneſs* in moſt Men to confeſs, what, oftentimes, they have not the *Grace* to abſtain from committing; and an Inability in the wiſeſt Judges to make a right Determination, without a full Knowledge of the State of the Controverſy, which can only be attained by the Information of *indifferent* Perſons: And therefore for a Man, (when [z] convened before a competent Authority, to declare what he knows) either to atteſt a Thing that is *falſe*, or conceal any Thing that is *true*, when it tends to clear up, and determine the Matter in Queſtion, is a Crime attended with the Aggravations of being done in the moſt ſolemn Manner; in Contempt of the Laws, and of the Reaſons, upon which Perſons are impowered to take Cognizance in ſuch Caſes; in Prejudice to the common Good and Happineſs of Society, which can never be preſerved without a due and conſcientious Regard to Truth; and in Violation of the higheſt and moſt authentick Sanction, that can be given to any Teſtimony, the laſt [a] *Confirmation for an End of Strife:* Beſides the *Ruin*, [b] that it, many Times, brings upon the Perſon againſt whom it is levelled; the *Aſſiſtance* it lends his *Adverſary* to accompliſh his wicked Deſigns upon him; and the *Obſtruction* it gives the *Magiſtrate*, (upon whoſe Lips Mens Lives and Fortunes very often depend) in the juſt and impartial Adminiſtration of Juſtice. For this Reaſon, the Tongue, that bears *falſe Witneſs*, is commonly called, by the *Rabbins*, the *Triple Tongue*; for, according to them, it kills *three*; him, that ſpeaks; him, that hears; and him, that is ſpoken of: And, for this Reaſon, their Law gives them theſe Injunctions; [c] *Be not Witneſs againſt thy Neighbour, without a Cauſe*; [d] *put not thine Hand with the Wicked to be an unrighteous Witneſs*; and, upon the Diſcovery of any ſuch Injuſtice, allows of the Penalty of Retaliation: [e] *If a falſe Witneſs riſe up againſt any Man, and teſtify againſt him that which is wrong, the Judges ſhall make diligent Inquiſition; and behold, if the Witneſs be a falſe Witneſs, and hath teſtified falſely againſt his Brother, then ſhall ye do unto him, as he thought to have done unto his Brother.*

THE

[a] Rom. xiii. 7, 8. [*] Matth. vii. 12. [t] Eph. iv. 28. [u] *Newcome*'s Catech. Sermons, Vol. II.
[x] An Indulgence, which the Law allows the People called *Quakers*. [y] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments.
[z] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [a] Heb. vi. 16. [b] *Towerſon*, ibid. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [c] Prov. xxiv. 28. [d] Exod. xxiii. 1. [e] Deut. xix. 16, &c.

THE Truth is, there is ſuch a *Complication* of Injuſtice and Villainy, of Boldneſs and Impiety; ſuch a baſe *Proſtitution* of Conſcience, and Deſtruction of the very Uſe and Ends of *Judicatures*, in this Practice; [f] that every falſe and ſuborned Witneſs ought to be looked upon, and deteſted as a *publick Enemy*, and common Diſturber of the Peace and Welfare of Mankind; and ſince there is no particular Perſon, but what has his private Intereſt concerned, and endangered in the Miſchief, that ſuch a Wretch does to the *Publick*, no Puniſhment can well be too ſevere for him; nor can any *Court* be too *ſolemn* in the *Admiſſion*, or too *nice* in the *Examination* of ſuch, as ſeem to be too forward in the Manner of offering themſelves to be Witneſſes. *A falſe Witneſs, a publick Evil.*

IT is uſually obſerved farther, that, though Witneſſes are chiefly concerned, yet all Perſons, that have any Buſineſs in publick *Courts*, and do any Way appertain to the Law, come within the Compaſs of this Commandment, and therefore, the *Plaintiff*, when he raiſes a falſe Accuſation, or mixes true and untrue Reports together in his *Plea*; the *Defendant*, when, to retard Juſtice, he denies that in *Judgment*, which his Adverſary juſtly charges him with; the *Advocate*, when he defends a wrong Cauſe, or makes falſe Repreſentations to the Judge and Jury; the *Judge*, when he ſuffers himſelf to be bribed, or ſeduced, or importuned to give a wrong *Sentence*; or the *Jury*, by any of theſe Means, to give a wrong *Verdict*: All theſe are guilty of *bearing falſe Witneſs*; and a great and crying Sin it is, when, in any of theſe Perſons, or by any of theſe Methods, Juſtice is perverted, and [g] *Judgment* (as the Prophet elegantly expreſſeth it) *ſpringeth up as Hemlock, in the Furrows of the Field.* This ſeems to be the primary Intention of the Precept: But, *Others concerned in this Command.*

II. IN a *civil* and *extrajudicial* Senſe (as we ſaid) it may not improperly be extended to the Prohibition of all *Falſifications* whatever; more eſpecially *Lying*, and *Slandering*, as they are Sins, which affect the Intereſt and Reputation of our Neighbour.

I. LYING is ſo frequently condemned in Scripture, and *Lyars* ſo often numbered amongſt the moſt profligate Sinners, that there is no Queſtion to be made of its *Enormity*, were but Men agreed, wherein its Nature does conſiſt: But herein both *Divines* and *Moraliſts* are greatly divided. [h] Some have made the Eſſence of a *Lye* to conſiſt in our *thinking one Thing, and ſpeaking another*: But, ſince there lies no Obligation on any one to tell always what he thinks; ſince thus to diſcover all our Thoughts is, in many Caſes, highly imprudent, and, in ſome Circumſtances, uncharitable and unjuſt; a Man may certainly, without Lying, without Sin, without offending God, or wounding his own Conſcience, think of thoſe Things, that he does not ſpeak of; provided he be careful to ſpeak nothing, but what he really thinks. Others therefore, by a *Lye*, underſtand, *a voluntary Declaration of what is falſe*; but it is a Miſtake to think, that the Falſehood of what is ſpoken, is eſſential to a *Lye*, ſince, though a Man ſhould ſpeak *that*, which is really *true*, yet if, when he ſpeaks it, he thinks it to be *falſe*, he is, without doubt, guilty of the Sin of Lying; as, on the contrary, he that ſpeaks what *eventually* proves falſe, if, when he ſpeaks it, he thinks it to be *true*, is certainly not chargeable with this Crime: And therefore, others, with more Juſtneſs, have concluded, that the Nature of *Lying* conſiſts [i] *in the Intention of the Speaker to deceive by his Speech*; and that, whether what is ſaid be in itſelf true or falſe; whether it agrees with the Thoughts of him, who ſpeaks it, or not; yet, if it plainly tends to deceive the Hearer; if he, who ſpeaks it, perceives the Tendency, and uſes it to this End; however diſguiſed it is, or under whatſoever Forms it be expreſſed, it is, to all Intents and Purpoſes, a *Lye*, involving the Speaker in the Guilt of *Lying*, and expoſing him to the Puniſhment threatened againſt *Lyars*. *Different Opinions of the Nature of a Lye.* *Wherein its Nature really lies.*

[k] No Benefit would accrue to Society by Speech, unleſs Men, by an *expreſs* or *tacit* Covenant, had agreed, or unleſs, by ſome ſuperior and antecedent Law, they were obliged, whenever they profeſs to open their Minds one to another, to do it with Sincerity. They may conceal their Sentiments indeed, when no one has a Right to know them, by Silence; but, whenever they make uſe of Words, they pretend thereby, to diſcover their Thoughts; and are therefore *falſe* to their Brethren, if they do not really perform what they pretend. [l] Every Man has a natural Right to Truth; and to communicate in our *real* Sentiments, if ſo be we think it fit to reveal our Sentiments at all: And therefore, when in our Declarations, Promiſes, or Profeſſions, there is a Repugnancy between what we ſay, and what we think; [m] when, by our Speech, we intend to *impoſe* upon the Credulity of others; when we abuſe *Its Heinouſneſs.*

the

[f] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [g] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments, and *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [h] Hoſ. x. 4. [i] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. I. and *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [k] *Smalridge*, ibid. [l] The Whole Duty of Man. [m] *Smalridge*, ibid.

the Truſt and Confidence, that they have in us, ſo far as to *deceive* them, at the very Moment we pretend to inform them aright; when we willingly, knowingly, and deliberately, under a Pretence of diſcloſing our Thoughts unto them, ſtudy to miſlead and miſguide them; ſuch a foul Prevarication, as this, is inconſiſtent with the Laws of God, and with the Rules of common Honeſty; 'tis an Act of great Baſeneſs and Diſingenuity, with Regard to ourſelves; of great Injuſtice and Uncharitableneſs to our Neighbour; and of great Boldneſs and Preſumption againſt the Omniſcient God, *who ſearches our Reins and Hearts:* And therefore the Scripture aſſures us, that [n] as *a Lye is a foul Blot* to him that uſes it, ſo it is [o] *an Abomination to the Lord*, and [p] a Matter of *Deteſtation to the Righteous*; that, conſequently [q] it excludes from Happineſs, and conſigns [r] *to the Lake, which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone*; for [s] *a falſe Witneſs ſhall not be unpuniſhed, and he that ſpeaketh Lyes, ſhall not eſcape*,

An officious Lye.

"BUT may not he *eſcape*, [t] who, to do a kind *Office*, rather than an Injury; to "appeaſe (for Inſtance) thoſe, that are angry; to *comfort* thoſe, that are dejected; "to *diſſuade* wicked Men from evil Purpoſes; or to *excite* good Men to commendable "Actions; to *ſave* the Life of a dear Friend, or *preſerve* an excellent Perſon from "periſhing; may not he, I ſay, now and then *deviate* from Truth, and ſpeak other-"wiſe than he thinks, in order to attain theſe good and commendable Ends?" A very learned and judicious [u] *Divine* of our Church gives us a full and peremptory Anſwer to this Queſtion. *We know not a greater Good*, ſays he, *(for there is not a greater Good) than the Glory of God; we ſcarce know a leſſer Sin (if any Sin can be accounted little) than an harmleſs officious Lye: Yet may not this be done, even for the Sake of that.* WILT THOU SPEAK WICKEDLY FOR GOD, AND TALK DECEITFULLY FOR HIM? ſays *Zophar* to *Job*; (where the Queſtion certainly implies the full Force of a Prohibition) *and if we may not ſpeak deceitfully for the Glory of God, then certainly not for any other inferior End: Not for the ſaving of a Life*; [*] *not for the Converſion of a Soul*; *not for the Peace of a Church*; *and (if even it were poſſible) not for the Redemption of the World: For no Intention of an End can warrant the Choice of ſinful Means to compaſs it.* [x] Officious Lyes are, without all doubt, much leſs flagitious, much more excuſable, than miſchievous ones; but they may ſtill be *Sins*, though not ſo heinous: They are certainly *Faults*, if they want to be excuſed. And therefore, though we are diſpoſed eaſily to forgive thoſe, who never allow themſelves to ſpeak what is falſe, but when they may do their Neighbour a good Turn by it; yet we cannot but eſteem, and commend, and reverence thoſe Perſons, and pay a more entire Deference to their Word, who think it not allowable to ſpeak that which is falſe in any Caſe, or for any End whatever.

Not allowable, though not ſo ſinful.

Evil-ſpeaking, the ſeveral Kinds of it.

2. ANOTHER Inſtance of *bearing falſe Witneſs*, is ſuch *Evil-ſpeaking* in general, as tends to leſſen the Reputation, and increaſe the Reproach and Diſparagement of our Neighbour: And this, [y] whether the Things related be true or falſe; ſpoken to the Face, or behind the Back; in expreſs Terms, or by Way of Inſinuation; in a *ſerious* or in a *jocular* Manner. If the Thing be falſe, and we know it, 'tis downright *Calumny*; if we know it not, but only take it upon the Report of others, 'tis nevertheleſs *Slander*. If the Thing be true, and we know it, 'tis *Defamation*, as prejudicing our Neighbour's good Name; if ſpoken to his Face, (which ſeems to be more generous) 'tis *Reviling*; if behind his Back, (which is vile and baſe) 'tis what we properly call, *Slander* or *Back-biting*. In what Manner of Addreſs this *Evil-ſpeaking* is convey'd, does not much alter the Caſe, ſo long as it has the Effect to *defame*; only it may be obſerved, that, many Times, the *deepeſt* Wounds are given by the *ſmootheſt* and moſt *artificial* Ways of Slander.

The Miſchief of it.

[z] MANY *have fallen by the Edge of the Sword*, (ſays the wiſe Son of *Syrach*, deſcribing the Miſchiefs of Slander and Defamation) *but not ſo many, as have fallen by the Tongue. Well is he, that is defended from it, and hath not paſſed through the Venom thereof; who hath not drawn the Yoke thereof; nor been bound in its Bands: For the Yoke thereof is a Yoke of Iron, and the Bands thereof are Bands of Braſs; the Death thereof is an evil Death; and the Grave were better than it.* The Truth is, [a] ſince all Men (eſpecially Men of Honour and Honeſty) do, from a neceſſary Inſtinct of Nature,

[n] Eccluſ. xx. 24. [o] Prov. xii. 22. [p] Ibid. xiii. 5. [q] Rev. xx. 15. [r] Ibid. xxi. 8. [s] Prov. xix. 5. [t] The *Papiſts* are of Opinion, that officious Lyes are *venal* Sins; the *Socinians*, that they are *allowable*, becauſe they hurt nobody, and many Times do a great deal of Good; and ſome of our own Divines, that in ſome Caſes, and for ſome Ends, they are *juſtifiable*; but all this ſeems to be a groſs Miſtake. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [u] *Sanderſon*, ad Clerum, *Ser.* II. [*] Ad ſempiternam ſalutem nullus ducendus eſt, opitulante Mendacio. *Aug. de Mend. C.* 19. *and* Rom. iii. 8. [x] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [y] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [z] Eccluſ. xxviii. 18, &c. [a] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. I.

Nature, eſteem a *good Name* beyond all temporal Enjoyments, and hold it more dear and precious, than their very Lives; the Man, that either openly, or clandeſtinely deprives them of it, does them as much Wrong, as if he had robbed them of their Subſtance, or maliciouſly taken away their Lives. Since [b] all Men (eſpecially Men of Merit and Abilities) deſire to be uſeful, and conſiderable in the Society, wherein they live, and can hardly attain to that End, without preſerving a fair Reputation in the World; the Man, who ſullies or defaces that, puts ſo many Bands and Yokes upon them; he lays an *Embargo* upon their Promotion, and cramps the Sinews of their Endeavours to riſe. For 'tis impoſſible that the greateſt Merit ſhould ſhine forth with a due *Luſtre*, when Calumny and Reproach have effectually *obſcured it*. *Both to the ſuffering Perſon,*

BE the Report never ſo *unjuſt*, all Men have not Time, and few will give themſelves Trouble to enquire into the Grounds of it: Many will be pleaſed with the Miſrepreſentation, from ſome agreeable Humour or *Turn of Wit* in it; and ſome from a natural Inclination to *depretiate* ſuperior Merit, ſometimes from a Motive of Envy or Revenge, and, on certain Occaſions, of Intereſt and Competition, will not diſlike it. Thus the Story will have a free Paſſage given it; [c] and, as a *poiſonous Vapour* ſometimes infects a whole City, or Country; ſo a Calumny, once ſet forward, and meeting with ſo general an Encouragement, will be apt not only to *ſpread itſelf* wide, but the wider it ſpreads, the more to increaſe its *Malignity*. Little therefore does the firſt Author of it know, to how vaſt an Account, the Injury he has done, may ſwell; and leſs is he able to make a valuable *Satisfaction* to the Sufferer, for an Indignity, that not only lies heavy upon the Perſon himſelf, while he lives, but [d] deſcends to his Children and Poſterity: Becauſe the good or ill Name of the Father is derived down to them, and, many Times, the *beſt* Thing, he has to leave them, is the *Reputation* of an unblemiſhed Virtue and Worth, which the Mouth of the Slanderer labours to deſtroy. *and his Poſterity.*

THE wiſe King of *Iſrael*, therefore, conſidering the laſting and irreparable Injury and Injuſtice, which Slander and Defamation bring upon any Perſon, compares Men, whoſe Pleaſure lies that Way, to thoſe, that are really diſtracted; [e] *as a Madman*, ſays he, *who caſteth out Fire-brands, Arrows and Death; ſo is he, that* [f] *defameth his Neighbour, and ſaith, am I not in Sport*; 'Tis wild Mirth, however, which is the Mother of Grief to thoſe, whom we ſhould tenderly love; and a cruel and unnatural Sport it is, to play with a Man's good Name, and expoſe his Character to be *baited*, as it were, for the Laughter and Entertainment of the Company. The *Reputation* is too noble a Sacrifice to be offered to *Raillery*; [g] and a *Good* too dear and precious, and withal too tender and brittle, to be handled with *Levity*, or proſtituted to any one's Diverſion. *The Madneſs of it.*

3. THERE are ſome other Inſtances of *bearing falſe Witneſs againſt their Neighbour* reducible to this Commandment; ſuch as, 1. *Detraction*, [h] which conſiſts in repreſenting his Perſon and Actions in the moſt diſadvantageous View; impairing his good Qualities, improving his Defects, and interpoſing Exceptions to all his Commendations. 2. *Flattery*, the oppoſite Extreme, which hides and palliates his Vices, and raiſes and enhances his Virtues, in order to ſooth his Vanity, and increaſe his Self-conceit. And, 3. All *Falſification* of our Words, either in Contracts, or Promiſes, which cannot but have a manifeſt Tendency to his Prejudice and Diſappointment. *Other Inſtances of it,*

THESE are ſome of the principal Tranſgreſſions againſt this Precept; and the *poſitive* Duties, that ſeem to be included in it, are; [i] to be religiouſly *ſtrict*, both in *civil* and *judicial* Matters; to ſpeak nothing but the Truth; and be very exact in our delivering and deſcanting upon it, that we give no Occaſion to Miſtakes; to allow every one their Due; to report nothing that may tend to their Diſgrace, nor detract any Thing from their juſt Eſteem; to vindicate their Reputation, as far as we fairly can, and to hold our Tongues, at leaſt not to aggravate their Faults, where we cannot; to be ſincere in our Promiſes and Contracts, in our Praiſes and Commendations, as well as our Admonitions and Reproofs; bearing always in Mind, that ſolemn, that awful Declaration of our Lord and Maſter, [k] *Every idle Word* (and much more every ſlanderous and detracting, every hurtful and pernicious Word) *that Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an Account thereof, at the Day of Judgment; for by thy Words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy Words thou ſhalt be condemned.* *and the poſitive Duties ariſing from it.*

[b] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [c] *Fiddes*'s Sermons. [d] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [e] Prov. xxvi. 18. [f] So the LXX render it. [g] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. I. [h] Ibid. [i] *Wake*, on the Church Catechiſm. [k] Matth. xii. 36, 37.

Tenth Commandment.

Thou ſhalt not covet thy Neighbour's Houſe, &c.

Why this Commandment laſt.

THIS Commandment is the *laſt* of the *ſecond Table*; and as the other, (which, in ſome Reſpects, are reducible to it) do, in their literal Senſe, relate only to our *external* Actions; in this we are directed, how to regulate what is the *internal Spring* and Movement of all we do, our *Deſires* and *Inclinations:* And the Wiſdom of God thought proper to place it here, not [l] only to be a *Supplement* and *Recapitulation*, but a *Security* and *Guard*, as it were, to the reſt; being well aware, that as no Man can keep the other, except he keep this; ſo a due Senſe and Obſervation of *this* would make the Performance of all the other *eaſy*.

THERE ſeems however to be a Miſtake in thoſe, who imagine, [m] that this Precept is chiefly intended to reſtrain the firſt Motions and Stirrings of Sin, (called by the Divines *Concupiſcence*) which ariſes in the *ſenſual* Appetite, previouſly to any deliberate Act of the *Intellect*, or Conſent of the *Will*. Whether the firſt Motions of *Concupiſcence*, which ariſe in our Minds ſuddenly, and without any previous or ſubſequent Conſent, are, in a proper Senſe, *Criminal*, is not ſo well agreed: But admitting they be *ſinful*, and that, by an eaſy Way of arguing, they may be reduced to this Commandment; yet, ſince the other Commandments, which forbid all *ſenſual* Acts, do equally forbid the *Principle*, from whence they ariſe; the Thing, which ſeems here *chiefly* and *properly* to be prohibited, is an *unlawful* and *inordinate* Deſire of that, which, by Right and Property, belongs to another: And in *Contrapoſition* to this, the Thing that ſeems chiefly to be recommended, is to be content, and fully ſatisfied with that Portion of outward Things, which the good Providence of God has been pleaſed to beſtow on us, without envying, or greedily deſiring the Poſſeſſions, that are our Neighbours. So that the Commandment, both as to its *negative*, and *affirmative* Senſe, reſolves itſelf very properly into this double Exhortation of the Apoſtle; [n] *Let your Converſation be without Covetouſneſs, and be content with ſuch Things as ye have.*

All coveting not ſinful.

COVETOUSNESS indeed is an odious Name, which moſt Men are aſhamed to own; but all Covetouſneſs is not *criminal*, neither is the Deſire of what is another's, ſo long as it keeps within due Bounds, unallowable. [o] 'Tis a natural, 'tis a neceſſary Paſſion in us; and we may as well expect *Light* not to ſhine, or *Fire* not to burn, as that the Repreſentation of a *Good*, which we want, and may have from another, ſhould not affect us, and make us wiſh and deſire to obtain it. The Profit of *Commerce*, the Income of *Induſtry*, the Reward of *Arts and Sciences*, are the common *Spur* and *Incentive* to Men's Endeavours: Theſe Things they preſent to their Thoughts, and ſet before their Expectations; and yet theſe Things, for the moſt part, are the *Property* of another.

When, and in what Caſe it is.

IT is not therefore the Deſire, but the *Inordinacy* of the Deſire, that falls under the Prohibition in this Precept. [p] When Men give up their Minds and Affections to *ſuch Things*, as, by the Laws of God and Man, the Proprietor cannot alienate; to *ſuch Things*, as are ſo neceſſary and beneficial to him, that, without manifeſt Detriment, he cannot part with; to *ſuch Things*, as are the peculiar Objects of his Eſteem and Affection, and without great Grief and Trouble of Heart, he cannot forego; or, when they ſuffer their ill-grounded Deſires to proceed ſo far, as to diſcompoſe their Minds, and devour their Eaſe and Self-enjoyment; to raiſe turbulent Thoughts, and anxious Reſentments in their Breaſt: In ſhort, when they have ſo far ſet their Hearts upon what is another's, as to be reſtleſs, till they have it, and diſcontented, if they have it not, they then incur the Sin of *Covetouſneſs*, properly ſo called, even tho' they meditate (as yet) no unlawful Methods to obtain it. For this

Ahab's Caſe.

ſeems to be *Ahab*'s Sin, in coveting *Naboth*'s Vineyard, that he could not reſt himſelf ſatisfied with all his own Abundance, but ſet his Mind upon his Neighbour's Plot; [q] which, lying ſo commodiouſly for him, irritated his Deſires to ſuch a Degree, that,

[l] *Barrow*, on the Decalogue. [m] Sanderſon ad Aulam, Ser. 5. [n] Heb. xiii. 5. [o] *Newcome's* Catech. Sermons, Vol. II. [p] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments.

[q] ——————O ſi angulus ille
Proximus accedat, qui nunc denormat agellum! ——— HOR. Sat. Lib. II.

that, unleſs he might have it, he could no longer enjoy his own. [r] He had not as yet (as far as it appears from the Hiſtory) any ſettled Purpoſe or Deſign to wreſt it from him by Force, or to weary him out of it by unjuſt Vexations: He offered fair Terms, either by Purchaſe or Exchange, to obtain it of him: Here was neither Fraud nor Violence, nor Threatnings uſed: The whole outward Carriage was *civil*, and the Propoſals reaſonable: All the Fault was *within*, and that Fault conſiſted in his inordinate Deſire of what was not his own; which *Inordinacy* diſcovered itſelf afterwards, in the Signs and Effects of a diſcontented Mind: [s] *He came into his Houſe, heavy and diſpleaſed, laid him down upon his Bed, and turned away his Face, and would eat no Bread.*

THIS farther Leſſon we may learn from *Ahab*'s ſubſequent Behaviour, that when once the *Spirit* of Covetouſneſs has taken Poſſeſſion of a Man, it will not be long before it *ſtupifies* his Conſcience, and goads him on to the Perpetration of any Wickedneſs, in order to accompliſh his Deſires. "If *Naboth* will part with his Vine-"yard, he ſhall have his Price; but, if he will not, another Expedient muſt be "found out: Letters muſt be written, Witneſſes ſuborned, Juſtice perverted, and "an innocent Perſon (had not the Situation of his Vineyard made him *guilty*) un-"der a *mock Form* of Trial, and much baſe Hypocriſy, accuſed, condemned, and "executed." To ſuch *Lengths* of Miſchief and Flagitiouſneſs will the Indulgence of a vicious *inordinate* Deſire lead us, when the *Object* we *covet*, blinds our Eyes, and the Inſtigations of *Satan* prompt us on! *The miſchievous Conſequences of Covetouſneſs.*

GOOD Reaſon, therefore, had our bleſſed *Saviour* to give us ſo ſtrict a Caution againſt this Sin above all others; *Take Heed, and beware of Covetouſneſs*; for look upon all the *Frauds*, that are practiſed every where among the Sons of Men; take a Survey of all Oppreſſions, the greater and the leſs Oppreſſions, that are done under the Sun, and you will find, that moſt of them owe both their firſt Birth, and After-growth to this curſed *Root* of Covetouſneſs. [t] Extortion, Bribery, Flattery, Calumny, Perjury, Simony, Sacrilege, unjuſt Wars and Suits, falſe Weights and Meaſures in Markets, falſe Lights and Wares in Shops, falſe Pleas and Oaths in Courts, the Coldneſs of Charity, and Perfidiouſneſs of Friends, the Want of Bowels, and Bloodineſs of Mind, do they not all come from hence? And does not the Frequency of theſe in the World unanſwerably convince the Men of this Generation of much Injuſtice and Uncharitableneſs, in coveting other Mens Goods, and not being content with their own?

CONTENTMENT [u] is ſuch an Acquieſcence of the Mind in that Portion of outward Things, which we poſſeſs, upon a Perſuaſion of its being ſufficient for us, * as makes us well pleaſed with the Condition we are in, and ſuffers not the Deſire of any Change, or of any particular Thing we have not, to trouble our Spirits, or diſcompoſe our Duty. And to bring ourſelves to this *Frame* of Mind, it may not be improper to conſider,—[x] That as God is the Creator and Preſerver, and, conſequently, the *Lord* and Governor of all Things, his Right and Prerogative it is, to aſſign every Man his Station, and allot every Man his Portion, as he judges moſt convenient: That, as he is infinite in Wiſdom, and boundleſs in Goodneſs, [y] he both knows, better than we do ourſelves, what Condition is fitteſt for us, and will be ſure to appoint us, what he eſteems to be ſo: [z] That we ourſelves, as God's Creatures, have no juſt Claim to any Thing, (all we have, or can have, coming from the Bounty of Heaven) and therefore, how *little* ſoever is allowed us, have no Wrong done us, nor any Right to complain: That as we are his *Servants*, our Work, our Garb, our Diet, how we are to be employed, and how accommodated, is entirely at our Maſter's Diſcretion; and, as we are *Sinners*, any Allowance is good enough, and better than we deſerve: That this World, at beſt, is but [a] a ſhort *Scene*, where every one is to act ſuch a Part, as the great Maſter of the *Drama* thinks fit to give him; and that it matters not much, whether it falls to our Share, to act the *Prince* or the *Peaſant*, ſo long as we perform but handſomely what we are to do: That *Contentment, what.* *Conſiderations leading to it.* 1. *From God.* 2. *From ourſelves.*

[r] Sanderſon ad Aulam, Ser. 5. [s] 1 Kings xxi. 4. [t] *Sanderſon*, ibid. [u] *Towerſon*, on the Commandments. * *Patrick*, on Contentment. [x] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. III. Sermon 6.

[y] Permittes ipſis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebuſque ſit utile noſtris:
Nam pro jucundis aptiſſima quæque dabunt Dii,
Charior eſt illis Homo, quam ſibi. —— JUV. Sat. x.

[z] *Barrow*, ubi ſupra. [a] Μίμνησο, ὅτι ὑποκριτὴς εἶ δράματος οἷον ἂν θέλῃ ὁ διδάσκαλος, &c. EPIC. *Enchir.* c. 23.

3. *From the World.* That [b] this World is but an *Inn*, and ourſelves but *Paſſengers*, and therefore it need not much diſturb us, if our *Accommodations* happen to be mean, ſince it is but for a very ſhort Stay we have to make, and Heaven, our *native Home*, will make us a full Amends, when we come to our *Journey's End*. What ſhould we think on more? Even what every Day's Experience teaches us, that [c] *our Life conſiſteth not in the Abundance of the Things that we poſſeſs*: That Contentment is rarely, more rarely to be found in a *ſplendid*, than in a *moderate* Fortune: [d] That the Things we naturally enjoy, are greater in Value, as well as more in Number, than thoſe we fancy we are in Need of, to our Happineſs: That the *Gaieties*, we ſo much admire, and without which we can hardly be eaſy, are attended with a proportionable Number of Inconveniencies; and that more Cares, and Fears, and Dangers wait upon the *Scepter*, than upon the *Spade*. What ſhall we think on more? Even the ſure Promiſes of God, recorded in the Scriptures, that he will ſupport us, under our humble Fortunes, or elſe make them advantageous to us: That [e] *his Eyes are upon them that fear him, to deliver their Souls from Death, and to feed them in the Time of Dearth*; that [f] *tho' the Lions do lack, and ſuffer Hunger, yet they, who ſeek the Lord, ſhall want no Manner of Thing that is good*; and, in fine, [g] *that all Things ſhall work together for good, to them that love God, to them that are called according to his Purpoſe*. What ſhall we think on more? Even the great *Examples* that have gone before, to teach us the Leſſon of Contentment: That ſome of the [h] heathen *Moraliſts*, by the bare Contemplation of the Nature of God, and the State of their own Dependence, have wrought themſelves up into a Spirit of Reſignation, and reſolved Acquieſcence, deſerving our Chriſtian *Emulation*: That the great Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, [i] *in whatever State he was, had learned to be content*; *every where, and in all Things, being inſtructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound, and ſuffer Need*; and that our bleſſed *Saviour*, the great Lord of the Univerſe, when *found in the Faſhion of a Man*, was never known to diſcover the leaſt Uneaſineſs, [k] *tho' the Foxes had Holes, and the Birds of the Air had Neſts*, while himſelf *had not where to lay his Head*. The proper Reſult of all theſe Conſiderations is, that [l] *we be careful for nothing, but in every Thing, by Prayer and Supplication, with Thankſgiving, let our Requeſts be made known unto God.*

4. *From different Conditions in Life.*

5. *From Scripture Promiſes.*

6. *From Examples of others.*

A General *Rule, for the eaſier Obſervance of theſe Commandments.*

THESE are the Commandments of the *ſecond Table*; and to inforce their Obſervance, as well as enable us to diſcharge them with more Eaſe and Readineſs, I know no Rule ſo proper to be recommended, as that which our bleſſed *Saviour* has given us; [m] *all Things, whatſoever ye would that Men ſhould do unto you, do ye even ſo unto them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.* To reſtrain our Minds from all covetous Deſires, ſo as to ſettle our Contentment in what is our own; to keep our Tongues from all Evil-ſpeaking, ſo as not to offend againſt Truth and Charity; to keep our Hands from all Violence and Wrong, ſo as not to offend againſt Mercy and Juſtice; to keep our Bodies from Riot and Uncleanneſs, ſo as not to offend againſt Modeſty and Temperance; to regulate our Conduct with relation to our Neighbour, either in Traffick, or any other Intercourſe; either as to his Bed, his Life, or any other Part of his Property; to regulate our Conduct with relation to our Parents, our Governors, our Superiors, our Equals, our Inferiors; and, in ſhort, to go thro' the whole *Compaſs* of what we owe towards one another, what Expedient can be deviſed more proper, than to bear always in Mind this ſhort Epitome of our Duty, *doing to other Men, as we would be done by?* * Let but a Child, for Inſtance, a Subject, or a Servant, aſk himſelf, without Partiality, what Honour, what Submiſſion, what Obedience he would think was due to him, were he himſelf a Father, a Magiſtrate, or a Maſter; and his Anſwer to *this* will be a *Rule* for his own Behaviour towards thoſe, that are ſo related to him. This would reſtrain us from an inſolent, or ſurly Carriage towards any one, from deſpiſing and ridiculing, from upbraiding and provoking

The Excellency of it.

[b] *Sherlock* on Death. [c] Luke xii. 15. [d] *Patrick* on Contentment. [e] Pſal. xxxiii. 18, 19. [f] Ibid. xxxiv. 10. [g] Rom. viii. 28. [h] There is a very remarkable Paſſage to this Purpoſe in *Epictetus*: "This is my Buſineſs, *ſays the Philoſopher*, to be found always void of Paſſion.——That I may have it to ſay "to God; Have I tranſgreſſed, at any Time, thy Commandments? Have I abuſed the Faculties, thou haſt given "me, to other Purpoſes? Did I ever accuſe thee? Did I find Fault, on any Occaſion, with thy Adminiſtration and "Government? I was ſick, becauſe it pleaſed thee to have it ſo: Others were ſick too; but I willingly. I was "poor, becauſe thou wouldeſt have it ſo: Others were poor too, but I joyfully. I was not advanced to be a Ruler, "becauſe thou wouldeſt not have me; but did I ever deſire Empire? Didſt thou ever ſee me the ſadder for Want of "it? Did I ever approach thee with a leſs chearful Countenance? —— I give thee all Thanks, that thou counteſt "me worthy of the Honour to ſee thy Works, and to underſtand thy Adminiſtrations." *Arrian*, Lib. III. cap. 3. [i] Phil. iv. 11, 12. [k] Matth. viii. 20. [l] Phil. iv. 6. [m] Matth. vii. 12. * *Gardiner's* Sermons.

provoking our Neighbour, if we do but ſeriouſly conſider, how ill we ourſelves would bear this from another. It would teach us to forbear and forgive, becauſe we deſire, in our Turns, to be forborne and forgiven; and it would make us candid and good-natured, in putting the beſt Interpretation upon the Words and Actions of others, if we reflect but how reaſonable we think it, that another ſhould deal ſo candidly with us.

IN a Word, this is a Rule particularly fitted for Practice, as it involves, in the very Notion of it, a *Motive*, ſtirring us up to do what it enjoins; and as it offers itſelf to our Thoughts, and is ready for preſent Uſe, upon all Exigencies and Occaſions; inſomuch, that no Neceſſity of acting can be ſo *immediate*, but that there may be Time for a ſhort Recourſe to it; Room for a ſudden Glance, as it were, upon it, in our Minds, where (as [u] one elegantly expreſſes it) it reſts and ſparkles always, like the *Urim* and *Thummim* on *Aaron*'s Breaſt.

[x] HUMAN Laws are often ſo *numerous*, as to eſcape our Memories; ſo *darkly* ſometimes, and inconſiſtently worded, as to puzzle our Underſtandings; and their *Original Obſcurity* is many Times improved, by the nice *Diſtinctions* and ſubtle Reaſonings of thoſe, who profeſs to clear them; but this is a Law attended with none of theſe Inconveniencies. The groſſeſt Minds can ſcarce miſapprehend it: The weakeſt Memories are capable of retaining it: No perplexing *Comment* can eaſily cloud it: The Authority of no Man's Gloſs upon Earth can, (if we are but ſincere) ſway us to make a wrong Conſtruction of it: [y] *It is, in ſhort, an Highway*, (according to the Prophet's Expreſſion) *and the wayfaring Man, tho' a Fool, ſhall not err in it.* And as it is adapted to all *Capacities*, ſo it extends to all Ranks and Conditions of Men, to the *Prince*, as well as the *Peaſant*; and to all Kinds of Acts and Intercourſe between them, to Matters of Charity, Generoſity, and Civility, as well as Juſtice; to *negative*, no leſs than *poſitive* Duties: And in this Reſpect, our bleſſed *Saviour* pronounces it to be *the Law, and the Prophets*; for ſuch is its Compaſs and Extent, that whatever Rules of the *ſecond Table* are delivered in the Law of *Moſes*, or in the larger Comments and Explanation of that Law, made by the other Writers of the Old Teſtament, they are all virtually contained in this Precept, wherein every Line of our Duty, relating to our Neighbour, centers; and under which, as under one common Head and Principle, they may be all reduced and ranged.

IF therefore we are deſirous to fulfil all the Duties of Righteouſneſs, our ſureſt and moſt compendious Way will be, to have this one *Precept engraven* upon the *Tables* of our Hearts, (as the wiſe *Heathen Emperor* had it on the Walls of his Palace) that from thence, upon every Occaſion, we may tranſcribe it into our Practice: For the Practice of this will anſwer all; ſince, [z] *If there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this Saying, namely, thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thyſelf*, and deal with him, as thou wouldeſt have thyſelf dealt with; *for Love is the fulfilling of the* Law.

SECT. III.

Of the Civil Laws.

THE next Sort of Laws, which God gave the *Jews*, are commonly called *Civil* or *Judicial* Laws, and were appointed for the Rule of *political* Government, the Preſervation of *Peace*, and the Adminiſtration of *Juſtice*, in that Nation. But before we come to ſpeak of theſe, it will be proper to premiſe ſomething concerning the ſeveral Forms of Government, which, at different Times, obtained among the *Jews*, in order to perceive, both how agreeable to ſuch Conſtitutions their *political* Laws were, and how far they may be ſuppoſed to affect *Chriſtian* Nations, ever ſince.

The Patriarchal *Government.*

WHETHER we ſuppoſe *Civil Government* to be a *poſitive* Inſtitution of God, or only founded in the *natural* Order and Reaſon of Things, it cannot otherwiſe be, but that the firſt Form of it was *Paternal*, and that *Adam*, while he lived, was, both *in Right*, and, ſo far as appears to us, *in Fact*, univerſal *Monarch*. [a] Upon his Death,

[u] *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [x] Ibid. [y] Iſa. xxxv. 8. [z] Rom. xiii. 9, 10. [a] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II.

Death, the ſovereign Power devolved to the next in Blood; and ſo *ſucceſſively* followed the Right of *Primogeniture*. After the *Flood*, and upon the Diſperſion of the Sons of *Noah*, the *Patriarchal* Authority was ſtill aſſerted and preſerved, and ſeveral Parts of the habitable World were, at that Time, divided [b] *to every one after his own Tongue, after their Families, in their Nations.* Upon the Uſurpation of *Nimrod*, and much more after the Confuſion of Languages, tho' there were frequent Infractions made upon this Order of Succeſſion; yet the *Patriarchal* Right was ſtill recognized till the Time of *Abraham*, who, by God's Appointment, removed into the Land of *Canaan*, and there governed his Family and Dependents with a full Authority; as indeed the *Patriarchal* Power was, all along, of as wide a *Scope*, as any *Regal* or *Sovereign* Power needed to claim; for it conſiſted in the Right [c] of bleſſing, [d] of curſing, [e] of caſting out of Doors, [f] of excluding from the common Right of Inheritance, and, in caſe of heinous Offences, of inflicting *Capital* Puniſhments; as appears in the Sentence of *Judah* againſt *Thamar*, upon an Accuſation of her having committed Adultery; [g] *bring her forth, and let her be burnt.* During the Time that the *Jews* ſojourned in *Egypt*, there were ſome Remains of this *Patriarchal* Authority in the Heads of the Tribes, and therefore they are called [h] *the Elders of the Children of Iſrael*, whom *Moſes* was commanded *to gather together*; but *when Iſrael came out of Egypt, and the Houſe of Jacob from among ſtrange Children*, God himſelf vouchſafed then to be their *immediate* Head and King, and appointed *Moſes* to be his *Deputy*; ſo that, from this Time forward, the *Patriarchal* Power was happily loſt in the *Theocracy*.

Of what Extent.

When expired.

Theocracy. THAT God was related to the *Jews* in a peculiar Manner, and not as he is the univerſal Ruler of the World, is manifeſt [i] from the diſtinguiſhing Marks and Glory of a *Sovereign*, which he was then pleaſed to aſſume. The *Tabernacle*, which was placed in the Middle of their Camp in the Wilderneſs, had thereby as much the Appearance of a *General*'s Tent, as of a Temple; that *Pillar*, which was ſometimes dark, and ſometimes luminous, was, as it were, the Signal, which he gave them; for [k] *they marched at the Commandment of the Lord; and, at his Commandment, they pitched, and kept Guard about him.* When the Temple was built, the *Jews* gave it the Name of *Hekal*, which ſignifies *a Palace*: The Ark, that was in it, was the Throne, whereon he ſat; and the *Manner*, wherein he cauſed himſelf to be ſerved, gave him ſtill a greater Appearance of *Sovereignty*. As a *King*, he had his Captains, his Soldiers, his Guards; he eſtabliſhed Officers of all Kinds; reſerved to himſelf the *Tenths* and *Firſt-Fruits* of all Things; impoſed a *Tribute* upon every Head; made Laws for no other End, but his own Worſhip; appointed Prieſts and *Levites*, almoſt innumerable to attend his Service; and required, that all the Firſt-born ſhould be devoted to him: In ſhort, the moſt powerful Monarch upon Earth cannot be attended with more Order and Magnificence, than God was ſerved with in the Temple.

Ariſtocracy. [l] BUT, tho' this Republick had at this Time no other Sovereign but God, yet the *Iſraelites*, who could not bear the Glory of his Preſence, and were terrified at the Noiſe and Thunder, in the Midſt of which he ſhewed himſelf to them on Mount *Sinai*, prayed him, that he would not ſpeak to them himſelf, but make Uſe of the Miniſtry of *Moſes*, that he might be the Interpreter of his Will. *Moſes* accordingly, (as the Author to the *Hebrews* [m] tells us) diſcharged this important Office *with Faithfulneſs*; but, to eaſe the Burthen of the Adminiſtration, God commanded him to chuſe out *ſeventy* aged and experienced Perſons, who were afterwards called the *great Sanhedrim*, to whoſe Authority the Tribes, the Prophets, and High-Prieſts were ſubject, and whoſe Buſineſs it was, not only to determine the weightieſt *Civil* Cauſes, but to arbitrate likewiſe, in what related to Religion; ſo that, by this Diſtribution of the Authority, the Government put on the Face of *Ariſtocracy*.

Judicial. AFTER the *Jews* were in quiet Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*, they were governed by *Judges*, [n] the Tenor of whoſe Commiſſion was different in this Reſpect, that, as they were called to the Adminiſtration upon ſome extraordinary Exigence: ſo, when the End, for which they were called, was effected, their Power expired; like that of the *Roman Dictators*, who, when the particular Occaſion, upon which they were created, was over, returned again to their former, and very often to a *private*

[b] Gen. x. 5. [c] Ibid. ix. 26. [d] Ibid. *ver.* 25. [e] Ibid. xxi. 10. [f] Ibid. xlix. 27.
[g] Ibid. xxxviii. 24. [h] Exod. iii. 16. [i] *Lamy*'s Introduction. [k] Numb. ix. 18,—23. Vulgat.
[l] *Lamy*, ibid. [m] Chap. iii. 2. [n] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II.

private Manner of Life. During their Regency, they were abſolute and independent, inveſted with an Authority equal to Kings, but without the *Royal* State and Equipage. Their Power, [o] in ſhort, was like that of a *General* of an Army, rather than the *Governor* of a Nation; and for this Reaſon their Office was not *Hereditary*, but conferred upon the Perſon, who was beſt accompliſhed, and moſt likely to anſwer the Exigencies of State. [p] This high, and *Dictatorial* Power, being but *temporary*, and having ſo frequent Interruptions in it, gave the ordinary and inferior Judges an Opportunity of growing remiſs in the Diſcharge of their Duty, not to ſay corrupt. [q] *Samuel* indeed, *(who judged Iſrael all the Days of his Life)* was a good and vigilant Magiſtrate; but, in the Decline of his Age, being leſs capable of the Adminiſtration, *he made his Sons Judges*, who committed great Diſorders, and gave ſuch Offence to the Elders of *Iſrael*, that they aſſembled together, and came to *Samuel*, at once remonſtrating againſt the Male-Adminiſtration of his Sons, and addreſſing him to make them a King, who might judge them, in the Manner they ſaw other Nations governed. *Samuel*, with ſome Reluctance, and God, with ſome Reſentment, complied with the People's Humour; and ſo a *Monarchy* was introduced, but exceedingly mild and temperate in its Kind, if ſo be the Prince ruled according to the eſtabliſhed Laws. This Form of Government however expired, when the King and Kingdom were ſubdued, and the Inhabitants carried to *Babylon*, after it had ſubſiſted about five hundred Years. *Regal,*

UPON the Return of the *Jews* from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, [r] the Government was no longer *Regal*, but rather *Sacerdotal*, for the High-Prieſt had the chief Authority, though the *Sanhedrim*, or great Council of the Nation, retained a great Share of the Power. This Form continued, without any noted Intermiſſion, about the Space of *four hundred and twenty* Years, and then the *Regal* Government was again introduced by *Ariſtobulus*, one of the Succeſſors of the *Maccabees*, but continued free and independent not above *forty-ſix* Years, when *Pompey the Great*, then *General* of the *Roman* Army, coming down like a Torrent upon the *Eaſt*, ſubdued the Country, and made *Paleſtine* a *Province* of the *Roman* Empire. *and* Sacerdotal *Government.*

FROM this ſhort Review of the different Forms of Government, which obtained in the *Jewiſh* State, we may better perceive the great Wiſdom of thoſe Laws, which were enacted for the Safety and Preſervation of it. [s] With Regard to the *Sovereign*, as he is the Head of the State, upon whoſe Conduct the Safety of the *Subject* depends, *Moſes* took all the Precaution imaginable, to prevent any one's being admitted to the *Dignity*, who was not a Lover of Virtue, and a Stranger to all Vice. "It is ſuffi- "cient for you, *ſays he to the People*, [t] *in the Words of Joſephus*, that God be your "Sovereign; but, if you ſhould ever deſire to have a *King*, take Care to chuſe one "of your own Nation, and one, whom you ſee inclined to Juſtice, and all other "Virtues. Whoever he be, let him have a greater Regard to God and his Laws, "than to his own Underſtanding: Let him do nothing in Oppoſition to the High- "Prieſt and the Senate: Let him avoid having a great Number of Wives, great "State and Equipages, and heaping up immenſe Riches; [u] *leſt his Heart be lifted up "above his Brethren; and let him, in ſhort, not turn aſide from the Commandment, to "the Right-Hand, or to the Left.*" *The Wiſdom of the Laws, in Relation to the King,*

AS to the *Adminiſtration of Juſtice*, the Rules which *Moſes* gave, were excellent in their Kind; that * *Judges* ſhould not ſuffer themſelves to be corrupted with Preſents; [x] ſhould not receive a falſe Report; [y] not reſpect Perſons in Judgment, nor [z] *countenance a poor Man in his Cauſe:* As to *Witneſſes*, [a] that one was not ſufficient, but that three, at leaſt two, were required in any Point of important Controverſy, and theſe not *Women*, becauſe of their natural Levity; nor *Slaves*, becauſe of the Baſeneſs of their Minds; but Perſons of Integrity, and whoſe good Conduct of Life, might give a proper Sanction to their Teſtimony: And, in caſe of any one's being deprehended a falſe Evidence, the Law of *Retaliation* took Place; for they were ordered [b] *to do to him, as he thought to have done to his Brother, that thoſe which remained might hear, and fear, and thenceforth commit no more ſuch Evil among them.* *to the Adminiſtration of Juſtice,*

AS to the *general Intereſt of the Nation*, God commanded the *Jews* to look upon themſelves as Brethren, and Members of the ſame Family. Upon this Account, the Land of *Canaan* was equally divided among them, and, leſt Avarice ſhould deſtroy *the National Intereſt,*

that

[o] *Lewis*'s Antiquity of the *Hebrew* Republick. [p] *Fidles*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [q] 1 Sam. vii. 15. [r] *Lewis*'s, ibid. [s] *Lamy*'s Introduction. [t] Joſeph. Antiq. lib. IV. c. 18. [u] Deut. xvii. 20. * Exod. xxiii. 8. [x] Ibid. *ver.* 1. [y] Deut. i. 17. [z] Exod. xxiii. 3. [a] Deut. xix. 15. [b] Ibid. *ver.* 19, 20.

that *Equality*, [d] the Law of *Jubilee* reſtored every Man to what he had at firſt. The Prohibitions [e] againſt Uſury, and [f] againſt removing Land-Marks, the Laws [g] for ſecuring Things entruſted with others, [h] and for regulating the Juſtice of Weights and Meaſures, as well as the ſtrict Proviſion made againſt *Theft*, (for it was [i] lawful to kill a Thief, who was taken in the Act of Stealing, or breaking through a Wall) were a good Fence to the Properties; and then [k] the Law of *Retaliation*, and [l] the Puniſhments annexed to *Murther*, were a great Security to the Lives of the People. For the Prevention of *accidental* Deaths, the Law required, [m] that all *Wells* ſhould be cloſed in, and the Roofs of all Houſes have *Battlements*; and, in caſe one Man had ſlain another unawares, [n] it appointed Places of *Refuge*, to ſcreen him from the Revenge of the Deceaſed's Relations.

and common Prudence.

IN *Point of Prudence*, nothing eſcaped *Moſes*. As Children are the Support, and what we may call the *Nurſery* of the State, [o] he proſcribed *Eunuchs*, who defraud the Publick of thoſe Pledges; he commanded, [p] that whoever debauched a Woman, ſhould *marry her*; and that [q] the Woman, who pretended to be a Virgin, and upon her Marriage was found otherwiſe, ſhould *be ſtoned*. *Adultery*, the great Reproach of the Marriage-State, was tried by a Miracle; [r] the Woman accuſed of it, was obliged to drink ſome Waters in the Temple, in Scripture called *the Waters of Jealouſy*, which, if ſhe was guilty, killed her, but in caſe ſhe was innocent, did her no Harm. *Polygamy*, as well as Divorces, was permitted the *Jews*, *for the Hardneſs of their Hearts*, [s] as our Saviour tells them, *i. e.* to prevent Poiſonings and Murthers: the *Deſire of having Children*, which Nature inſpires, was encouraged [t] by the Reproaches, which the Law throws upon the *Barrenneſs* of Women; and, in order to preſerve both the Names and Eſtates of Families among them, if a Woman had no Children by her Huſband, ſhe, after his Death, was to marry his *Brother*, [u] and the Children of the *ſecond* Marriage were eſteemed the *Deſcendants* of the *firſt*.

How far they oblige other People.

THESE are ſome of the *Civil* and *Judiciary* Laws, which God appointed the ancient *Hebrews*, and which were of excellent Uſe and Contrivance to that People; but whether, or how far they ought to oblige other *political* Societies, has been a Queſtion controverted among *Divines*. The Reſolution, however, ſeems to lie * in diſtinguiſhing between ſuch Laws, as have a Reſpect to the particular Condition and Circumſtances of the *Jews* and their *Polity*, and ſuch, as are not *peculiar* to them, but, with Parity of Reaſon, may be equally applied to other Nations. [x] The *Jews*, who, at their firſt Inſtitution, were a Society ſeparate from the reſt of the World, were, by the ſpecial Command of God, ordered to drive out and deſtroy a wicked Race of People, and, after their Deſtruction, to make an equal Diviſion of the Land among them, which Diviſion was to be a Perpetuity to each Family, as long as their State endured. [y] For this Reaſon, the Law of *Jubilee*, and the Prohibition of *Uſury* was enacted, as a Means to preſerve that *Equality*, to keep ſome from being exceſſively rich, and others from being miſerably poor: But this by no Means is to be applied to other Conſtitutions, where Men are left to their Induſtry, and neither have their Inheritance by a Grant from Heaven, nor, by any ſpecial Appointment of God, are put all upon a *Level*. What was peculiar to the State of the *Jews* therefore is not of any Obligation to other Nations: But this Regard we conceive is due to thoſe *Politicks*, which were the Invention and Appointment of Heaven, that, where they are of common Uſe and Equity, and founded upon ſome *general* Reaſon, there other Nations ought to conform, as much as they can, to the Model propoſed to them: [z] Particularly as to *Judicial* Proceedings, in awarding Puniſhments, and eſpecially *capital* Puniſhments; for, the Power of inflicting them being derived from God, the Meaſures and Regulation of them (wherein ſome Difficulty often occurs) cannot be better determined, than by thoſe *Precedents*, which God left us concerning them, when he condeſcended to be a *Civil* Legiſlator himſelf.

The Nature of their Sanctions.

WHAT *Sanctions* God gave to theſe Laws, and whether the Promiſes and Threats, whereby he was pleaſed to enforce the Obſervance of them, were only *temporal*, or of a larger Extent and Continuance, is another Point, not ſo well agreed on among Divines. The Truth is, [a] if we take the Words of the Covenant, which *Moſes* made between

[d] Deut. xxv. [e] Exod. xxii. 25. [f] Deut. xxvii. 17. [g] Exod. xxii. 7. [h] Deut. xxv. 13, *&c.* [i] Exod. xxii. 2, 3, *&c.* [k] Ibid. *ver.* 24. [l] Lev. xxiv. 17. [m] Deut. xxii. 8. [n] Numb. xxxv. 11. [o] Deut. xxiii. 1. [p] Ibid. xxii. 28. [q] Ibid. *ver.* 21. [r] Num. v. [s] Matth. xix. 8. [t] Exod. xxiii. 26. Deut. vii. 14. [u] Deut. xxv. 5, 6. * *Edwards's* Survey, Vol. I. [x] *Fiddes's* Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [y] *Burnet's* Expoſition of the XXXIX Articles. [z] *Fiddes*, ibid. [a] *Burnet*, ibid.

between God and the People of *Iſrael*, ſtrictly, and as they ſtand, they import only *temporal* Bleſſings and Puniſhments; [b] for the Law of *Moſes*, being a *political* Law, was not intended for the Government of all Mankind, but of one particular Nation only; and therefore was eſtabliſhed (as *political* Laws are) upon temporal Promiſes and Threatnings: But, that under theſe temporal Promiſes and Threats, Rewards and Puniſhments of a higher Nature were intended, the *Tenor* of the Promiſes made to their Forefathers, as well as the general *Principles* of Natural Religion, not yet quite extinguiſhed among them, were a ſufficient Indication. That *Abraham*, and the Patriarchs before him, had a true and full Notion of a Life after this, [c] *looking for a City which hath Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God; confeſſing, that they were Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, and embracing the Promiſes, which they ſaw at a Diſtance, and were perſuaded of*, we are certain from the Teſtimony of the Author to the *Hebrews*; and that the *Jews* were all along inſtructed herein by their Forefather *Abraham*, we have an equal, if not a greater Certainty from the Character, which God gives that Patriarch, [d] *I know him, that he will command his Children and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the Way of the Lord.* [e] The Buſineſs of the Law, therefore, was not to eſtabliſh an eternal State of Happineſs, † wherein the *Jews* were ſufficiently inſtructed already; but, as the People of all Nations are encouraged, in their Obedience and Subjection to Governors, for the Benefit of Safety and Protection under them; ſo the *Iſraelites* were to be ſettled into a regular Method of Life, both *Religious* and *Civil*, and temporal Rewards and Puniſhments were appointed by *Moſes*, to encourage their Obedience, and deter them from the contrary; [f] though Men of more diſcerning Thoughts underſtood them, no doubt, as *Pledges* and *Types*, to repreſent and prefigure the Rewards and Puniſhments of a *future State*. *For the End of the Law*, [g] ſays a great *Jewiſh* Expounder of it, *is not to make the Earth fructify, to give Men their Lives; but that, by all theſe Things, they may be encouraged to perfect their Obedience, and thereby become worthy of the Life of the World to come.*

SECT. IV.

Of the Eccleſiaſtical Laws.

WE come to the *Ceremonial* or *Eccleſiaſtical* Law, which contains thoſe Precepts, that God gave the *Jews*, concerning ſuch external *Rites*, as belong to *Religion*, and relate either to the *Time*, or *Place*, or *Offices*, or *Officers* of religious Worſhip.

I. [h] THE ſolemn Times of Worſhip, appointed to the *Jews* in the *Moſaick* Law, were by a general Name called *Feaſts*, though (to ſpeak properly) ſome of them were *Faſts*: But becauſe the Word *Feaſt* is frequently taken by the *Jews* for any *ſolemn* Time of religious Worſhip, whether it be accompanied with rejoicing or mourning, that Term is applied to them all: And, according to this Latitude, [i] *Feſtivals* are ſolemn Days ſet apart for the Honour and Service of God, either in Commemoration of ſome ſpecial Mercies received from his bountiful Hand, or in Memory of ſome Puniſhments, which he, in former Times, had inflicted on them; or in Hopes of averting *ſuch*, as, at the Time of their Inſtitution, hung over their Heads. Thoſe of the firſt Kind (which at preſent we are to ſpeak of) were attended with Rejoicings, Feaſtings, Hymns, Concerts of Muſick, Euchariſtical Sacrifices, and a total Exemption from Labour; upon which Account they were termed *Sabbaths*, [k] and are properly of three Sorts; 1. Such as were *common*, and returned oft in the ſame Year: 2. Such as were *extraordinary*, and returned but once in a certain Number of Years. And, 3. Such as were *annual*, or returned *once* every Year. *Times of Worſhip.*

[b] *Pocock*, on *Hoſea* ii. 3. [c] Heb. xi. 10, 13. [d] Gen. xviii. 19. [e] *Collier*'s Introduction.

† The Author of the *Divine Legation of Moſes* has taken great Pains to prove, that, as temporal Rewards and Puniſhments were the proper Sanction of the *Jewiſh* Law, ſo there were no other: That as *Moſes* purpoſely omitted the Doctrine of a State of future Rewards and Puniſhments, ſo neither had the antient *Jews* any Knowledge of it, which he endeavours to demonſtrate from *Paſſages*, taken from the Books both of the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, and by anſwering the *Objections*, that are generally produced from thence. Vol. II. Lib. V. and VI.

[f] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. [g] *Maimonides* in his Preface to *Perck Cheleck*. [h] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [i] *Beauſobre*'s Introduction. [k] *Lamy*'s Introduction.

The Feaſt of the Sabbath.

1. OF thoſe that were common, and returned oft in the ſame Year, the *Sabbath* was the chief, a Feſtival inſtituted by God, not only in Commemoration of the Creation of the World, and with a Purpoſe to prevent *Idolatry*, or the worſhipping of Creatures, by ſetting it apart for the Service of the great Creator of all Things; but, in a peculiar Manner, to give both Man and Beaſt one Day of Reſt and Relaxation every Week: And accordingly we may obſerve, that though religious Exerciſes, ſuch as reading the Law, praying, and bleſſing, *&c.* were reckoned neceſſary on the *Sabbath-Day*, yet were they not preſcribed by the Law. *Reſt* was the only Injunction, and it was required with ſo much Strictneſs, that [l] even the moſt neceſſary Works were forbidden upon Pain of Death; ſuch [m] as gathering Manna, or Wood, baking Bread, or lighting a Fire, *&c.* Not only ſowing and reaping were then reckoned unlawful, but [n] even plucking any Ears of Corn, [o] carrying any Thing from one Place to another, or [p] going above two thouſand Paces or Cubits, which in Scripture is called [q] *a Sabbath-day's Journey*. Nay, to ſuch a Degree did the *Jews* carry their Scruples as to this Particular, that they imagined, they were not ſo much as allowed to fight, in Defence of their Lives, on the Sabbath-day; [r] for which they paid dearly, during the Perſecution of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, but came to be convinced of their Error, in the Time of *Mattathias*.

Of the New Moon.

EVERY *New Moon*, or the firſt Day of every Month, was another *Feſtival* among the *Jews*; not that it was directly of divine Inſtitution, but, becauſe God having commanded them [s] to offer up a Burnt-ſacrifice to him at the Beginning of every Month, they therefore thought themſelves concerned to ceaſe from the Works of their ordinary Employments on that Day, and to be very exact in their Obſervations and Diſcovery of the New Moon. [t] The ancient *Jews*, who were not much acquainted with *Aſtronomical Calculations*, began their Month, not from the firſt Conjunction of the Sun and Moon; (which could only be known that Way) but from the firſt *Phaſis*, or Appearance of the Moon, which required no Learning to diſcover. To this Purpoſe they appointed Men of ſtrict Probity to go to the Top of the neighbouring Mountains, in the Time of the Conjunction, and, as ſoon as ever they perceived the New Moon appear, to come with all Speed, (even though it were the Sabbath-Day) and acquaint the *Sanhedrim* with it, who, upon Examination into the Matter, pronounced theſe Words; *the Feaſt of the New Moon, the Feaſt of the New Moon*, whereupon the Trumpet ſounded, and acquainted all the People with it; and unto this Ceremony *David*, no doubt, alludes, when he ſays, [u] *Blow up the Trumpet in the New Moon, in the Time appointed, on our ſolemn Feaſt-Day.*

The Sabbatical *Year.*

2. AMONG *extraordinary* Feſtivals, which happened but *once* in ſome conſiderable Time, was the *Sabbatical* Year, which returned every ſeventh Year, and was indeed one continual Feaſt. [x] The Ground remained untilled, and whatever it produced of itſelf was left to the Poor: Servants were ſet at Liberty, unleſs they deſired to continue with their Maſters; and [y] all Debts, that were contracted during the ſix preceding Years, were remitted; [z] but it may be queſtioned, whether the Creditor was not allowed to demand his Debt at the End of the *Sabbatical* Year; the *Talmudiſts* are not agreed about it, but thus much is certain, that this Year was at leaſt a Time of Acquittance for Creditors.

The Jubilee *Year.*

THE *Jubilee*, which was celebrated every *fiftieth* Year, had the ſame Privileges with the *Sabbatical* Year, that the Land was untilled, and Slaves ſet at Liberty; but over and above this, [a] that all Debts were cancelled, all Captives releaſed, all Priſoners ſet free, all Controverſies and Law-ſuits ended, and (what [b] was an excellent Law, to preſerve the ancient Diviſion of the Tribes, to ſuppreſs the Greedineſs of heaping up Wealth, and prevent the Poor from ſinking into Miſery) all mortgaged and alienated Eſtates were returned to their ancient Owners. This however was not done, until the tenth Day of the Month *Tiſri*: During the nine preceding Days, the *Jews* decked themſelves in *Flowers* and *Garlands*, and thought indeed on nothing but *Mirth* and *Diverſions*; but on the tenth (which was the Feaſt of the Expiation) the

[l] Numb. xv, 32, *&c.* Exod. xxxi. 14. [m] Exod. xxxv. 3. Ch. xvi. 23. [n] Matth. xii. 1, 2. [o] John v. 10. [p] Acts i. 12. [q] *A Sabbath-Day's Journey* was much about one of our Miles, and the Reaſon of their thinking themſelves allowed to go ſo far on this Day of profound Reſt, was founded on this; that, in their Marches, after they came out of *Egypt*, the Ark was carried always at this Diſtance from the Tents of the *Iſraelites*, Joſh. iii. 4. And therefore, being permitted to go, even on the Sabbath-day, to the *Tabernacle* to pray, from thence they inferred, that the taking of the ſame Journey, though on another Account, could not be a Breach of the Sabbath-day. *Lamy*'s Introduction. [r] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XII. [s] Numb. xxviii. 2. [t] *Lamy* and *Beauſobre*'s Introduction. [u] Pſal. lxxxi. 3. [x] Exod. xxiii. 11. [y] Deut. xv. 2. [z] *Beauſobre*, ibid. [a] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [b] *Lamy*'s Introduction.

the *Sanhedrim* blew their Trumpets, and then immediately were the Priſon-Doors ſet open, Slaves releaſed, and each Man reſtored to the quiet Poſſeſſion of his Eſtate.

The Paſſover.

AMONG *annual* Feſtivals, or ſuch as were celebrated once *every Year*, the moſt ſolemn and renowned was the *Paſſover*, which the *Jews* were to keep, in Remembrance of their great and happy Deliverance from *Egyptian* Bondage, when the *deſtroying* Angel paſſed over their Doors, which were ſprinkled with the Blood of the Lamb, appointed to be ſlain that Evening, and killed the Firſt-born of *Egypt*. But of this we have ſaid enough in another Place.

The Feaſt of Pentecoſt.

FIFTY Days after the *Paſſover*, fell the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*, [c] inſtituted in Memory of the Delivery of the Law, on Mount *Sinai*. It was likewiſe called the Feaſt of *Harveſt*, becauſe on it were the Firſt-Fruits of the Harveſt offered up to God, which Oblation was accompanied with ſeveral Sacrifices and Libations, and the whole Feaſt celebrated with Abundance of Mirth and Rejoicing.

Of Tabernacles.

THE *Feaſt of Tabernacles* was inſtituted by God, in Remembrance of the *Iſraelites* having dwelt ſo long in Tents and Tabernacles, while they ſojourned in the Wilderneſs: Beſides, that it was farther deſigned for a Time of returning Thanks to God, for the Fruits of the Vine, as well as other Trees, that were gathered about this Time, and of begging his Bleſſing upon thoſe of the Year enſuing. No Feaſt was ever attended with more Rejoicing than this. [d] During the whole Solemnity, (which laſted eight Days) the *Jews* dwelt under Tents made of Branches of Trees; they offered every Day Abundance of Sacrifices, beſides the uſual ones; carried always in their Hands Branches, or Poſies of Palm-Trees, Olives, Citrons, Myrtles, *&c.* and expreſſed their Joy in Feaſting, Dancing, Muſick, and Illuminations; all which was owing, ſome ſay, to the Expectation they then had [e] of the *Meſſiah*'s Coming, and for which, on that Feſtival, they prayed with the utmoſt Earneſtneſs and Importunity.

Of Trumpets.

ANOTHER *annual* Feſtival of God's appointing, was the *Feaſt of Trumpets*; not, but that other Feſtivals were uſhered in by the Sound of that Inſtrument, but becauſe this was introduced with a greater Solemnity of this Kind, than uſual. [f] It was inſtituted, as ſome think, in Memory of the loud Sounding of the *Angelick* Trumpets, on Mount *Sinai*, before God's Declaration of the Law; and, as it was the firſt Day of the Year, (according to the *Æra*, that they computed their *civil* Year by) it was commanded to be ſolemnized by a Ceſſation from all Work, [g] and by a particular Burnt-offering appointed for that Day.

Other Feaſts of human Inſtitution.

BESIDES theſe *Feſtivals*, commanded in the *Moſaick* Law, there were others of *human* Inſtitution; ſuch as [h] the *Feaſt of Lots*, in Remembrance of the ſignal Deliverance of the *Jews*, which *Eſther* obtained of *Ahaſuerus*, when they were juſt going to fall a Victim to the Pride and Cruelty of *Haman*; that of *Dedication*, mentioned by St *John*, and appointed by *Judas Maccabeus*, for a thankful Remembrance of the cleanſing of the Temple and Altar, after they had been profaned by *Antiochus*; that of *the ſacred Fire*, which was miraculouſly rekindled after the Captivity; that *of Judith*, for having killed *Holofernes*; and that, wherein was commemorated the Victory over *Nicanor*.

The great Day of Expiation.

THE *Jews* had but one ſolemn *Feaſt* of divine Inſtitution, which, becauſe *they* [i] *were to do no manner of Work thereon*, is, a little *improperly*, called the *Feaſt of Expiation*; on which Day, [k] the High-Prieſt brought a young Bullock, and the People two *She-Goats*, over which he made a publick Confeſſion, in the Preſence of God, both of his own Sins, and of all the Sins of the People. When this was done, they caſt Lots upon the two Goats, to know which of them was to be ſacrificed, and which driven into the *Wilderneſs*. The High-Prieſt ſacrificed the Bullock, and one of the Goats for a Sin-Offering, and, mixing the Blood of theſe two Victims together, went into the Temple, and ſprinkled it upon the Altar of Incenſe; and the Veil, which was before the *Holy of Holies*, into which, on this Day only of all the Year, he was permitted to enter. [l] Upon the Head of the other Goat, which was not ſacrificed,

[c] *Lamy*'s Introduction. [d] Ibid. [e] This Feſtival Chriſt honoured with his Preſence at *Jeruſalem*, coming thither on Purpoſe to bear a Part in the ſolemnizing, which implied his Approbation of it; and from hence *Grotius* very juſtly infers, that Feſtival Days, in Memorial of publick Bleſſings, may piouſly be inſtituted by Perſons in Authority, without a divine Command. *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part II. [f] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [g] Lev. xxiii. 24, 25. Numb. xxix. 1—6. [h] The *Feaſt of Lots* is ſo called from *Haman*'s enquiring by *Lot*, Eſth. iii. 7. when it would be the fitteſt Time for deſtroying the *Jews*. It was celebrated two Days together, in which *Eſther* was read out, and, as often as the Children heard the Name of *Haman*, they ſtruck the Benches of the Synagogues, with as much Joy, as they would have ſtruck *Haman*'s Head, if it had been before them. *Lamy*, ibid. [i] Lev. xxiii. 31. [k] *Lamy*, ibid. [l] This Goat was called *Azazel*, i. e. (according to ſome) *a Devil*, becauſe it was ſent away with the Sins of the People. The LXX have rendered it by a Word, which ſignifies *to remove*, or *turn away Evil*. But it may likewiſe ſignify an *Emiſſary*, or *Scape-Goat*, from the Word [*Az*] which ſignifies a *Goat*, and [*Azal*] to *ſeparate*. *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part. II.

ſacrificed, the High-Prieſt laid both his Hands, and, having confeſſed over it the Sins of the whole People, and laid them, as it were, upon it, he had it conveyed, by a fit Perſon, into the Wilderneſs; all which was a very expreſſive Ceremony. The Sins of the People were drawn away by the Sacrifice of the *firſt* Goat, and, to ſhew they would no more be had in Remembrance, the *ſecond* was loaded with them, and carried them with him into the Wilderneſs, [m] the uſual Aboad (as the Opinion then prevailed) of Devils, the Authors and Abetters of all Sin and Iniquity. And this was a fit *Prefiguration* of what our *Saviour* has done for us, [n] who took upon himſelf the Sins of the whole World; was condemned to Death by the Prieſts in the Temple; was carried out of *Jeruſalem*, and crucified upon Mount *Golgotha*; and *there*, by his own Blood, opened for us an *Entrance* into Heaven, where he now lives, and is for ever making Interceſſion for us.

Other leſs Faſts.

BUT beſides this great Day of Expiation, there were other Faſts among the *Jews*, which, though not commanded by the Law of *Moſes*, were by the Authority of the Church enjoined to be obſerved. [o] *The Faſt of the fourth Month*, or our *June*, in Remembrance of the Time, [p] when *Jeruſalem* was invaded, the Tables of the Law broken, and the Book of the Law burnt; *the Faſt of the fifth Month*, or *July*, [q] for the Deſtruction of the Temple; *the Faſt of the ſeventh Month*, or *September*, [r] for the Killing of *Gedaliah*; and *the Faſt of the tenth Month*, or *December*, [s] in Commemoration of the Siege of *Jeruſalem* by *Nebuchadnezzar*. On all which ſtated Faſts, as well as on thoſe, which were enjoined in the Time of any general Calamity, [t] the Cuſtom was, firſt to give Notice by the Sound of Trumpet, that the People (who on this Occaſion were obliged to appear in *Sackcloth*) might gather themſelves together, and then was the Ark, wherein was the Law, brought forth, covered with Aſhes, in Token of Sorrow and Affliction, and one of the *Preſidents* of the *Synagogue* made a Speech, ſuitable to the Day and Occaſion, which was accompanied with ſeveral Ejaculations and Prayers.

Places of Worſhip.

II. THE next Thing, which the *ceremonial* Laws took Notice of, was the *Place* of divine Worſhip, and the *Veſſels* and *Utenſils* thereunto belonging. The *Tabernacle* was a Kind of portable Temple, that might be pulled down, or ſet up upon Occa-

The Tabernacle deſcribed.

ſion, and was therefore very eaſily removed from Place to Place. [u] It was in Length thirty Cubits, *i. e. fifteen* Yards, (for the *Cubit*, by which this *Fabrick* and the Temple are meaſured, is but half a Yard) and in Breadth ten Cubits. Whenever the *Iſraelites* changed their Camp, the Tabernacle was taken down, and [x] the *Levites* (as it was their Office) carried ſome one Part of it, and ſome another; and, when they came to a *Station*, [y] it was always placed in the Midſt of the Camp, with the Tents at a proper Diſtance from it; which made it a Saying among the *Hebrews*, *that the Tabernacle was, at the ſame Time, both the Temple of their God, where he was to be worſhipped, and the Palace of their King, where he ſat to rule and govern his People.* [z] Before the Tabernacle there was an open *Area* of an hundred Cubits long, and fifty broad, incloſed with *Pillars*, fixed at equal Diſtances, and *Curtains* to fill up the Spaces. This Area was divided into two Courts, the *exterior* was for the People to meet at divine Service: Hither they brought all their Offerings, and here they prayed, and heard the Word, and ſtood all the while that the Prieſts ſacrificed. The *interior* Court, or that, which was next the Body of the Tabernacle, was the Place where the Sacrifices were offered. Here ſtood the great *Brazen-Altar*, which was exactly four-ſquare, five Cubits long, and five broad, but only three Cubits high, having four Horns, at every Corner one, whereunto the Sacrifices were tied, and whereupon ſuch Perſons as fled for Refuge were wont to lay hold: And not far from hence was the *Brazen-Laver*, wherein the Prieſts waſhed their Hands and Feet, before they offered Sacrifice, or went into *the Holy Place*, (for ſo they called the *Nave*, or Body of the Tabernacle) or undertook any other holy Work. In the Body of the Tabernacle, cloſe by the Entrance into the *Holy of Holies*, ſtood the *Golden-Altar*, called the *Altar of Incenſe*, one Cubit ſquare, and two Cubits high, whereon was burnt Frankincenſe, and other rich *Perfumes* (highly neceſſary to take away the ill Smell, occaſioned by the perpetual burning of Fleſh on the *great Altar*) every Morning and Evening; and to it belonged a *Golden Cenſer*, or Perfuming-pan, to tranſmit and ſcatter all around the Scent of the ſweet Incenſe and other Perfumes. On the *North Side* of this Altar, ſtood

[m] It was a common Opinion among the ancient *Hebrews*, that Deſerts, and uninhabited Places, were the Haunt and Habitation of Devils. *See* Matth. xii. 43. and Rev. xviii. 2. [n] *Lamy*'s Introduction. [o] Zech. viii. 19. [p] Jer. lii. 6, 7. [q] Zech. vii. 3. [r] 2 Kings xxv. 25. [s] Jer. lii. 4. [t] *Beauſobre*'s Introduction. [u] *Lewis*'s Antiquities, Vol. I. [x] Numb. iv. [y] Ibid. i. 50, 53. [z] Vid. *Lewis*'s Antiquities.

ſtood the *Table* of *Shew-bread* [q], whereon were ſix Loaves piled upon one another in one Diſh, and ſix in another, which Loaves were, every Sabbath-day, taken away, and new ones put in their Place; and on the *South-Side* was placed the *Golden Candleſtick*, with ſeven Branches, which were ſo many Lamps of Oil, burning all Night, and in the Morning extinguiſhed.

Of the Holy of Holies.

IN *the Holy of Holies*, which ſeems to anſwer the *Chancels* of our Churches, and had a Veil between it and the *Nave* of the Tabernacle, was the *Ark*, wherein were laid up the *Pot of Manna*, *Aaron's Rod*, and the *two Tables of Stone*, wherein were the Ten Commandments written by God himſelf. It was in Length two Cubits and an half, in Breadth one Cubit and an half, and one Cubit and an half in Height. Its Covering (which was of Gold) was called the *Mercy-Seat*, or *Propitiatory*, and from this Propitiatory, eſpecially from the uppermoſt Part, and where the Wings of the *Cherubims* hovered over it, God was wont to give the *Oracle*, or Anſwer, to what the High-Prieſt came to enquire of him. [r] What theſe Cherubims were, the Diverſity of Opinions has made it not ſo eaſy to determine; only as the *Holy of Holies* was an *Emblem* of Heaven, and the *Mercy-Seat* denoted the Throne of God, they were not improperly ſuppoſed to be *Images* and Repreſentations of the *Angelick* Hoſt, thoſe Servants and Attendants of the Heavenly King; as the *Cloud*, which, [s] *at firſt*, filled the whole Tabernacle, but, *afterwards*, reſided moſt conſtantly on this *Ark of the Teſtimony*, with a great Luſtre ſhining from between the Cherubims, (which the Apoſtle therefore calls [t] *the Cherubims of Glory*) were a manifeſt Indication of his *Majeſtick Preſence*.

The Manner, *in which theſe Things were made*,

THESE were the ſeveral Things belonging to the Tabernacle of *Moſes*, and in what Manner they were made, as well as what *myſtical* Meaning they had, the Author to the *Hebrews* has ſufficiently inſtructed us. They were made exactly [u] *according to the Pattern, which God ſhewed* Moſes *in the Mount*; but whether this Pattern was a lively *Deſcription* and Enumeration of every Particular, or rather a real *Plan* and Model of the Whole repreſented to his Sight, is not ſo material to enquire; ſince, whatever it was, God muſt be ſuppoſed to have acted upon his *Imagination* in a ſupernatural Manner, otherwiſe he would not have been capable of retaining the exact Figure and Dimenſions of every Thing, he was to relate to the ſeveral Workmen.

and their myſtical *Meaning*.

THAT all this rich Furniture of the Tabernacle was * *but a Shadow of heavenly Things*, and had great and worthy Myſteries couched under it, the ſame ſacred Author teſtifies; and as he particularizes ſome of them, we may, without forcing the Alluſion, ſuppoſe, that *the Altar of Burnt-Offering* [x] ſignified the great expiatory Sacrifice of Chriſt upon the Croſs; the *Altar of Incenſe, and the Golden Cenſer*, his powerful Interceſſion at the right Hand of God; *the Laver, and Table of Shew-bread*, the two Chriſtian Sacraments of *Baptiſm* and the *Lord's Supper*; and the *Candleſtick, and Lamps*, [y] the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Ghoſt, with that abundant Light, which is the peculiar Bleſſing of the Goſpel. More eſpecially the *inmoſt* Part of the Tabernacle, whereinto the High-Prieſt only entered, was a more lively Repreſentation of the great *Myſteries* of the Goſpel; [z] the *Holy of Holies* was a Type of the *Celeſtial* Manſions above; *the Veil* was the Fleſh of Chriſt, which, when rent, ſignified his Death, which opened us a Way into them; *the Ark* repreſented the Divine Preſence, reſiding in human Nature; *the Oracle* was the Word incarnate, revealing the Will of God; *the Mercy-Seat*, the Merits of Chriſt, ſhielding us from the Condemnation of the Law, and, conſequently, from the Divine Diſpleaſure; and *the Cherubims* hovering over the Ark, and looking down with their Heads towards the *Mercy-Seat*, God's Protection of his Church, by the Miniſtry of his bleſſed Angels, [a] who are deſirous to pry into the Myſteries of the Goſpel. In a Word, the Preſence of God with his People, the glorious Undertakings of his Son, the gracious Influence of his bleſſed Spirit, and the State of the Chriſtian Church, both here and hereafter, are ſet forth in the ſeveral Things contained in the different Partitions of the *Moſaick* Tabernacle; [b] and though other ſpiritual Meanings may poſſibly be affixed to them,

[q] It is, in *Hebrew*, *the Bread of Faces*, becauſe being placed before the Ark, where God was preſent, it was, as it were, ſet before God's Face, looking from the Mercy-Seat, *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [r] Some have thought, that they were Images in the Shape of Boys; others in the Likeneſs of Oxen or Calves; becauſe *Cherubim*, in *Chaldee* and *Syriac*, is *Bos*, and ſo is taken in *Ezek.* x. 14. compared with *Ezek.* i. 10. Others again think, that they had not one Shape, but many, *viz.* the upper Parts of a Man, the Wings of Eagles, the Backs of Lions, and the Thighs and Legs of Oxen; while others, laſtly, were of Opinion, that they were winged Creatures of ſuch a Shape as never was known, *Joſeph. Antiq.* [s] Exod. xi. [t] Heb. ix. 5. *See* Levit. xvi. 2. *and* 1 Sam. iv. 22. [u] Heb. viii. 5. * Ibid. [x] Heb. xiii. 10. [y] Rev. i. 4. *and* iv. 5. [z] Heb. ix. 24. [a] 1 Pet. i. 12. [b] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I.

yet that the Explication, which we have offered, is not *precarious* and *fanciful*, we have the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* to produce, where we find the moſt of the ſacred Myſteries thus *unfolded* and *explained*.

2. THE Tabernacle wandered with the Children of *Iſrael*, in the Wilderneſs, until they arrived at the *Land of Promiſe*, and, for almoſt 400 Years, was the only Place of Divine Worſhip, that the *Jews* had to reſort to; but, in Proceſs of Time, King *Solomon*, by God's Appointment, began to build a *Temple* [c] on Mount *Sion*, (a principal Part of *Jeruſalem*) which, in the Space of ſeven Years, he finiſhed, with vaſt Expence and Magnificence. We ſhould, however, miſtake the Matter much, if we think, that the Temple of *Jeruſalem* was made like one of our Churches; [d] it did not conſiſt of one ſingle Edifice, but of ſeveral Courts and Buildings, which took up a great deal of Ground, and was large enough to contain the Miniſters, and all the People, *i. e.* more than two or three thouſand Men. The outward Incloſure, which went by the Name of the *Mount of the Temple*, was a Square of 500 Cubits every Way, which contained ſeveral Buildings for different Uſes, and was ſurrounded with Cloyſters, ſupported with Marble Pillars. Next to this Space, was the *Court of the Gentiles*, ranged all around with Cloyſters, and ſeparated from the other Courts with Stone Baluſters three Cubits high, with Pillars, at certain Diſtances, upon which were engraven, in *Hebrew* and *Greek*, Exhortations to Purity and Holineſs, [e] and a Prohibition to all the *Gentiles*, and ſuch as are *unclean*, to advance beyond them: In this Place ſtood the *Shops*, and Tables of *Money-Changers*. *The Court of the Women* was the next, and was ſo called, not becauſe Women only were ſuffered to go into it, but becauſe they were allowed to go no farther; it was one hundred and thirty-five Cubits ſquare, with a Balcony round it, from whence the Women might ſee what was doing in the great Court. In this Place ſtood the *Treaſury*, wherein was depoſited the Money, which the People gave towards repairing the Temple, relieving the Poor, and providing the Sacrifices. From *the Court of the Women*, there was an Aſcent of fifteen Steps into *the great Court*, which was divided into two Parts, *the Iſraelites Court*, and *the Court of the Prieſts*. *The Court of the Iſraelites* had ſeven Gates, one to the *Eaſt*, which was called the *Beautiful*, as likewiſe the *Corinthian*, becauſe it was covered with *Corinthian* Braſs; three to the *South*, and three to the *North*, and a great Number of Apartments, into which ſeveral pious People retired; and, having Conveniencies of Lodging, are ſaid to *continue in the Temple Day and Night*. *The Prieſts Court* was next the Body of the Temple, and in it was the *Brazen Altar* of Burnt-Offerings, a great deal larger than that of the Tabernacle; two *Braſs* Pillars, called *Jachim* and *Boaz*, which were not in the Tabernacle; ten *Brazen Lavers*, whereas the Tabernacle had but one; and a *Sea of Braſs*, which was ſupported by twelve Oxen; all theſe Courts were uncovered, and lay open to the Sky. From the Prieſts Court, there was an Aſcent of twelve Steps, to what we may ſtrictly call the Temple, which conſiſted of three Parts, *the Porch*, *the Sanctuary*, and *the Holy of Holies*. The *Porch* was about 15 or 20 Cubits long, and as many broad, with a large *Portal*, which, inſtead of Folding-doors, had only a rich *Veil*. Here hung up ſeveral valuable Ornaments, [f] the Preſents from Kings and Princes, and what were carried away by *Antiochus Epiphanes*. *The Sanctuary*, or *Nave* of the Temple, was twenty Cubits broad, and forty in Length and Height, having in it the Altar of Incenſe, and the Table of Shew-bread; but becauſe the Temple was larger, and wanted more Light than the Tabernacle, inſtead of one, it had *ten* golden Candleſticks. *The Holy of Holies* was twenty Cubits long, wherein was the Ark of the Covenant, containing the two Tables of Stone, but inſtead of two Cherubims, (as were in the Tabernacle) in the Temple there were *four*.

A Deſcription of the Temple. The ſeveral Courts.

The Temple itſelf.

Its Glory.

[g] BUT the Glory of *Solomon*'s Temple was not in the Temple itſelf, much leſs in the Bigneſs of it, (for that alone was but a ſmall Pile of Building, as containing no more than an hundred and fifty Feet in Length, and an hundred and five in Breadth, taking the whole of it together, from Out to Out, which is exceeded by many of our Pariſh-Churches) but the main Grandure and Excellency of it conſiſted in its *Out-buildings* and *Ornaments*, its Workmanſhip being every where exceedingly curious, and Overlaying vaſt and prodigious; for the Overlayings of the *Holy of Holies* only (which was a Room but 30 Feet ſquare, and 20 Feet high) amounted to

[c] Mount *Sion* and Mount *Moriah* are the ſame, as *Joſephus* teſtifies, Antiq. Lib. I. c. 14. [d] *Lamy*'s and *Beauſobre*'s Introduction. [e] The Prohibition was, *to let no Alien enter into the Holy Place.* [f] 2 Mac. iii. 2. [g] *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I.

to six hundred Talents of Gold, which comes to four Millions, three hundred and twenty thousand Pounds of our *Sterling* Money.

The second Temple.

[h] IT is a Point of History sufficiently known, what was the End of this noble Building, and how God was pleased to permit it to be destroyed and laid waste, because it had been polluted and profaned. *Zerobabel*, however, obtained Leave of *Cyrus*, at the People's Return from Captivity, to re-build it; but though he built it upon the same Place, yet it fell far short of the Magnificence of the former. It cannot be denied indeed, but that *Herod the Great* very much improved and embellished it, and yet it still wanted those extraordinary Marks of the Divine Favour, wherewith the other was honoured. 1. The Ark of the Covenant and Mercy-Seat. 2. The *Shechinah*, or Divine Presence. 3. The *Urim* and *Thummim*. 4. The Spirit of Prophecy. And, 5. The Fire from Heaven, which often came down and consumed their Burnt-Offerings. In this, however, the Prophet is sent to assure them, that the *latter* Temple should have a Pre-eminence; that, during its standing, the *Messiah* should be born, and abundantly over-balance these Defects by his gracious and Divine Presence; [i] *I will shake all Nations, and the Desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this House with Glory. The Glory of this latter House shall be greater than of the former, and in this Place will I give Peace, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

Oratories.

3. ANOTHER Place of Divine Worship, very ancient among the *Jews*, tho' not instituted by the Law of *Moses*, was their *Proseuchæ*, or Praying-places, which were a Kind of *Courts*, encompassed only with a Wall or some other Inclosure, and left open above-head. [k] The chief Place, where the *Israelites* met together for the Worship of God, was the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and, before that was built, the Tabernacle; and the open Court before the Altar was, in both of them, that Part, where the People assembled to offer their Prayers unto God: But those, who lived at a Distance from the *Tabernacle*, while it was in Being, and afterwards from the *Temple*, when that was built, not being able, at all Times, to resort thither, built Courts, like those in which they prayed at the Tabernacle, and at the Temple, therein to offer their Prayers to God. Of what Form and Use these *Proseuchæ* were, *Their Form,* we have a notable Passage in [l] *Epiphanius*, who himself was a *Jew*, and born in *Palestine*, that acquaints us: For, after he has said, that the *Massalians* built themselves certain *broad Places*, in the Manner of *Forums*, which they called *Proseuchæ*, he goes on thus; *and that the* Jews *of old (as also the* Samaritans) *had certain Places, without the Cities for Prayer, which they called* Proseuchæ, *is apparent from the* [m] *Acts of the Apostles, where Lydia, a Seller of Purple, is said to have met with the Apostle St* Paul, *and to have heard him preach in a Place, whereof the Scripture says,* ἐδόκει τόπος προσευχῆς εἶναι, *it seemed to be a Place of Prayer*, or (as our Translation has it) *where Prayer was wont to be made. There is likewise, at Sichem, which is now called Neapolis*, says he, *above a Mile without the City, a Proseucha, or Place of Prayer, like a Theatre, which was built in the open Air, and without a Roof, by the Samaritans, who in all Things affected to imitate the Jews.*

and Antiquity.

[n] *SICHEM* indeed was the Place, where God appeared to *Abraham*, after he had left *Haran*, promising to give the Land of *Canaan* to his Posterity, and where *Abraham*, in Memory of that Vouchsafement, *built an Altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.* This gave a Kind of Sanctity to the Place: And therefore, we need less wonder, that we find one of these *Proseuchæ* (called [o] by the Name of the *Sanctuary of the Lord*, where *Joshua*, not long before his Death, assembled all the Tribes of *Israel*, and made a solemn Covenant between them and the Lord) erected in this Place, [p] and surrounded with a Grove of Oaks, even during the Time of the Tabernacle. There is great Reason to believe indeed, that these *Proseuchæ* were the very same with those, in the Old Testament, that are called *high Places*; for tho' these *high Places* were often employed in *idolatrous* Worship, or in a *schismatical* Way, by setting up Altars in them, in Opposition to that at *Jerusalem*, and are therefore frequently condemned; yet we meet with several Instances in Scripture, [q] wherein Prophets and good Men are said to make use of them: and it may not be an improbable Conjecture, [r] that our blessed *Saviour* himself did the same, when it is said that *he went out to the Mountain to pray*, and continued all Night, ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ, *i. e. in the*

[h] *Beausobre*'s Introduction.
[i] Haggai ii. 7, &c.
[k] *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. VI.
[l] In Tract. de Massalianis Hæreticis.
[m] Chap. xvi. 13.
[n] Gen. xii. 6, 7.
[o] Josh. xxiv. 26.
[p] See *Mede*'s Discourse 18.
[q] 1 Sam. ix. 9.—x. 5, &c.
[r] *Mede*, ibid.

the Oratory, or Praying House of God; for why should it not be as likely that our *Saviour* might pray in the *Jewish* Oratories, as teach in their *Synagogues*?

Synagogues. THESE Oratories however, being, as we said before, open to the Sky, were not so commodious in the Winter and stormy Seasons of the Year; and therefore, to remedy this Inconvenience, in Process of Time, but, not till after the *Babylonish* Captivity, (as most learned Men agree) they erected Houses and Tabernacles, wherein to meet for the Purposes of God's Worship; and this was the Original of their *Synagogues*. In every *Town*, [t] where there were ten Men of some Learning, Fashion and Quality, that had Time, and were piously disposed to attend upon Divine Service, (for less than ten such did not make a Congregation, and without such a Congregation present, no Part of the *Synagogue-Service* could be performed) they were allowed to build a Synagogue, but not otherwise. And tho', at first, the Number of them was but small; yet, in a short Time, they multiplied, in the Manner as our Parish-Churches have done, to such a Degree, that in our *Saviour*'s Time, there was no Town of any Note in *Judea*, but what had one or more of them.

Their Form. [u] THESE Places of Worship were so framed and contrived, as to bear a Resemblance of the Temple at *Jerusalem*, towards which they always pointed. They consisted of two Parts, which may be called the *Chancel*, and the Church: The Chancel they called the *Temple*, and it stood *Westward*, as did the *Sanctum Sanctorum* in the Tabernacle and Temple; and in this they set an Ark or Chest, made after the Model of *the Ark of the Covenant*, with a Veil before it, representing the Veil, which separated the Holy Place from the *Holy of Holies*, in which was laid up the Book of the Law, *i. e.* the *Pentateuch*, or five Books of *Moses*. *In the Body of the Church*, the Congregation met, and this was the Manner of their sitting. The Elders, *i. e.* Persons of more Gravity, Prudence, and Authority than others, † sat in a *Semicircle* near the *Chancel*, with their Faces down the Church, and the People sat, one Form behind another, with their Faces up the Church, towards the Chancel, and the Elders. Between the People and the Elders, thus facing one another, there was a Space left, where the *Pulpit* and Desk stood, in which the Person, who either read, or expounded the Law, stood raised above the rest. The Women were not admitted into the Congregation with the Men, but placed in a separate Balcony, or Gallery, where they could see into the Body of the Church, and hear Divine Service: And (to particularize no farther) over the Gate of the Synagogue was generally written this Inscription, [x] *This is the Gate of the Lord, the Righteous shall enter into it*; and upon the Walls, these, and the like Sentences, *Remember thy Creator. Enter the House of the Lord thy God with Humility. Prayer, without Attention, is like a Body without a Soul. Silence is commendable in the Time of Prayer.*

[y] WHAT the Service, both *stated* and *occasional*, performed in these Synagogues, was, we shall have Occasion to take Notice elsewere, and, at present, shall only remark, that they differed from the abovementioned *Proseuchæ* in these three Particulars, 1. The Synagogues were covered Houses, but the *Proseuchæ* were Courts, built in the Manner of *Forums*, which were open Inclosures, where anciently at *Rome*, and in other *Democratical* Cities, the People assembled for the Transaction of publick Affairs. 2. *Synagogues* were built within the Cities, whereunto they belonged, but the *Proseuchæ* without, and commonly on high Places, with Groves, either within or without them: 3. In the *Synagogues* the Prayers were offered up in publick Forms in common for the whole Congregation, but in the *Proseuchæ* they prayed (as in the Temple) every one apart for himself. But to return.

Sacrifices of several Sorts. III. ANOTHER Part of the *Ceremonial* Law related to the Manner and Offices of worshipping God, in *Oblations* and *Sacrifices*, joined with Prayers, for Favour and Pardon; and *Praises*, in Acknowledgment of the Divine Goodness. [z] Sacrifices, properly so called, were Animals killed, and then burnt. He, who presented the Sacrifice, led up the Animal before the Altar, laying his Hand upon its Head, and leaning upon it with all his Weight, to denote, that he loaded the Creature with his Iniquities, and deserved the Death, which it was going to suffer. The Animals, which were thus offered, were of five Sorts; Oxen, Sheep, Goats, Turtle-doves, and Pigeons;

[t] Spencer de Leg. Heb. Lib. I. c. 4. Vitringa, de Synagogâ veteri, Lib. I. Part II. c. 9. Relandus, in Antiq. Sacr. Part I. c. 10. *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. VI. [u] *Prideaux*, ibid. [u] *Lewis*'s Antiquities of the *Hebrew* Republick. † The Seats of the Elders were the πρωτοκαθεδρίαι τῶν συναγωγῶν, affected by the *Pharisees*, for which our *Saviour* condemns them, *Matth.* xxiii. 6. *Lamy, de Taber.* Lib. IV. c. 8.

[x] Psal. cxviii. 20. [y] The Reader that is impatient to know, what the Synagogue-Service consisted in, may find it largely explained in *Lewis*'s Antiquities of the *Hebrew* Republick, Lib. III. c. 12. or *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. VI. [z] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I.

Pigeons; and the Sacrifice of theſe was either *ſtated* or *occaſional*. *Stated* Sacrifices were ſome of them *anniverſary*, ſuch as thoſe, which were offered on the great Day of Expiation, at the *yearly* Commemoration of the Paſſover, and on other ſolemn Feaſt-Days; ſome *monthly*, *viz* the Sacrifices offered conſtantly at the New Moons; ſome *weekly*, *viz*. ſuch as were the Oblations made on every Sabbath-Day; and ſome that were offered *every Day*, as a Lamb every Morning, [a] at the *third* Hour, *i. e.* at nine o'Clock, and another at the *ninth* Hour, *i. e.* at three o'Clock in the Afternoon. Theſe daily Sacrifices, which were always attended with a Meat-Offering of Flour and Oil mingled, and were never without a Drink-Offering of Wine, were called [b] *Holocauſts*, or *Burnt-Offerings*, becauſe they where wholly conſumed by Fire; whereas, in other Offerings, a Part only was burnt, and the reſt was divided between the Prieſts, and the Perſons that brought them. *Occaſional* Sacrifices, which had no determinate Time of being offered, were either after the Commiſſion of ſome Sins, or the Receipt or Expectance of ſome particular Mercies. Thoſe, that were offered upon the Commiſſion of Offences, were either [c] called [*Chattah*] *Sin-Offerings*, becauſe they were appointed for the Expiation of the Sins of *Ignorance*, Infirmity, and Inadvertency; or [*Aſham*] *Treſpaſs-Offerings*, becauſe they were commanded to be offered for the Expiation of more *enormous* Tranſgreſſions, of voluntary and deliberate Sins, and therefore required a more coſtly Sacrifice, than the other. Thoſe, that were offered upon the Receipt or Expectance of ſome particular Mercies, were called [*Shelamim*] *Peace-Offerings*, and were either *Euchariſtical*, *i. e.* deſiged to be a Teſtimony of their Thankfulneſs to God for the Benefits they had already received; or *Euctical*, *i. e.* ſuch as were attended with Wiſhes and Supplications to God for the Bleſſings, which they ſtood in need of. Both theſe were called *Freewill-Offerings*: And we have only to obſerve farther of them, that, whereas the *Holocauſt* was all of it conſumed in the Fire, and nothing left, and whereas Part of the *Sin-Offering* was burnt, and the other Part given to the Prieſt, here it was otherwiſe diſpoſed of; for theſe Sacrifices were diſtributed into three Parts, *one of* which was burnt to God upon the Altar, for a ſweet Savour, *another* was given to the Prieſt, and *the third* was reſerved for the Perſon, who brought the Offering, and ſuch as he pleaſed to invite to partake with him: So that, always, after a *Peace-Offering* there followed a *Feaſt*, made of the Remainder of the Sacrifice; and to this the Apoſtle ſeems to allude, when he tells us, [d] *that Chriſt our Paſſover*, and Peace-Offering with God, *is ſacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the Feaſt.*

Stated,

and Occaſional.

BUT, beſides theſe Sacrifices of Animals, there were likewiſe, as was ſaid, ſome *Oblations* among the *Jews*, which were made of Bread, Wine, Oil, Incenſe, or any of the Fruits of the Earth; and theſe were of three Kinds, *viz* ſuch as were *common*, ſuch as were *voluntary*, and ſuch as were *preſcribed*. The *common* and ordinary Oblations were either of a certain Perfume (called *Thumiama)* burnt every Day upon the Altar of Incenſe; or of the *Shew-bread*, which was offered new every Sabbath-Day, and the old taken away, and eaten by the Prieſts. *Free* and voluntary Oblations aroſe from the Vows and Promiſes (which the *Jews* were apt to make, either in their Proſperity or Diſtreſs) of devoting Something to God, which neither was to be of a mean Value, nor of a polluted Nature; for ſo the Injunction is, [e] *thou ſhalt not bring the Hire of a Whore, or the Price of a Dog, into the Houſe of the Lord thy God for any Vow.* The *preſcribed* Oblations were either the *Firſt-fruits*, or the *Tenths*. The *Firſt-fruits of Animals*, if Males, were offered to God; if Men, or unclean Creatures, were redeemed with Money, to be expended in Charity, or the Reparation of the Temple. *The Firſt-fruits of the Field* were required in Token of their thankful Acknowledgment of God's inexhauſtible Goodneſs, and, according to the Difference of Geſture uſed in preſenting them, were either called *Heave*, or *Wave-Offerings*. Laſtly, the *Tenths*, which the *Jews* were

Oblations.

Their different Kinds.

[a] The *Jews* and *Romans* divided the Day, *i. e.* the Space between the riſing and ſetting of the Sun, into four Parts, conſiſting each of three Hours; but theſe Hours were different from ours in this, that ours are always equal, being the four and twentieth Part of the Day, whereas with them the Hour was a twelfth Part of the Time, which the Sun continued above the Horizon: And as this Time is longer in Summer, than in Winter, their *Summer-Hours* muſt therefore be longer than their *Winter-ones*. The firſt Hour began at Sun-riſing; *Noon* was the Sixth, and the Twelfth ended at *Sun-ſet*; ſo that the *third* Hour divided the Space between Sun-riſing and Noon, as the *ninth* divided that, which was between Noon and Sun-ſet. *Lamy*'s Introduction, Lib. I. c. 5.

[b] Numb. xv. 3, &c. [c] *Maimonides* was of a quite contrary Opinion, *viz*. that *Chattah* was a Sacrifice offered for the Expiation of Faults of an high Nature, and *Aſham*, for thoſe of an inferior Kind. *More Nev.* Part III. c. 46. Our learned *Mede* is of Opinion, *Treſpaſs-Offerings* were for Sins againſt the *firſt Table*, and *Sin-Offerings* for thoſe againſt the *Second*; and that, as our internal Sins, or Sins of Infirmity, are *peccata jugia*, continual and daily Sins; ſo the *Holocauſt*, or Burnt-Offering, was continual, and daily offered; whereas the *Sin-Offering* and *Treſpaſs-Offering* were not ſo. *Mede*'s Dif. 51. [d] 1 Cor. v. 7. [e] Deut. xxiii. 18.

obliged to pay, [f] were of four Kinds; ſuch as were paid to the *Levites* by the People; ſuch as were paid by the *Levites* to the Prieſts; ſuch as were reſerved for the *Banquets*, which were made within the Verge of the Temple; and ſuch as were paid every three Years to the *Poor*.

The Ends of their Inſtitution to typify Chriſt's *Death.*

THESE were ſome of the Sacrifices and Oblations, which God appointed to the *Jews*: And, conſidering the great Number and Expenſiveneſs of them, it may well be enquired, for what Ends they were inſtituted, and of what Efficacy they were, towards the Atonement of Sin. [g] The moſt probable Account of the *Original* of Sacrifices is, that they were at firſt of divine Inſtitution, and appointed ſoon after the *Fall* of Man, as Types of the Sacrifice of the Death of Chriſt, who was promiſed to be ſent into the World, in order to die for the Expiation of Sin. For though there be a natural Reaſon, why we ſhould [h] *not offer unto the Lord our God, of that which doth coſt us nothing*, but ſhould [i] *honour the Lord with our Subſtance*, and preſent ſome Part of the beſt we have in Devotion and Gratitude to him, from whom we have received the *Whole*: Yet no ſufficient Reaſon can be given, why Beaſts ſhould be ſlain in Sacrifice, before they were uſed in Food; why God ſhould accept of the Blood of any Creature, or be pleaſed with taking away the Life, which he had given it; or why a peculiar Efficacy, towards the Expiation of Sin, ſhould be ſuppoſed to reſide in the *Blood*, more than any other Part, unleſs it had been upon the Account of the Blood of Chriſt, which was *typically* prefigured by the Blood of Beaſts: Unleſs, I ſay, we are prepoſſeſſed of this Truth, that the Sacrifices of the ancient Law were *prefigurative* of the Sacrifice of *Jeſus Chriſt*, [k] we can look upon the Tabernacle and Temple of *Jeruſalem* as no better than ſo many Slaughter-Houſes, and the Blood, and Fat, and continual burning of Fleſh will be a Means to excite our Diſguſt, rather than Religion.

[l] *TO what Purpoſe is the Multitude of your Sacrifices unto me? I am full of the Burnt-Offerings of Rams, and the Fat of fed Beaſts, and I delight not in the Blood of Bullocks, and of Rams, and of He-Goats:* Theſe are the Words of God, commanding the People *to bring no more vain Oblations to him.* But how came God to reject the Sacrifices, which he himſelf had inſtituted? Did that, which pleaſed him at one Time, diſpleaſe him at another? We cannot charge God with ſuch Inconſtancy; but we ſee by theſe *Exprobrations*, that, when he commanded the Sacrifices of the ancient Law, he did it not out of any Deſire [m] *to drink the Blood of Goats, or to eat the Fleſh of Bulls*, (as *David* ſpeaks) but only to *typify* thereby the great and precious Sacrifice, which his Son ſhould one Day offer up; and that as ſoon as theſe Sacrifices ceaſed to be animated by this *Spirit*, (as thoſe did, which the *carnal Jews* offered up) they became inſupportable to him.

To be of moral *Intendment.*

THERE were other Ends of a *ſecondary* Nature, which God might have, in appointing theſe Ordinances to the *Jews*. Oblations of all Kinds were *federal Rites*, and deſigned to ſignify the Covenant and Agreement between God and them. The continual Morning and Evening Sacrifices were *ſymbolical* of his divine Preſence reſiding among them; the Blood of the ſubſtituted Victim was declarative of the heinous Nature of Sin; the Fruits of the Earth, which they brought, were Acknowledgments of God's Bounty and Liberality to them; and every Pigeon or Turtle-dove, which they preſented, reminded them of the acceptable Sacrifice *of a broken and contrite Heart*; and whiſpered the Words of the wiſe Son of *Syrach* in their Ears, [n] *He that keepeth the Law, bringeth Offerings enough; he that taketh Heed to the Commandment, offereth a Peace-Offering; he that requiteth a good Turn, offereth fine Flour; and he that giveth Alms, ſacrificeth Praiſe; to depart from Wickedneſs, is a Thing pleaſing to the Lord; and to forſake Unrighteouſneſs, is a Propitiation.*

and to atone for Sins.

THERE is one End more which God might deſign in the Inſtitution of theſe Sacrifices, and that was the *Remiſſion of Sin.* [o] Some indeed are of Opinion, that the *Jewiſh Religion* allowed of no Expiation, but for *legal* Impurities, and involuntary Tranſgreſſions, ſuch as proceeded from Ignorance and Inadvertency, but not for Sins of Preſumption, and ſuch as were committed with an high Hand. "If Men ſinned "wilfully, there was no Sacrifice appointed by the Law for ſuch Offences; and this "they ſeem to prove, from the very Authority of the Law itſelf, *viz.* [p] *that the "Prieſt ſhall make Atonement for the Soul that ſinneth ignorantly, but the Soul that "does*

[f] *Jerome*'s Comment upon *Ezek.* liv. [g] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion, Vol. II. [h] 2 Sam. xxiv. 24. [i] Prov. iii. 9. [k] *Lamy*'s Introduction. [l] Iſa. i. 11. [m] Pſal. l. 13. [n] Ecclus. xxxv. 1, &c. [o] Volkelius, de Nat. Relig. Lib. II. c. 12. *Tillotſon*'s Sermon, on 2 Pet. i. 4. *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, P. II. Vol. II. c. 7. [p] Numb. xv. 28, 30.

" *does ought preſumptuouſly, ſhall be cut off from among the People.*" Now [q] it is generally confeſſed, that God appointed Sacrifices and Propitiations for the worſt of *mental* Sins, ſuch as Unbelief, blaſphemous Thoughts, Uncleanneſs of the Heart, *&c.* becauſe it is hardly ſuppoſeable, but that the beſt Men were not altogether free from theſe; and, though the *Moſaick* Law ſeems to have made no Proviſion for *viſible*, and outward groſs Enormities, ſuch as Idolatry, Murther, Blaſphemy, *&c.* becauſe the Offenders were preſently puniſhed with Death; yet it does not follow from thence, that there was no Expiation for theſe enormous Crimes. Upon ſincere Repentance they might be expiated, though the Perſons, that committed them, underwent the Penalty of the Law, it being neceſſary to animadvert ſeverely upon them, leſt Impunity ſhould give Encouragement to Vice, and thereby endanger the *Commonwealth*.

IT cannot but be granted, (becauſe it is manifeſt from ſeveral Inſtances) that the Crimes of Perſons have been forgiven and pardoned, though they themſelves were not exempted from Puniſhment. *Moſes*'s Death was the Recompence of his Unbelief, though there is no Doubt to be made of his dying in the divine Favour; and *Joſiah* was juſtly ſnatched away in Battle, becauſe he engaged in it againſt the divine Will and Command; but yet he *died in Peace* and Reconciliation with God, and was tranſmitted to the Place of everlaſting Bliſs: And from hence we may gather, that though Death was, by *Moſes*'s Law, made the *penal* Conſequence of Adultery, Diſobedience to Parents, Violation of the Sabbath, *&c.* yet whoever, among ſuch Criminals as theſe, turned unto God by an unfeigned Deteſtation of the Sins they committed, had, without doubt, the Benefit of legal Sacrifices, which expiated the Offences of all true Penitents, though they were never ſo great and grievous. The Reaſon is, [r] becauſe this Inſtitution and Ordinance of Sacrificing was the ſtanding Means of Salvation in the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation; and therefore it was requiſite, that the Influence of it ſhould extend to all Sinners, that were heartily ſorry for their Offences, abhorring their paſt Crimes, and themſelves for committing them. But ſtill it muſt be owned, that theſe Oblations and Sacrifices did not of *themſelves*, or by their own Worthineſs, atone for the Guilt of Sin, but only by Virtue of the *Expiatory* Sacrifice of the *Meſſias* to come, whereof they were but *Types* and *Shadows*. And therefore, to ſpeak ſtrictly and properly, they did not *really* and *formally*, but *typically* and *myſtically* expiate, *i. e.* they did not pacify God's Anger, and ſatisfy his Juſtice, and take away Sin, and juſtify Perſons by their own *Force* and *Efficacy*; but as they were *Figures* and Significations of that *univerſal* Sacrifice, which, in the divine Intention, was ſlain *from the Foundation of the World*, and, in the Fulneſs of Time, was to come down from Heaven, in order to fulfil the great Undertaking *of making Atonement for the Sins of all Mankind*.

The ſeveral Sorts of Levites, *and their Office.*

IV. THERE is one Thing more which the *Eccleſiaſtical* Law took under it's Conſideration, and that was, the Order and Office of ſuch, as attended upon divine Service. The loweſt of this Order were the *Levites*, ſo called becauſe they were of the Tribe of *Levi*, one of the twelve Sons of the Patriarch *Jacob*. *Moſes* is very particular [s] in giving an Account of what each *Levite* was to carry, upon the Removal of the Tabernacle: For to carry about the Ark and the Tabernacle, and to take care of the ſeveral Things, which appertained unto them, was, at their firſt Inſtitution, their proper Employment; but this Part of their Office, after the Conqueſt of the Land of *Canaan*, ſubſiſted no longer. *David*, after he had ſettled the Ark and the Prieſthood, [t] eſtabliſhed a new Order among the *Levites*, whereby [u] ſome were appointed to guard the Gates, [x] ſome to ſing Pſalms, and [y] ſome to take care of the Treaſures of the Temple: He likewiſe divided them into different *Claſſes*, whereof *Maimonides* reckons twenty-four, and each of theſe were to ſerve a whole Week. The *Head* of each Claſs divided againſt thoſe, that were under him, into different Families, and choſe out, every Day, a certain Number of them, who were to ſerve, aſſigning every one his proper Office. Nor muſt it be forgot, that *David* choſe out two hundred and eighty-eight *Levites*, [z] to be Maſters of Muſick; ſo that as there were four and twenty *Claſſes* of Singers, and each Claſs had twelve Maſters, who, in their Performances, mixed *Vocal* and *Inſtrumental* Muſick together; it is very probable, that, out of this Order of Men, were choſen the Στρατηγοὶ, or *Military Officers*, (which [a] St *Luke* makes mention of) whoſe Buſineſs it was to give Notice of the Time for Solemnities, of the Day and Hour of the Sacrifices, and to ſet the

[q] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [r] Ibid. [s] Numb. iv. [t] *Lamy*'s Introduction.
[u] 1 Chron. ix. 17, 26. and Chap. xxvi. [x] Ibid. xxv. [y] Ibid. ix. 29. [z] Ibid. xxv. 7. [a] Luke xxii. 52.

the Guard; and, who, beſides this, had committed to their Charge and Inſpection the Muſick, the Inſtruments, the Libations, the Sick, the Waters, the Shew-bread, the Perfumes, the Oils, and the ſacerdotal Habits. The *Levites*, in ſhort, after the Temple was erected, had their Office much altered, and advanced, and inſtead of being Lacqueys and Porters to the Tabernacle, were appointed to aſſiſt at the Altar in the Time of Sacrifice; to help in the Service of the Temple, to teach and inſtruct the People publickly; and to be *Aſſeſſors* ſometimes with the *Prieſts*, in the Courts of *Judicature*.

Prieſts and their Office.

As to the Function of the *Prieſts*, their Buſineſs was, [b] to keep up the Fire upon the Altar of Burnt-Offerings, that it might not go out; to guard the ſacred Veſſels; to waſh the Victims; to make the Aſperſions, whether of Blood or Water, either upon the Victims, or the Book of the Law; to [c] burn the Incenſe upon the Altar; to place the new Shew-bread upon the Table, and remove the old; and (what peculiarly belonged to them) to catch the Blood of the Victims, and ſprinkle it upon the Altar. In a Word, the ſuperior Part of the Prieſt's Office and Employment was, [d] to offer Sacrifices for the People of God; [e] to bleſs the People; to intercede for them with God; [f] to teach and expound the Law; and [g] to judge and determine Cauſes, both *Civil* and *Eccleſiaſtical*; for which Reaſon they were to addict themſelves to Study, [h] *that their Lips might keep Knowledge, when the People ſought the Law at their Mouth; for they were the Meſſengers of the Lord of Hoſts.*

The High-Prieſt and his Office.

ALL the Prieſts had over them an *High-Prieſt*. *Aaron* was the firſt in that Office; to his Houſe it was tied by divine Inſtitution, and was to have deſcended in an *hereditary* Succeſſion, but it did not continue long in that State. *Eleazer* indeed came after his Father; and, upon his Death, three Prieſts of his Family ſucceſſively were High-Prieſts: After that, the Office went out of the Houſe of *Aaron*, and came to *Eli*, of the Family of *Ithamar*; but it was not long, before it reverted into it's former Channel; and then generally deſcended *lineally*, and continued for Life, [i] until the *Jews* became ſubject to the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and then the Duration of that venerable Office depended upon the Will of their Princes and Governors: But as long as it continued, the Perſon inveſted with it had the ſingular Honour of being *Metropolitan* of the *Jewiſh Church*, and *Preſident* of their Grand Council, or *Sanhedrim*. As to religious Matters, his Office was much of the ſame Nature with the Prieſts, to inſtruct, and bleſs, and pray for the People; but as his Habit was more *ſplendid* and his Conſecration more *ſolemn*, than theirs, ſo his peculiar Province was to preſide over them, and other inferior Officers of the Church; [k] to take care that they diſcharged their Functions right; and his diſtinguiſhing Adminiſtration was, to go into the *Sanctum Sanctorum* once a Year, and there make Atonement for his own Sins, and the Sins of the People; and to aſk Counſel of God, in the great and weighty Affairs of State by Way of *Urim* and *Thummim*; the Nature of which *Politick* Oracle (as we may call it) we ſhall here take Occaſion to explain.

Urim *and* Thummim, *what.*

IN order to this, we muſt obſerve, that the *High-Prieſt*, beſides other his rich Attire, had a Sort of Garment, which he wore outmoſt, not much unlike a Waiſtcoat without Sleeves, called, by the *Hebrews* [l] an *Ephod*, and by the *Latins*, a *Superhumerale*, becauſe it was faſtened upon his Shoulders; that upon each Shoulder he had a precious Stone, in which were engraven the Names of the Children of *Iſrael*; in that on the *right* Shoulder, the Names of the ſix Eldeſt, and in that of the *left*, thoſe of the ſix Youngeſt; and that upon his Breaſt he ſometimes wrote a ſquare Piece of Stuff, about a Span broad, ſet with twelve precious Stones, upon which were likewiſe engraven the Names of the twelve Sons of *Jacob*. This Breaſt-plate (as the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies) wherein was contained the *Urim* and *Thummim* (*Light* and *Perfection* as the two Words denote) the High-Prieſt was uſed to put on, when he conſulted God upon any Occaſion: But what this *Urim* and *Thummim* was, and in what Manner God anſwered the High-Prieſt, whenever he came to conſult him, with this Ornament on, has been a Matter of much Speculation and Debate among the *Learned*.

THE

[b] Lev. iv. 5, &c. [c] Exod. xxx. 7. 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—19. [d] Numb. iii. and iv.
[e] Ibid. vi. 23. [f] Lev. x. 11. [g] Ibid. x. and xiii. Deut. xvii. 8, &c. [h] Mal. ii. 7.
[i] *Lamy*'s Introduction. [k] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [l] The *Hebrew* Word is *Hoſchen*, *i. e.* a Pectoral or Breaſt plate, becauſe it was worn upon the Breaſt; but the *Greeks* call it λόγιον, and the *Latins*, from them *Rationale*. The *Greek* Word may be tranſlated by the *Latin* one, but I think it would be better rendered *Oraculum*, becauſe this was, as it were, the Oracle, by which God gave his Anſwers. *Lamy*, ibid.

THE general Opinion ſeems to be, that this *Urim* and *Thummim* were one and the ſame Thing; [m] but an ingenious Writer of our own Nation conceives them to be two different *Oracles*, and applied to different Purpoſes: That the *Urim* was the Oracle, whereby God gave Anſwer to thoſe, that conſulted him in difficult Caſes; and *Thummim* that, whereby the High-Prieſt knew, [n] whether God did accept the Sacrifice or no; and therefore the former is called *Light*, as giving Knowledge, which diſpels the Darkneſs of our Minds; and the other *Integrity*, or Perfection, becauſe they, whoſe Sacrifices God accepted, were accounted *Thummim*, *i. e.* juſt and righteous in the Eyes of God. The *Jewiſh* Doctors are moſtly of Opinion, that *Urim* and *Thummim* were nothing elſe but the *precious Stones* which were ſet in the *Breaſt-plate*, and [o] that, by the ſhining and protuberating of the Letters in the Names of the twelve Tribes, graven on the twelve Stones, the High-Prieſt, when he came to conſult God, did read his Anſwer. [p] Others will have them to be the *Tetragrammaton*, or the ineffable Name of God, which being written or engraven, in a myſterious Manner, and put into the Breaſt-plate, gave it an *Oracular* Power: But, inſtead of the Name of God, [q] an Author of our own Nation will needs have it to be no more than the two Words, *Urim* and *Thummim*, written or engraven, as we ſaid, and ſo put in the Hollow of the Breaſt-plate, under the precious Stones; and that the High-Prieſt was inſtructed in his Anſwer by a certain Difference he obſerved in the Letters made by God's own Diſpoſal. [r] *Chriſtophorus à Caſtro*, and from him, [s] Dr *Spencer* tells us, that they were two little *Images*, much of the ſame Nature with the *Gentile Teraphim*, which, being ſhut up in the folding or doubling of the Breaſt-plate, did from thence give the Oracular Anſwer by a *Voice*. But, beſides that this ſavours more of *Heatheniſm* and Idolatry, than of the pure Inſtitution of a divine Law; [t] to think that God, who declares himſelf ſo poſitively againſt the *idolatrous* Practice of the *Gentiles*, ſhould, by theſe Images of *Pagan* Invention, take the ready Way to give them Countenance and Encouragement; or, to think that the *Jews*, who were particularly commanded *not to learn the Ways of the Heathens*, but to avoid them, and act contrary to them, were permitted, nay commanded, and encouraged to make Uſe of this *magical* and ſuperſtitious Rite, is ſuch an Heap of odd and wild Conceits, as no unprejudiced Mind can entertain. And therefore the moſt common, and indeed the only probable Opinion is, that *Urim* and *Thummim* were not any *corporeal* Things, but a certain *Virtue* and *Power*, given to the Breaſt-plate at its Conſecration, of obtaining an Oraculous Anſwer from God, whenever Counſel was aſk'd of him by the High-Prieſt with it on, in ſuch Manner as his Word did direct; and that the Names of *Urim* and *Thummim*, *Light* and *Perfection*, were given hereunto, only [u] to denote the Clearneſs and Perſpicuity, which theſe Anſwers of God had, *viz.* that they were not like *heathen* Oracles, *enigmatical* and *ambiguous*, but plain and manifeſt, and ſuch as never fell ſhort of Perfection, either of *Fulneſs* in the Anſwer, or *Certainty* of the Truth of it.

Different Opinions concerning it.

WHETHER this Oracle was only conſulted in the great and important Affairs of *State*, or might be adviſed with in Queſtions of a lower Nature, [x] is not entirely determined by the Learned: But the moſt prevailing Opinion is, that the High-Prieſt was not allowed to addreſs to it for any private Perſon, but only for the King, the Preſident of the *Sanhedrim*, the General of the Army, or ſome other great Prince, or publick Governor in *Iſrael*; and that, not upon any *private* Affairs, but ſuch only as related to the *publick* Intereſt of the Nation, either in Church or State. When therefore any ſuch Matter happened, wherein it was neceſſary to conſult God, the Cuſtom was for the High-Prieſt to put on his *Robes*, and over them his *Breaſt-plate*, in which the *Urim* and *Thummim* were, and ſo to preſent himſelf before God. The *Place*, where he preſented himſelf, was before the *Ark of the Covenant*, not within the Veil of *the Holy of Holies*, (for thither he never entered but once a Year, on the great Day of *Expiation*) but without the Veil, in the holy Place: And there ſtanding with his Robes and Breaſt-plate on, and his Face turned directly towards the Ark and Mercy-Seat, whereon the *divine Preſence* reſted, he propounded the Matter, and at

When, *and* how *conſulted.*

[m] *Mede*'s Diſcourſe 35. [n] He ſuppoſes farther, that both theſe Oracles were in uſe among the Patriarchs, and that, by ſome ſuch Means as this, *Abel* knew that God had accepted his Offering, and *Cain*, that he was refuſed, *Ibid.* [o] *Prideaux*'s Connect. P. I. lib. 3. [p] *Paraphraſis Jonathanis* in *Exod.* xxviii. 39. [q] *Edwards* upon the Subject. [r] *De Vaticinio.* [s] *Diſſert. de Urim & Thummim.* [t] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. *Pocock*, in his Comment on *Hoſea*, iii. 4. [u] Hence it poſſibly is, that the LXX tranſlate *Urim* and *Thummim* by the Words, Δήλωσιν καὶ Ἀλήθειαν, *Manifeſtation and Truth*, becauſe all theſe Oracular Anſwers, given by *Urim* and *Thummim*, were always clear and manifeſt, and their Truth ever certain and infallible. *Prideaux*, ibid. [x] Mr *Mede* and Dr *Edwards* ſeem to be of Opinion, that it might be conſulted in Matters of a private Nature.

ſome Diſtance behind him (but without the Holy Place) ſtood the Perſon on whoſe Behalf the Counſel was aſked, in devout Expectation of the Anſwer; which (as [y] it ſeems moſt congruous to the Thing) was given him by an *audible Voice*, from the *Mercy-Seat*, which was within, behind the Veil. Here it was that *Moſes* went to aſk Counſel of God in all Caſes; and from hence he was anſwered by an *audible Voice*: And, in like Manner, whenever the High-Prieſt preſented himſelf before God, according to the Preſcription of the divine Law, 'tis reaſonable to believe, that God gave him an Anſwer in the ſame Way, as he did *Moſes*, *i. e.* by an audible Voice, from the Mercy-Seat; and for this Reaſon it is, that ſuch Addreſs for Counſel is called [z] *enquiring at the Mouth of God*; *and the Holy of Holies* (the Place where the Ark and Mercy-Seat ſtood, and from which the Anſwer was given) is ſo often, in Scripture, [a] ſtiled *the Oracle*, becauſe from thence the Oracles of God were uttered and delivered to thoſe, that aſked Counſel of him.

The Ceremonial Law, why inſtituted at firſt.

THESE, and ſuch like, were the Rites and Ordinances of the *Ceremonial* and *Eccleſiaſtical* Law, which God gave the *Jews*. And, before we diſmiſs this Argument, there are but two Enquiries more we think ourſelves concerned to make; 1. For what Reaſon God inſtituted it at firſt. And, 2. of what Continuance he intended it to be. [b] That all the *legal* Rites and *Ceremonial* Worſhip of the *Jews* were but Shadows, and Types, and Figures of Chriſt, and of that Redemption, Righteouſneſs, and Sanctification, which was to be wrought by him; that their Incenſe and Oblations, their legal Uncleanneſs and Purifications, their Diſtinction of Meats, their Faſtings and Feſtivals, and other Ordinances enjoined them by the Law of *Moſes*, were not required, for their own Sakes, or any Virtue or Efficacy ſuppoſed to be in the Things themſelves to recommend Men to God's Favour, but were inſtituted to ſignify the *inward* Purity and Integrity of the Heart, and by *outward* Obſervances, and ſenſible Things, to lead a carnal and ſenſual People to the Knowledge and Practice of Things *ſpiritual*, we have, in ſome Meaſure, proved before; and the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* has ſhewn enough to ſuperſede any farther Enquiry. [c] That they were ordained likewiſe for the *Prevention* of Idolatry, and to keep the People from hankering after the Ways and Cuſtoms of the religious Worſhip, perform'd to Idols and falſe Gods, either by the *Egyptians*, from whom they came, or the Inhabitants of *Canaan*, whither they were going, or any of the idolatrous Nations about them, is what [d] the Learned among the *Jews*, and [e] the ancient Fathers of the *Chriſtian* Church have not been wanting to obſerve. *Maimonides* was the firſt, who oppoſed, and confuted that received Opinion of ſome *Jewiſh* Doctors, *that there was no Reaſon to be given for the ritual Law, which was wholly to be aſcribed to the ſovereign Will and Pleaſure of God.* He, by his Acquaintance with the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Zabii*, an ancient Sort of Idolaters in the *Eaſt*, came to perceive, that moſt of the *Jewiſh* Rites were inſtituted in direct Oppoſition to the Superſtition of that People. The *Jewiſh* Prohibition [f] of cutting or mangling their Fleſh, of ſhaving the Corners of their Heads, [g] of wearing a Garment of Linnen and Woollen, [h] of ſowing the Ground with different Seeds, [i] of ſeething a Kid in his Mother's Milk, [k] of a Woman's wearing the Armour of a Man, and a Man's wearing the Garments of a Woman: Theſe, and ſeveral other Precepts of the Law of *Moſes*, are reduced, by that learned *Rabbin*, from idolatrous Cuſtoms, as the Occaſion of them; and his Conjectures ſeem to have more Weight, becauſe God, in general, did ſo ſtrictly forbid the *Jews* to imitate the Practices of other Nations; [l] *after the Doings of the Land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, ye ſhall not do*; *and, after the Doings of the Land of Canaan, whither I bring you, ye ſhall not do*; *I am the Lord your God, ye ſhall therefore keep my Statutes and my Judgments*: Which Words ſeem to imply, not only that the idolatrous Rites of the *Gentiles* were forbidden, but that thoſe of God's Appointment were made in direct Oppoſition to them: And, accordingly, we find the *Roman* Hiſtorian repreſenting the *Jews* [m] *as a People, whoſe religious Rites were contrary to all the World beſides*; *that what, to others was moſt ſacred, they accounted profane*; *and allowed as lawful, what other Nations were wont to abominate.*

IF

[y] *Prideaux*, ibid. [z] Joſh. ix. 14. [a] Pſal. xxviii. 2. 1 Kings vi. 5, &c. 2 Chron. iii. 16. Chap. iv. 20, &c. [b] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. [c] *Collyer*'s Introduct. [d] Maimon. More Nev. P. III. c. 29. [e] Prima Legis noſtræ Intentio Idololatriam tollere, & quæ illi adhærent, & occaſionem præbent. *Irenæus Lib. IV. c.* 28. Facilem ad Idola reverti populum erudiebat per multas avocationes, &c. *Tertull. contra Marc. Lib. II. c.* 18. [f] Lev. xix. 28, 29. [g] Ibid. xix. 19. [h] Deut. xxii. 9. [i] Exod. xxiii. 19. [k] Deut. xxii. 5. [l] Lev. xviii. 3, 4. [m] Profana illis omnia, quæ apud nos ſacra, rurſum conceſſa apud illos, quæ nobis inceſta. *Tacitus, Hiſt. Lib. V. c.* 4. The like Repreſentation is made of them by *Dion. Caſſius*, Lib. XXXVII.

IF then the *Moſaick* Laws and Ceremonies were given the *Jews*, as *Barriers* againſt Idolatry, and *formally* repugnant to the Practice of the *Gentiles*; it would ſound but very oddly, one would think, [n] to be told, "That moſt of them were "of heathen *Original*; and that, to cure his People of Idolatry, God had borrowed "the Inſtitution of New Moons and Sabbaths, of Tythes and Firſt-fruits, of Obla-"tions and Sacrifices, of *Urim* and *Thummim*, of the Ark and Cherubims, and almoſt "of all the other Ordinances of the *Tabernacle* and *Temple-Worſhip* from idolatrous "Nations." But [o] here we may appeal to any ſober and conſiderate Man, whether it be conſiſtent with good Senſe, or congruous to Truth and Reaſon, that God ſhould make Laws exactly contrary to the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians*, and other *Pagan* Nations, ſhewing thereby, that he hated the very Semblance of their Rites; and yet, at the ſame Time, take the Riſe of its Inſtitutions from the Cuſtoms and Practices of theſe *Gentiles:* Nay, whether it gives us not ſuch an Idea of God (as Reverence to his tremendous Majeſty will not ſuffer us to name) to repreſent him raking up all the vain, ludicrous, ſuperſtitious, impious, impure, idolatrous, magical, and diabolical Cuſtoms, which had been firſt invented, and afterwards practiſed, by the moſt barbarous Nations; and, out of all theſe, patching up a great Part of the Religion, which he appointed his own People. But I forbear Exaggerations; and ſhall only obſerve, that, as many Precepts of the *Ceremonial* Law were not ſo much founded on any unalterable Reaſon, as inſtituted in Bar and Oppoſition to the idolatrous Cuſtoms of the Nations, among whom the *Jews* then dwelt, and to diſtinguiſh them from the reſt of Mankind; ſo do they ſeem, in their *primary* Intendment, not to have been deſigned for any longer Continuance, than the Reaſon, which at firſt occaſioned them, ſhou'd remain in Force. And therefore, when the Prophecies ſhould be fulfilled, and [p] *the Deſire of all Nations was come*; [q] when *the Mountain of the Lord's Houſe ſhould be exalted, and all Nations flow into it*; ſo that, [r] *from the riſing of the Sun unto the going down thereof, God's Name ſhould be exalted among the Gentiles, and, in every Place, Incenſe ſhould be made unto him, and a pure Offering*; then ſhould the Ceremonies, which made a Separation between God's People and other Nations, and [s] *the Sacrifice and Oblation*, which were of peculiar Uſe and Inſtitution, and not adapted to an *univerſal* Diſpenſation, *be cauſed to ceaſe.*

Dr Spencer's *Opinion, cenſur'd.*

When to ceaſe.

[n] *Spencer*, de Legibus Hebr. L. III. [o] *Edwards's* Survey, Vol. I. [p] Hag. ii. 7. [q] Iſa. ii. 2. [r] Mal. i. 11. [s] Dan. ix. 27.

CHAP. V.

The moſt memorable Tranſactions from the Giving of the Law, to the Building of the Temple.

WHILE *Moſes* was on the *Mount*, receiving theſe Laws from the Mouth of God, the People below ſoon forgot [a] the Promiſes of Obedience, they had made, and fell into a ſad *Apoſtacy*. *Moſes*, at his going up into the Mount, appointed [b] *Aaron* and *Hur* to be the Rulers of the People, during his Abſence; but his Abſence being longer than was expected, the Children of *Iſrael* began to be uneaſy. They ſaw *the Glory of the Lord, which was like devouring Fire, on the Top of the Mount*, and thereupon they concluded, that *Moſes*, who tarried ſo long, was certainly deſtroyed in the Flames: They ſaw too, that *the Pillar of the Cloud*, which uſed to reſt upon the *Tabernacle*, and conduct them in their Marches, was gone, and in no Likelihood of returning again; and hereupon, having loſt their Leader, as they thought, and the *viſible* Token of God's Preſence among them, they come unto *Aaron*, and, in a tumultuous Manner, demand of him to make them another *Repreſentation* of the Divine Preſence, in the Room of what was departed from them. [c] *Up*, ſay they, *and make us Gods*, (or as the *Hebrew* Text will bear it) *make us a God, which ſhall go before us: For as for this Moſes, the Man that brought us up out of the Land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him:*

Before Chriſt, 1491, &c. *Of the World.* 2513, &c.

The golden Calf, why made.

[d] Not

[a] Exod. xxiv. 3. [b] Ver. 14. [c] Ibid. xxxii. 1.

[d] Not that they were ſo ſtupid as to imagine, that the true God could be made by any Man, or that any Image could be a Means of conducting them; but what they wanted was, ſome *outward* Object, to ſupply the Want of the *Cloud*, by being a Type and Symbol of the Deity, and where they might depoſit the Homage, which they intended to pay to the *ſupreme* God; for ſo [e] ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors have expounded the Text of *Moſes*, *they deſired a ſenſible Object of Divine Worſhip to be ſet before them; not with an Intention to* deny *God, who brought them out of Egypt, but that Something, in the Place of God, might ſtand before them, when they declared his wonderful Works.*

Why Aaron *did it.*

THE Commandment againſt making Images had ſo lately, in ſo terrible a Manner, been enjoined by God himſelf, that tho' ſome Reaſon may be given, why the Children of *Iſrael* were ſo forward to make the Demand, yet none can be imagined, why *Aaron* ſhould comply with it, without Remonſtrance; and yet we meet with no Refuſal recorded by *Moſes*; all that we have in Extenuation of *Aaron*'s Fault, is from the Suggeſtions of the *Rabbins*, [f] who pretend, that *Aaron*'s Compliance proceeded from his *Fear*; that the People had murthered *Hur*, the other *Deputy*, for oppoſing their Deſire; that [g] to diſcourage them from purſuing it, *Aaron* demanded all their *golden Ear-Rings*, in Hopes that they would not inſiſt upon having an *Idol*, which would coſt them ſo dear; but that, when Nothing would avail, he took their Gold, and caſt it into the Fire, and contrary to his Intention, [h] by ſome *Magical* and *Diabolical* Art, there immediately came forth a *Calf*, which much increaſed the People's Superſtition. But this, and [i] Abundance more of the like Nature, ſeem to be *Conceits*, invented for the Excuſe of *Aaron*, who is plainly enough ſaid to have [k] *made this molten Calf*, which he could not have done, without deſigning it, and running the Gold into a Mould of that Figure.

Why a Calf *made an Emblem of the Deity. Different Opinions.*

BUT here a famous Queſtion does ariſe, "*For what poſſible Reaſon* Aaron *ſhould* "*make choice of the Image of a Calf, to be an expreſſive Emblem of the Deity?*" What we here render *Calf*, is, [l] in other Places of Scripture, called an *Ox*, and as an Ox's Head was, in ſome Countries, [m] an Emblem of Strength, and the Horns, a common Sign of Kingly Power; [n] a learned Prelate, out of a Deſire to apologize for *Aaron*, tells us, that his Intention in making an Ox the *Symbol* of the Divine Preſence, was, to remind the *Iſraelites* of the Power of God, and to expreſs the great Tokens, they had ſeen of it, in their wonderful Deliverance from the Land of *Egypt*. [o] But how ingenious ſoever this Opinion may be, yet it wants this Foundation for its Support, that this *Hieroglyphick* was in Uſe, in the Time of *Moſes*, which will hardly be proved; nor can we well imagine, why *Aaron* ſhould forget to plead this in excuſe for himſelf, when he is called to an Account by *Moſes*, or why God ſhould have been ſo highly incenſed againſt him, had his Deſign been only to exhibit a Symbol of the Divine Power and Authority to a People of too groſs Sentiments, without ſuch a viſible Repreſentation, ever to comprehend it.

[p] ANOTHER learned Prelate of our own Nation, equally inclined to excuſe this Action of *Aaron*'s, ſuppoſes, that he took his Pattern from Part of what he ſaw on the holy Mount, [q] when the *Shechinah* of God came down upon it, attended with Angels, ſome of which were *Cherubims*, or Angels appearing in the Form of Oxen: But this Opinion is inconſiſtent with the great Care that was taken on *Sinai*, not to furniſh any Pretext for Idolatry, and the Caution that *Moſes* gives the People to that Purpoſe, *Take ye therefore good heed unto yourſelves (for ye ſaw no Manner of Similitude, on the Day, that the Lord ſpake unto you in Horeb, out of the Midſt of the Fire) leſt ye corrupt yourſelves,*

[d] *Saurin*'s Diſſertation, and *Patrick*'s Commentary. [e] *R. Jehudah*, in *Lib. Cozri, P.* 1. *Sect.* 97. [f] Vid. *Shemoth Rabba, Sect* 41. *Fol.* 156. [g] Vid. *Auguſt. Tom.* 4. *Quæſt.* 41. in Exod. [h] The *Ambiguity* of the Words, wherein *Aaron* excuſes himſelf, *I caſt it*, i. e. the Gold, which they gave me, *into the Fire, and there came out this Calf*, Exod. xxxii. 24. gave Occaſion to this Conceit; whereas his Intent only is, to plead, in Mitigation of his Fault, that he was not actually the Maker of the Image; and therefore he repreſents, that they required him to make them a God; that thereupon he aſked them for Materials; that they brought him their Gold: *Then*, ſays he, *I caſt it into the Fire*, I delivered it out of my Hands to the Uſe it was deſigned for, into the Furnace, in which it was to be melted, *and there came out this Calf*, i. e. "I was no further concern'd in what "was done; the next Thing I ſaw was a Calf: What was done farther, was done by others, not by me; the "Workmen made the Calf, and brought it to me," Exod. xxxii. 24. And therefore, to make this his Excuſe conſiſtent with what went before, the Words in the fourth Verſe of this Chapter, *he received them at their Hands, and he faſhioned it*, &c. by a ſmall Emendation in the Text, may be rendered, not in the *Plural*, but in the *Singular* Number, thus: — *And he received it* [i. e. the Gold] *at their Hands; and they formed it into a Mould, and they made a molten Calf, and they ſaid, this is thy God, O Iſrael.* Vid. *Shuckford*'s Connect. Vol. III. Lib. 11. [i] Nay, ſome of the *Jews* go a great deal farther, and ſay, that the Devil entered into this Calf, and made it roar, like a Bull, to ſtrike the greater Awe into the People; as *R. Judah* ſaith in *Pirke Elieſer*, C. 45. and in *Tanchuma*, they ſay, it not only roared, but danced alſo. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [k] Exod. xxxii. 4. [l] Pſal. cvi. 20. [m] So it was among the *Phœnicians*, the *Egyptians*, and the *Romans*, as *Patrick* ſhews in his Commentary. [n] *Patrick*, Ibid. [o] *Saurin*'s Diſſert. [p] *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry, C. 6. [q] Exod. xxiv. 10.

yourſelves, and make you a graven Image; the Similitude of any Figure, the Likeneſs of any Male or Female, the Likeneſs of any Beaſt, that is on the Earth, the Likeneſs of any winged Fowl, that flieth in the Air, the Likeneſs of any Thing, that creepeth on the Ground, the Likeneſs of any Fiſh, &c. Where the Holy Spirit *enumerates Animals* of all Kinds, and poſitively aſſures us, that none of their Forms or Figures appeared upon the Mount.

THE Generality of Interpreters, who are not ſo inclined to excuſe *Aaron*'s Fault, have run into this Opinion, that he made Choice of the Figure of an *Ox*, or a *Calf*, in Compliance to the Prejudice of the People, and becauſe that Creature was worſhipped in *Egypt*. That the *Iſraelites* were ſorely infected with the Idolatry of the *Egyptians*, we have many plain Proofs [r] from Scripture to convince us; that all Sorts of Animals were worſhipped by the *Egyptians*, and, among the *terreſtrial*, more eſpecially the *Ox*, [s] is what the ſeveral Authors, who have treated of the Affairs of *Egypt*, do abundantly teſtify; and that the Idolatry of Animals, and more eſpecially of the Ox, was eſtabliſhed in *Egypt*, during the Sojourning of the *Iſraelites* in that Land, is more than probable from thoſe Words of *Moſes* to *Pharaoh*, [t] *If we ſacrifice the Abomination of the Egyptians before their Eyes*, i. e. [u] If we ſacrifice to our God Oxen, Sheep, and Goats, which the *Egyptians* worſhip and adore, and, conſequently, make an Abomination to the Lord, *will they not ſtone us?* So that it ſeems moſt rational to ſuppoſe, that this Image was made in Compliance to the giddy Humour of the People, and in Imitation of the *Egyptians*, who worſhipped their Idol *Apis*, or *Serapis*, not only in a living *Ox*, but in an Image made after the Similitude of an Ox, with a *Buſhel* on his Head, in Memory (as ſome ſay) of *Pharaoh*'s Dreams, and *Joſeph*'s Proviſion againſt the Dearth, that enſued them; if it were apparent, that the Worſhip of the *Egyptian Apis* was prior to the Formation of this *Golden Calf*, which happens to be a Point, wherein [w] the Learned are not ſo well agreed.

HOWEVER this be, 'tis a great Inſtance of the Clemency of God, as well as [x] the Prevalency of a great Man's Prayers, that *Aaron*, who, upon all Accounts, cannot but be thought guilty of a great Offence, upon the Interceſſion of his Brother *Moſes*, was not only pardoned, when [y] others were devoted to Deſtruction, but both he and his Sons, not long after, admitted to the Honour of the *Prieſthood*, and to have that Honour ſettled upon his Family, in an *hereditary* Succeſſion. Two of his Sons, however, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, were ſcarce inveſted in their Office, before they violated the Obligations of it, and incurred a ſevere Penalty for ſo doing: [z] *They took their Cenſers* (as *Moſes* has related the Fact) *and put Fire therein, and put Incenſe thereon, and offered ſtrange Fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not; and there went out Fire from the Lord, and devoured them.* Now, in order to know what this Offence of *offering ſtrange Fire before the Lord* was, we muſt obſerve, that, after the Conſecration of *Aaron* and his Sons to the Prieſtly-Office, [a] a miraculous *Fire from the Lord*, *i. e.* a Fire, which either came down immediately from Heaven, or out of the Cloud, which covered the Tabernacle, conſumed the firſt Victims, which *Aaron* offered for a Burnt-Offering: That God had expreſſly commanded, [b] that *the Fire, which was upon the Altar*, ſhould not be ſuffered *to go out*, which (according to the Conſent of moſt Interpreters) ſignifies, that the ſaid *miraculous* Fire, which had confirmed the *Inſtallation* of *Aaron* and his Sons, after ſo ſurprizing a Manner, ſhould be kept *alive*, and burning with the utmoſt Care; and that, as it was required [c] by another Law, that at this very Fire *Aaron* was to kindle the Incenſe, he offered to God in *the moſt Holy Place*, on the *great Day of Expiation*; ſo, we may take it for granted, that the like Law was impoſed on the *inferior* Prieſts, with relation to the Incenſe, which they were to offer every Day before God, *in the Holy Place*. We have, indeed, no Mention made of ſuch a Law, but the Hiſtory, we are commenting upon,

Of the World, 2514, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 1490, &c.

Nadab *and* Abihu's *Crime.*

[r] *Vid.* Joſh. xxiv. 14. Ezek. xx. 7, 8. Ch. xxii. 3, 8. [s] *Vid.* Strab. Lib. 17. de Egyptiacis Templis. Herod. L. 2. Diodor. L. 1. & Plutar. Mor. Lib. de Iſide & Oſiride. [t] Exod. viii. 26. [u] The *Chaldee* Interpreters, the *Syriac*, and others, take the Paſſage in this Senſe, which ſeems, indeed, to be the moſt obvious. [w] *Vid.* Ger. Voſſ. de Idololat. C. 6. Bochart Hieroz. P. I. L. 2. c. 2. and *Tenniſon* of Idolatry. [x] In the Prayer, which *Moſes* makes for the Forgiveneſs of this Offence, there is this Expreſſion of a particular Vehemence: *But yet if thou wilt, forgive their Sins, and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the Book, which thou haſt written*, Exod. xxxii. 32. Whereby *Moſes* does not (as ſome imagine) wiſh Damnation to himſelf, but only to be excuſed from living any longer, if God ſhall refuſe to grant him his Requeſt: For the Expreſſion has a manifeſt Reference to the Numbering the People of *Iſrael*, whoſe Names were thereupon written in a *Regiſter*, and, as they died, *blotted out every* Year: And therefore we find him, upon the like Occaſion, praying in the ſame Senſe; *If thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of Hand*, Numb. xi. 15. [y] Exod. xxxii. 27, &c. [z] Lev. x. 1. [a] Ibid. ix. 24. [b] Ibid. vi. 12. [c] Ibid. xvi. 12.

gives us ſtrong Preſumption, that the Uſe of this Fire *only* was preſcribed; and therefore the Words, *which he commanded them not*, are thought to imply an expreſs Prohibition of any other.

Different Opinions concerning it.

THE Crime then of *Nadab* and *Abihu* conſiſted in their kindling with Fire, (different from that, which was continually on the Altar of Burnt-Offerings, and, conſequently, different from that, which God had appointed them to uſe) the Incenſe, which their Office of Prieſts obliged them to offer up to God, every Morning and Evening, in the *Holy Place*. * Other Offences indeed have been laid to their Charge, [d] *ſome* pretending, that they endeavoured to intrude into the *moſt Holy Place*, (which was not permitted them to enter) becauſe, immediately after the Recital of their Death, in another Place, *Moſes* relates, how God commanded him to ſpeak unto *Aaron*, [e] *that he come not, at all Times, into the Holy Place, within the Veil, before the Mercy-Seat, that he die not:* And [f] *others* inſinuating, that they were guilty of *Intemperance*, at the Entertainment made at their Inſtallation; becauſe, after the Relation of their fatal End, *Moſes*, by God's Order, gives this Injunction to *Aaron*, and the Remainder of his Sons; [g] *Do not drink Wine nor ſtrong Drink, thou, nor thy Sons with thee, when ye go into the Tabernacle of the Congregation, leſt ye die: It ſhall be a Statute for ever thro' your Generations, that ye may put a Difference between Holy and Unholy, between Unclean and Clean:* But theſe are no more than bare Surmiſes, that have no proper Foundation in the foregoing Texts; nor is there any Occaſion to hunt out for Paſſages to augment theſe Offenders Crime.

The Heinouſneſs of it.

NADAB and *Abihu* had not only been admitted, in common with the reſt of their Brethren, to the Honour of the Prieſthood, which, among the *Jews*, was a *Dignity* of no ſmall Eſteem; [h] but had particular *Motives*, which the others had not, to the Obſervance of all God's Precepts; [i] as having had the Privilege of ſeeing the *Symbols* of the Divine Preſence, on that *formidable* Mount, from whence his Laws were promulgated, without being conſumed. The higher therefore their Station was, and the more diſtinguiſhing the Favours they had received, the more provoking was their Affront, in attempting to adulterate an Ordinance of God's Inſtitution. *Common Fire*, they thought, might ſerve the Purpoſe of burning Incenſe, as well as that which was held more *ſacred*; at leaſt, in the Gaiety, or rather *Naughtineſs* of their Hearts, they were minded to try the Experiment, even in Oppoſition to the Divine Command; and therefore it was juſt and requiſite in God (eſpecially [k] in the *Beginning* of the Prieſthood, and when one *Alteration* in a Divine Precept might, in Proceſs of Time, be productive of many more) to inflict an exemplary Puniſhment upon them, that *others might hear and fear, and not commit the like Abominations.*

Aaron's *Behaviour upon it.*

IT may be imagined, perhaps, that the Injunction was a little too ſevere, [l] which, upon Pain of Death, forbad *Aaron* to ſhew any Tokens of Sorrow for ſo great a Loſs. "What, ſhould not a Father, in ſuch Circumſtances, be permitted to devote "ſome Time to Grief, which the fatal End of two of his Children did ſo juſtly call "for? Should Religion reſtrain our Tears, when we ſee thoſe, whom Nature has "ſo cloſely united to us, die impenitent? Can any Conſolation be a Balance to this "Reflection, or any Grief exceſſive, which is cauſed by the Loſs of a Soul?" ‡ Now, tho' we are not allowed to judge, or determine any Thing concerning the *eternal Fate* of Mens Souls; and our Religion, which requires us to *tremble* for our own Salvation, requires us to hope always for that of others; yet, in Caſe we were aſſured, even by a *Divine Revelation*, that thoſe, to whom we were united by the moſt tender Bonds of Nature, were for ever ſentenced to the Divine Wrath; even then, it would become us to reſign them to the Will of God. *Aaron*, however, had no ſuch Revelation: He might preſume, that the Juſtice of God, being ſatisfied with the *temporal* Puniſhment of his Sons, might be appeaſed, with relation to their eternal State, and that † *the Fleſh being deſtroyed, their Spirits might be ſaved in the Day of the Lord.* He knew too, how much himſelf had lately offended in the Matter of the *Golden Calf*, and might juſtly think, that God had called his Sin to Remembrance, in the Deſtruction of his Sons: He acknowledged therefore the Righteouſneſs of God, *in all*

* *Le Clerc*, in his Commentary upon *Leviticus* xix. 23, is of Opinion, that when *Aaron* came down from the Altar, after he had offered the appointed Sacrifices, *and went with* Moſes *into the Tabernacle of the Congregation*, it was to have *Moſes* ſhew him how he was to burn the Incenſe, according to the Commandment of God, *Exod.* xxx. 7, 8. And that *Aaron*, when he was inſtructed by *Moſes*, ordered his Sons, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, to do the ſame, which they badly obeyed.

[d] *Le Clerc* on *Leviticus* x. [e] Lev. xvi. 1, 2. [f] *Patrick* on *Leviticus* x. [g] Lev. x. 9, 10. [h] *Saurin's* Diſſertat. [i] Exod. xxiv. [k] *Le Clerc's* Commentary. [l] Lev. x. 3, 6. ‡ *Saurin's* Diſſertat. † 1 Cor. v. 5.

all that he had brought upon him: He wiſely adored the Divine Hand, which, though armed with Thunder, was not leſs worthy of Homage; [m] *he was dumb* (as the Scripture expreſſes it) *and opened not his Mouth, becauſe it was the Lord's Doing.*

WHILST the Children of *Iſrael* lay before the holy *Mount*, but were now upon their Removal from thence, their *Encampments* and *Marches*, by the ſpecial Order of God, were diſpoſed in this Manner. [n] In their Encampment, they were form'd into four *Battalions*, each under one general *Standard*; and theſe were ſo placed, that they incloſed the Tabernacle. [o] The Standard of the Camp of *Judah* was firſt, which conſiſted of the Tribes of *Judah*, *Iſſachar*, and *Zabulun*, the Sons of *Leah*; and was pitched over-againſt the Tabernacle, on the *Eaſt* Side of it, or towards the *Riſing of the Sun*. On the *South* Side was the Standard of the Camp of *Reuben*; under which were the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Simeon*, the Sons of *Leah* likewiſe, and of *Gad*, the Son of *Zilpah*, her Maid. On the *Weſt* Side was the Standard of the Camp of *Ephraim*; under which were the Tribes of *Ephraim*, *Manaſſeh*, and *Benjamin:* And on the *North* Side was the Standard of the Camp of *Dan*; under which were the Tribes of *Dan* and *Naphtali*, the Sons of *Bilhah*, *Rachel*'s Maid, and of *Aſher*, the Son of *Zilpah*. [p] Between the four great Camps and the Tabernacle were pitched four leſs Camps, conſiſting of the *Prieſts* and *Levites*, near to the Tabernacle, where their Service lay. On the *Eaſt* Side encamped *Moſes* and *Aaron*, with *Aaron*'s Sons, who had the Charge of the Sanctuary. On the *South* Side were the *Kohathites*. a Part of the *Levites* deſcended from *Kohath*, the ſecond Son of *Levi*. On the *Weſt* Side, behind the Tabernacle, ſtood the *Gerſhonites*, another Part of the *Levites*, deſcended from *Gerſhon*, *Levi*'s Eldeſt Son; and on the *North* Side were placed the *Merarites*, the remaining Part of the *Levites*, who were ſprung from *Merari*, *Levi*'s Youngeſt Son.

The Iſraelites *Manner of encamping,*

THIS was the Order of their encamping; and the Manner of their *diſlodging*, and *marching*, was thus: [q] When they were to remove, (which was when the Cloud was taken off the Tabernacle) the Trumpet was ſounded, and, upon the *firſt Alarm*, the Standard of *Judah* being raiſed, the three Tribes which belonged to it, ſet forward. Then the Tabernacle being taken down, the *Gerſhonites* and *Merarites* attended the Waggons, with the Boards and Staves of it. When theſe were on their March, a *ſecond* Alarm was ſounded; upon which the Standard of *Reuben*'s Camp advanced, with the three Tribes under it. After them followed the *Kohathites*, bearing the *Sanctuary*; which being more holy, and leſs cumberſome, than the heavy Boards and Pillars of the Tabernacle, was not put into a Waggon, but carried on their Shoulders. Next followed the Standard of *Ephraim*'s Camp, with the three Tribes belonging to it; and laſt of all, the other three Tribes, under the Standard of *Dan*, brought up the *Rear*.

and marching.

IT will not be expected, that we ſhould follow theſe People in all their Marches and Encampments, and take Notice of every Accident that befel them in the Wilderneſs, before they arrived at the *Land of Promiſe:* Let it ſuffice, that in this, and other Parts of their Hiſtory, we animadvert only upon ſuch *Occurrences*, as are moſt remarkable, and have been the Subject of ſome *Theological* Diſquiſition.

[r] THE long Stay which the *Iſraelites* had made in the Wilderneſs of *Sinai*, had ſo accuſtomed them to Eaſe and Indolence, that a March of *three Days* (and that not without ſome Reſt and Relaxation to be ſure, otherwiſe they could not have gathered the *Manna*, which fell every Night about their Tents, and [s] would keep no longer than one Day) made them *murmur* and complain. God had heretofore pardoned their Offences of this Kind, and even indulged them in every Thing they murmured for; but, ſince the Promulgation of the Law, he began to treat them with more *Severity*, and to puniſh their Refractorineſs in Proportion to the Knowledge, that he had given them: And therefore, *a Fire*, which the Scripture calls, *the Fire of the* Lord, as either coming immediately from Heaven, [t] like Lightning, or from the Pillar of the Cloud and Fire over the Tabernacle, *burnt among them, and conſumed* [u] *ſome in every Part of the Camp*; or, if the Words (as they are in our Tranſlation) be rendered, *in the*

The Fire from God, what.

[m] Pſal. xxxix. 9. [n] *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [o] Each Standard had the Sign of ſome *Creature* engraven on it: That of *Judah* had the Image of a *Lion*; *Reuben*, a *Man*; *Ephraim*, an *Ox*; and *Dan*, an *Eagle*. For what Reaſon theſe *Hieroglyphicks* were appointed, it is not ſo eaſy to diſcern, though ſome have imagined, that the *Man* denotes Wiſdom; the *Lion*, Power; the *Ox*, Aſſiduity; and the *Eagle*, Expedition in the Execution of God's Commands. *Howell*, ibid. [p] Between each Tribe, in every one of theſe Quarters, as *Joſephus* tells us [in *Antiq. l.* 3. *c.* 11.] there were diſtant Spaces, like Streets, where there was Buying and Selling, as in a *Market*, and Tradeſmen in their *Shops*, in the Manner of a City. [q] *Howell*, ibid. [r] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [s] Exod. xvi. [t] 2 Kings, i. 12. [u] So *Bochart* has demonſtrated, that the Word, which we tranſlate the *utmoſt Parts*, ſignifies *in* all, or *throughout*. *Hieroz.* P. II. L. I. c. 34.

the utmoſt Parts of the Camp, then may the Suppoſition * of a learned Commentator ſeem not improbable, *viz.* that, which is here called *Fire*, was an *hot* burning Wind, in theſe *Deſert* Places not *unuſual*, and, many Times, very *peſtilential*, but, on this Occaſion *preternaturally* raiſed, in the *Rear* of the Army, to puniſh the *Stragglers*, and ſuch as, out of Pretence of Wearineſs, lagged behind.

THIS Diſaſter, inſtead of terrifying them into their Duty, did but increaſe their Murmuring. They began now to impute their *Debility*, and Wearineſs in marching, to the Poverty of their *Diet*; to upbraid *Moſes* with the Plenty of ſtrong Food, they had in *Egypt*; and, with Vehemence and Importunity enough, to clamour for Fleſh. Here it was, that *Moſes*'s Faith failed him: For God having promiſed to give the People Fleſh in Abundance, even for the Space of a whole Month, the holy Man, as in a ſudden Lapſe of Mind, ſeems to forget the Miracles which God had formerly wrought: [x] *The People*, ſays he, *among whom I am, are ſix hundred thouſand Footmen; and thou haſt ſaid, I will give them Fleſh, that they may eat a whole Month; ſhall the Flocks and Herds be ſlain for them, to ſuffice them? Or ſhall all the Fiſh of the Sea be gathered together for them to ſuffice them?* Theſe are ſuppoſed to be ſome of the Words, which *Moſes* [y] *ſpake unadviſedly with his Lips*, and for which God gave him this gentle Rebuke, [z] *Is the Lord's Hand waxen ſhort? Thou ſhalt ſee whether my Word ſhall come to paſs unto thee, or not.* Accordingly there aroſe a mighty Wind, which brought vaſt Numbers of [a] Quails, from the Sea-Coaſt, within a Mile of the Camp; which the People, ſtill diffident of God's Providence, fell greedily to gathering, as if they were never to have any more. However, while they were regaling themſelves with theſe *Dainties*, the Scripture tells us, that God *ſent* [b] *a great Plague among them:* But of what particular Kind that Plague was, it is not ſo well agreed among *Commentators*.

Moſes's *Diffidence.*

The Plague, upon ſending the Quails, what.

[c] SOME, from the Words of the Pſalmiſt, [d] *a Fire was kindled in Jacob*, have been apt to imagine, that the *Plague*, here ſpoken of, was that ſame *Fire*, which is mentioned, in the Beginning of the *eleventh* Chapter of *Numbers*; and therefore they ſuppoſe, that, in the three firſt Verſes of it, *Moſes* but juſt touches upon what he afterwards *re-aſſumes*, and, in the reſt of the Chapter, treats of it more copiouſly: But, ſeeing there are ſo many Incidents intervening between the *third* and the *thirty-third* Verſe of that Chapter, [e] it ſeems more likely, that there was a *double* Murmuring among the People, and a *double* Plague inflicted on them. [f] Stomachs, that, for a whole Year, had been accuſtomed to the Digeſtion of no other Food, than the light Nouriſhment of *Manna*, may well be ſuppoſed not ſo able to bear what was more heavy and ſolid; and therefore others have thought, that this was the only Puniſhment which God ſent upon them. The Words of *Moſes* may indeed be underſtood in this Senſe, as well as any other, *while the Fleſh was yet between their Teeth, e're it was chewed, the Wrath of the Lord was kindled againſt the People, and the Lord ſmote the People with a very great Plague*; which may properly enough ſignify a Death, occaſioned by their eating of the ſaid Food to Exceſs: Or, if we will needs have it ſome particular *Diſeaſe*, [g] the Import of the Words ſeems to remit us to the *Squinancy*, or ſome ſuch *ſuffocating* Diſtemper, which choaked them, even while they were eating, or ſoon after. And to this the Account of the Pſalmiſt gives ſome Countenance and Confirmation: [h] *ſo they did eat, and were well filled; for he gave them their own Deſire, they were not diſappointed of their Luſt: But, while the Meat was yet in their Mouths, the heavy Wrath of God came upon them, and ſlew the Choiceſt of them*; inſomuch that they, from their luſting after Fleſh, gave to the Place, where they were buried, a Name, that ſignifies the *Graves of Concupiſcence*.

The Plague, upon ſending the Quails, what.

Korah's *Rebellion, upon what Pretences.*

AT what Time, or in what Encampment, the Rebellion of *Korah* and his Adherents happened, the ſacred Hiſtory has not informed us; but in this all Interpreters agree, [k] that the Cauſe of the Mutiny was his Reſentment, upon the Advancement of

* *Le Clerc*'s Commentary on *Numb.* xi. [x] Numb. xi. 21, 22. [y] Pſal. cvi. 33. [z] Numb. xi. 23. [a] Theſe Quails muſt be ſuppoſed to come from the *Arabian*, or *Red-Sea*; and, as *Paran* and *Kibroth Hattaavah* were *North*, or *North-Eaſt* of the *Red-Sea*, it muſt be a *Southerly* Wind that brought them thither. Whether they were *Quails* or *Locuſts*, is a Matter of great Diſpute among the Learned. The great *Bochart*, in his *Hierozoicon*, [*P. II. L. i. c.* 15.] has produced many weighty Arguments and Authorities to prove they were the *former*; but the learned *Ludolphus* (whom we mentioned before on this Subject) in his Commentary upon his *Ethiopick Hiſtory*, [*L.* 1. c. 4.] is ſuppoſed by ſome to plead, with more Juſtneſs and Truth of Reaſon, for the *latter*; however that be, they both agree, that Quails and Locuſts were bred, in great Plenty, about the Banks of the *Red-Sea*: *Bochart* proves from *Joſephus*, [*Antiq. L. iii. c.* 1.] and *Pliny*, [*L. x.* c. 23.] as to Quails; and *Lodolphus*, from *Strabo*, [*L. xvi.*] and *Doodorus Siculus*, [*L. iii.*] as to Locuſts; ſo that, which ſoever they were, 'tis very preſumable, that they came from the *Red-Sea*. [b] Numb. xi. 33. [c] *Bochart* and *Menochius*. [d] Pſal. lxxviii. 21, [e] *Le Clerc*, ubi ſupra. [f] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [g] *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [h] Pſal. lxxviii. 29, &c. [i] Kibroth Hattaavah. [k] *Patrick*'s Commentary on *Numb.* xvi.

of *Aaron* and his Family, ſo high above the reſt of the *Levites*. It may be thought likewiſe, that he did not digeſt [l] the late Preferment of *Elizaphan*, the Son of *Uzziel*, who was the youngeſt Son of *Kohath*, to be chief of the Family of the *Kohathites*, which of Right, [m] he thought, belonged to him; and therefore finding himſelf too weak to make an Inſurrection alone, he perſuaded *Dathan* and *Abiram*, of the Tribe of *Reuben*, and thoſe, in whom they had an Intereſt, to join him, upon another Pretence, *viz.* that they were deſcended from the eldeſt Son of *Iſrael*, to whom the chief Authority in the Nation (which *Moſes* had uſurped) belonged; that he had preferred the Tribe of *Judah* to [n] the principal Place, or Poſt of Honour in their Encampments; and, in the Choice of the *ſeventy Elders*, to be his Aſſiſtants in the Government, had left them out of the Number.

UPON theſe, and ſuch like Grounds, the Heads of the Faction may be thought to have proceeded, *Korah* ſeeking the *Prieſtbood*, and the Sons of *Reuben* the *Civil Dignity*. To juſtify himſelf therefore, as well as his Brother *Aaron*, as to the Adminiſtration of the Government, both *Civil* and *Eccleſiaſtical*, which God had entruſted them with, *Moſes* puts the Matter upon this Iſſue: [o] "Hereby ye ſhall know, that "the Lord hath commiſſioned me to do what I have done, and that I have under-"taken nothing in Gratification of my own Pride or Ambition: If theſe Men die the "common Way of Nature, and be viſited like other Men, then may it be taken for "granted, that the Lord hath not ſent me; but, if he he deal with them after a ſtrange "and unuſual Manner, and the Earth opening her Mouth ſwallow them up alive, "then ſhall ye underſtand, that theſe Men have provoked the Lord." [p] And no ſooner had he ſpoken theſe Words, but terrible Convulſions heaved the labouring Earth, and, its Surface cleaving aſunder, *Korah* and his Faction, [q] with all their Goods and Families, were ſwallowed up alive, and, the Ground cloſing upon them, periſhed. The other Leaders in this Rebellion, to the Number of two hundred and fifty Men, who had profanely attempted to offer Incenſe contrary to the Law, were deſtroyed by a *miraculous* Fire; and when, the next Day, the People murmured againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, as if they had been the Authors of theſe Mens Death, God ſent a *Peſtilence* among them, which, in an Inſtant of Time, (as it were) carried off fourteen thouſand and ſeven hundred of them; and would have proceeded farther, had not the *Incenſe* of the High-Prieſt made Atonement for the People, and put a Stop to the Mortality. *It's Puniſhment, and the Removal of it.*

[r] A CERTAIN Doctor of the *Jewiſh* Church, upon this Occaſion, applies to *Aaron* the following Words of the Prophet: [s] *He poured out his Soul unto Death; he was numbered with the Tranſgreſſors, and bare the Sins of many, and made Interceſſion for the Tranſgreſſors.* [t] But had that *Rabbin* been inſtructed in a better *School*, and thereby enabled to penetrate farther into the Meaning of the *Prophets*, he would have perceived that *Aaron*, in this Circumſtance, was a *Type* and Figure of him, whom *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of in that *myſterious* Chapter: and who repreſents himſelf in another Book, (rejected indeed by the *Jews*, but dictated by the ſame unerring Spirit) as [u] *holding a golden Cenſer, in which he offered Incenſe, whoſe Smoke aſcended up before God, being mixt with the Prayers of the Saints*, which, by that *Myſtical* Union, were made more efficacious.

THE Acceptance of *Aaron*'s Office, in putting a Stop to the Plague, was a ſufficient Teſtimony of his Right to the Prieſthood, by God's Appointment; but, to put the Matter paſt all Controverſy for the future, God commanded *Moſes* to take a *Rod* from each Tribe, and to write, or engrave upon it, the Name of the *Prince* of that Tribe, to which it belonged; on the Rod of the Tribe of *Levi*, to write *Aaron*'s Name, as being the Prince thereof; to lay up all theſe Rods together in the *Tabernacle*; and to let the People know, that God would cauſe the Rod of that Man, whom he intended to honour with the Dignity of the Prieſthood, to bloſſom. Why God made choice of a Rod for the Inſtrument of the Miracle he was about to work, is a Matter that has been diſputed by Commentators; but the moſt probable Opinion is, * that for this Reaſon he did it, becauſe the Princes of the Tribes were uſed to carry *Rods* in their Hands, as *Badges* of their Authority. [x] Some will needs have this Rod of *Aaron* to have been the ſame with that of *Moſes*, where- *Aaron's Rod bloſſoming.* *Not the ſame with that of Moſes.*

[l] Numb. iii. 30. [m] As being the ſecond Son of *Kohath*. [n] Numb. ii. 3. [o] Ibid. xvi. 28, &c. [p] *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [q] Except ſome of *Korah*'s Sons. *See* Numb. xxvi. 11. [r] *R. Menachem* on Numb. xvi. *Paraſche Korah ſub fin.* [s] Iſa. liii. 12. [t] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations, and *Patrick*'s Commentary on Numb. xvi. [u] Rev. viii. 3. * *Ainſworth*, on Numb. xvii. [x] *Vid.* R. Simon apud Galatin. L. VI. c. 15.

wherewith he wrought ſo many Miracles in *Egypt*, and at the *Red-Sea*; and concerning it the *Cabbaliſts* tell us many ſtrange Stories, *viz.* that it came originally from a Branch of the Tree of Life, which an Angel gave to *Seth*, who planted it in the Wilderneſs, where *Moſes* found it grown to a Tree, and, by God's Direction, cut this Rod from it: While others pretend, that it was given to *Adam*, and by him to *Enoch*, till it came to *Joſeph*, in whoſe Houſe the *Egyptians* found it, when he died, and brought it to *Pharaoh*; from whom *Jethro* ſtole it, and gave it to *Moſes*; with Abundance more of the ſame *romantick* Stuff. But, as there is not the leaſt Intimation of its being the Rod of *Moſes*, on the contrary, it is expreſsly called [y] the Rod of *Aaron*; [z] ſo it had not been a ſufficient Argument to convince the Infidelity of the *Iſraelites*, if *Aaron*'s Rod had not been of the ſame Kind with all the reſt. For they might have aſcribed what came to paſs to the ſingular *Quality* and Virtue of that Rod, (eſpecially had it been *Moſes*'s *Wonder-working Rod)* and not to a *ſpecial* Hand of God, appearing to eſtabliſh the Authority of *Aaron:* Whereas on the contrary we find that the Miracle had it's intended Effect. For no ſooner was *Aaron*'s Rod, whereon were the *Buds*, and *Bloſſoms*, and Fruit of an *Almond-Tree*, produced, but the People immediately acknowledged their Error, and from that Time forward, we hear no more of any Diſputes with the Tribe of *Levi*, concerning their Privileges, nor any Repining at the ſuperior Authority of *Aaron*.

Of the World, 2552, &c. Before Chriſt, 1452, &c.

Water out of the Rock.

BUT it was not long, before they gave an Inſtance, in another Kind, of their mutinous and rebellious Temper, which proved of fatal Conſequence to *Aaron* and *Moſes* both. The Waters, which *Moſes*, above thirty-eight Years before, had made to come out of the Rock at *Horeb*, had hitherto followed the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, which Way ſoever their Orders were to march; but, [a] whether God was minded, at this Time, to try the Faith of this *new* Generation, (for moſt of their Fathers, for whom the Waters of *Horeb* were provided, were dead) or that he intended very ſpeedily to bring them into a Country, wherein they might be ſupplied without a Miracle; ſo it was, that the Waters, (as we ſaid) which all along followed them in their Journies, began now to *fail*, being either ſtopped in the Rock from whence they iſſued out, or falling into the *Red-Sea* (as ſome imagine) at *Ezion-Geber*, [b] the Place of their laſt Encampment, were there ſwallowed up. Upon this Occaſion, the People, as uſual, began to murmur; *Moſes*, as his Cuſtom was, makes his Addreſs to God; and God, as he never failed to do, promiſed them Relief: [c] *Take the Rod*, ſays he, *and gather the Aſſembly together, thou, and Aaron thy Brother, and ſpeak ye unto the Rock before their Eyes, and it ſhall give forth his Water, and thou ſhalt bring forth to them Water out of the Rock; ſo that thou ſhalt give the Congregation, and their Beaſts, Drink.* This was the Order, God gave *Moſes*, and this the Promiſe of the Miracle, he intended to work. How it was, Commentators are at Variance to determine; but certain it is, that there was ſome great Default, both in *Moſes* and *Aaron*, either in not giving ſufficient Credit to the Miracle, or not executing the Order, as God appointed; becauſe we find him decreeing, that they ſhould not live [d] *to bring the Congregation into the Land, that he had given them; becauſe they believed not, to ſanctify him in the Eyes of the Children of Iſrael*; which accordingly happened, for *Aaron* [e] was *gathered to his People*, the very next Station they came to, and *Moſes* not very long after.

Moſes's *Offence hereupon, what.*

Several Opinions concerning it.

THE *Talmudiſts* have a very odd Conceit, that the great Sin, for which *Moſes* and *Aaron* were hindered from going into the Land of *Canaan*, was, becauſe they called God's People, [f] *Rebels*; and from hence they have formed a Maxim, that *he, who treats the Church, which ought to be honoured, with Contempt, is, as if he blaſphemed the Name of God.* But, in Oppoſition to this, it ſhould be conſidered, [g] that *Moſes*, on this Occaſion, uſes the very ſame Language that God himſelf does, when he bids him *lay up the Rod of Aaron,* [h] *as a Token againſt the Rebels*; and that, if this was the Thing, wherein he offended God, he, not long after, committed the ſame, in an higher Degree again, (which Nobody can think he would have done, had it already coſt him ſo dear) when he told the People plainly, [i] *Ye have been rebellious againſt the Lord, ever ſince I knew you.* Several *Chriſtian*, as well as *Jewiſh* Expoſitors, think, that the Tranſgreſſion of *Moſes* lay in *ſmiting* the Rock, when he was only ordered to *ſpeak to it:* And, for the Support of this, they alledge, [k] that God is an *abſolute* Sovereign, expecting an abſolute Obedience, and exacting Puniſhment, even of his greateſt *Favourites*,

[y] Numb. xvii. 6. [z] *Patrick*'s Commentary on Numb. xvii. [a] Ibid. on Numb. xx.
[b] Numb. xxxiii. 36. [c] Ibid. xx. 8. [d] Ibid. *ver.* 12. [e] Ibid. *ver.* 24. [f] Ibid. *ver.* 10.
[g] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [h] Numb. xvii. 10. [i] Deut. ix. 24. [k] *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible.

Favourites, when they pretend to vary from his Commands, or to mix their own Conceptions with his Directions. But though there ſeems ſomething in this, yet it is not eaſy to conceive, for what Purpoſe God appointed him to take the Rod, if he was not to ſmite the Rock with it, as he had done before. 'Tis certain, that [l] the divine Writers, who have touched upon this Hiſtory, have made mention of two Defaults in *Moſes*, his *Impatience* and his *Infidelity*; and therefore we may ſuppoſe, that, the Water now ceaſing [m] at the Time, when his Siſter *Miriam* died, he was exceedingly troubled on both theſe Accounts; that, unexpectedly aſſaulted by the People, who ought to have paid him more Reverence, eſpecially in a Time of *Mourning*, he fell into a greater Commotion of Anger and Indignation, than was uſually in him; and that this Anger gave ſuch a Diſturbance to his Mind, and ſo diſordered his Thoughts, that, when God bad him *take his Rod, and go, and ſpeak to the Rock*, he fell into ſome Doubt, whether the divine Goodneſs would grant the People the ſame Favour, he had done before; that therefore he ſtruck the Rock with *Diffidence*, believing it improbable, that ſuch worthleſs and rebellious Wretches ſhould deſerve a Miracle; and that, the Water not iſſuing at the firſt Stroke, his Diffidence increaſed into *Unbelief*, and a ſettled Perſuaſion, that they ſhould have none at all. Another Conjecture [n] of a very learned Man (which I mention, that the Reader may judge which has the beſt Appearance) is, —that *Moſes* and *Aaron* began to diſtruſt God's Promiſe of entering into the Land of *Canaan* at the End of forty Years, and to imagine, that, if they brought Water again out of the Rock, it muſt follow them as long as the other had done, and engage them again in the like Wanderings: And therefore the Comment he makes upon their Words is this: *What, ye Rebels, muſt we bring Water out of a Rock, as we did at Horeb? Are all our Hopes and Expectations of getting out of the Wilderneſs come to this? We never fetched you Water out of the Rock but once, and that was, becauſe we were to ſtay a long Time in the Wilderneſs, and muſt we begin our Abode here again, when we thought we had attained to the End of our Travels? O ye Rebels, have ye brought it to this Paſs by your Murmurings?* Whereupon he preſently ſmote the Rock in a Paſſion *twice*, whereas God commanded him only *to ſpeak to it*. But which ſoever of theſe Conjectures we are inclined to think moſt plauſible, there are few Writers, but who are diſpoſed to extenuate the Fault of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, [o] as not deſerving ſo ſevere a Puniſhment, had not God, in paſſing their Sentence, conſidered the *Excellency* and *Dignity* of their Perſons, in whom a Fault of this Nature was far more grievous, and inexcuſable, than in *ordinary* Men.

The moſt probable.

SECT. I.

Of the fiery Serpents, Balak, *and* Balaam, *&c.*

THE Wilderneſs, wherein the *Iſraelites* travelled, was full of all Kinds of Serpents; and *Moſes* repreſents it as one of the greateſt Mercies and Miracles, vouchſafed that People, that God [p] *led them through it, all along protecting them from theſe venomous Creatures*, until they began to complain [q] of the *Tediouſneſs* of their Journies, and their *Want* of Proviſions, even when they were ſupplied by a *miraculous* Providence every Day; and then he withdrew that Protection, and ſent Serpents among them, [r] whoſe *Biting* raiſed ſuch *Inflammations* in their Bodies, as occaſioned the Death of ſome of the moſt guilty, and violent Pains in all of them. Upon their Repentance, however, and the Interceſſion of his Servant *Moſes*, he appointed a Remedy of a *particular* Nature, [s] the Figure of one of theſe Serpents, made of poliſhed *Braſs*, and fixed upon a *Pole*, to cure all, that were bitten, as oft as they looked up to it. Whether the Sight of Braſs (as ſome *Naturaliſts* ſay) be hurtful or no, in ſuch Caſes, [t] this is certainly a Preſcription of *Phyſicians*, that ſuch People, as are bitten

Of the World, 2552, *&c.* *Before Chriſt*, 1452, *&c.*

The fiery Serpents.

The Brazen Serpent, *why made choice of.*

[l] Pſal. cvi. 32, 33. and Numb. xx. 10. [m] Numb. xx. 1. [n] *Lightfoot*'s Chronica Temp. *in* Numb. xx. [o] *Patrick*'s Commentary. [p] Deut. viii. 15. [q] Numb. xxi. 4, 5. [r] *Gerard Voſſius* is of Opinion, that the fiery Serpents, of which *Moſes* ſpeaks, were of the ſame Kind with thoſe, which the *Greeks* call Πρηστῆρες and Καύσωνες, and *Pliny* reckons among the *Sceleratiſſimi Serpentes*, the moſt pernicious Serpents, Lib. XXIV. c. 13. But the famous *Bochart* has, by many Arguments, proved, that they were a Sort of Serpents, called *Hydri*, becauſe, in Winter, they lived in Fens and Marſhes; but theſe Fens and watery Places being dried up in the Summer, they then living in dry Places, were thereupon called *Cherſydri*, and, in the hot Seaſons of the Year, had a moſt ſharp and ſtinging Poiſon, *Boch. Hieroz.* Part II. Lib. III. c. 13. Now, it being the latter End of *Auguſt*, when they infeſted the *Iſraelites*, they could not but be very venomous. *Patrick*'s Commentary.
[s] Numb. xxi. 8. [t] *Patrick*, ibid.

bitten with any *venomous* Beaſt, ſhould be kept from the Sight of the very *Image* of the Beaſt, from which they received ſuch Hurt; and therefore God might take Occaſion, from the *Contrariety* of Means, to make Uſe of this Kind of Remedy, that the *Iſraelites* might know and be perſuaded, that both their *Diſeaſe*, and their *Medicine* came from him.

Its Virtue, whence.

[u] A *Taliſman*, which (according to the common Account) is a certain *Piece of Metal*, made under the Influence of ſuch and ſuch *Planets* or *Conſtellations*, having wonderful Qualities, to beget Love, and overcome Enemies, to drive away noxious Animals, and to cure ſome Kinds of Diſeaſes, is a *chimerical* Notion; and thoſe, who pretend to reſemble the Figure, which God appointed *Moſes* to ſet up, to any of theſe vain Devices, deſerve our Scorn, more than our Confutation. The Author of the *Book of Wiſdom*, addreſſing himſelf to God, and ſpeaking of the *Iſraelites*, has imputed the Virtue of this Serpent to its true Cauſe, * *he that turned himſelf toward it, was not healed by the Thing, which he ſaw, but by Thee, who art the Saviour of all*; and therefore he calls it, in the foregoing Verſe, *a Sign, or Symbol of Salvation, to put them in Remembrance of the Commandment of the Law.* The only conſiderable Difficulty in the whole Tranſaction is, why God, who had forbidden all Manner of Images, ſhould, on this Occaſion, command one to be made. This the Jewiſh Doctors (as *Juſtin Martyr* [x] obſerves in his Days) could give no Account of; but had they known *Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified*, they might have ſoon perceived, [y] that God intended it for a *Type* of the Death of Chriſt, and the Manner, in which he was to die; and that the *Effects* of the Brazen Serpent, upon them who looked on it, did repreſent the *Virtue* received by true Believers from the Death of their Redeemer: For ſo we find Chriſt himſelf explaining the myſterious Meaning of it; [z] *as Moſes lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderneſs, even ſo muſt the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoſo believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life.*

A Type of Chriſt.

THE Hiſtory of the *Brazen Serpent* carries our Thoughts, naturally enough, to that of the Serpent of *Æſculapius*. 'Tis pretty remarkable, that the ſame Creature, whoſe Aſpect ſerved to cure the *Iſraelites*, ſhould be made the *Symbol* of the God of *Phyſick* among the Heathens; but, [a] whether that, which we find recorded by *Moſes* concerning the *Brazen Serpent*, be the *Origin* of what the *Heathens* tell us of *Æſculapius*, is a Queſtion yet undecided, and may poſſibly deſerve the *Elucidation* of the Learned. What we have further to obſerve of the *Moſaick Serpent* is, that it remained, among the *Jews*, above ſeven hundred Years, even to the Time of *Hezekiah*, King of *Judah*; but, when it came to be made an *Object* of Idolatry, and the People, for ſome Time, had paid their Incenſe and Adorations to it, [b] that pious King cauſed it to be broken to Pieces, and, by way of Contempt, called it *Nehuſhtan*, i. e. a Lump of Braſs only.

LONG had the *Iſraelites* travelled in the Wilderneſs; but approaching now to the Promiſed Land, and having defeated, and utterly deſtroyed the *Amorites*, and their King, who obſtructed their Paſſage thither; by the Rumour of their Arms, and Rapidity of their Conqueſts, they put *Balak*, King of *Moab* likewiſe, and his People, [c] into a terrible Conſternation. *Balak*, knowing himſelf too weak to engage the mighty Force of *Iſrael*, adviſed with the Chiefs of *Midian*, his Neighbours and Confederates, to whom he propoſed the common Danger of theſe Invaders; and the Reſult of the Conſultation was, that he ſhould ſend † Meſſengers to *Balaam*, the Son of *Beor*, who lived at *Pethor*, a City of *Meſopotamia*, by Preſents and Promiſes to invite

[u] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. * Wiſdom xvi. 7. [x] Contra Tryph. p. 322, 328. For there inſiſting upon it, as a Type of Chriſt, and appealing to the Company, what Reaſon (excluding that) could be given of this Matter; one of the *Jews* confeſſed, that he was in the Right, and that he himſelf had enquired for a Reaſon among the *Jewiſh* Maſters, and could meet with none. *Kidder*'s Demonſtration, *p.* 73. [y] Ibid. [z] John iii. 14, 15. [a] The Reader, that deſires to know what ſeveral Authors have ſaid, upon this Subject, will find them collected by *Saurin*, in his 63d Diſſertation. [b] 2 Kings xviii. 4. [c] If the *Moabites* had known the Protection they were under, they needed not to have been afraid; for, had they been quiet, they were particularly exempted from the Sword of *Iſrael*, as being deſcended from *Lot* by his eldeſt Daughter. *Deut.* ii. 9.

† Here in the *Old Teſtament*, *Balaam* is called the *Son of Beor*, but St *Peter*, in the *New*, (2 Pet. ii. 15.) ſtiles him the *Son of Boſor*: *Beor* and *Boſor*, however, are both the ſame Name in the *Original*, only *differently* pronounced. But then it looks a little ſtrange, that the *Midianites* and *Moabites* ſhould truſt ſo little to their *own Gods* at Home, as to ſend, as far as *Meſopotamia*, for a Prophet to aſſiſt them. But perhaps they imagined, that the Gods of their own Country were not able to defend them againſt the God of *Iſrael*, having ſo lately ſeen what the *Iſraelites* had done to the *Amorites*, their Neighbours: Or they might fancy, that *Balaam* had an Intereſt with all Kinds of Gods, and might engage them *all* to come in to their Aſſiſtance: Or rather, they might know, that he was a Prophet of the ſame God, whom the *Iſraelites* worſhipped; and that therefore, by his Means, they hoped to draw off the God of *Iſrael* from aſſiſting them, and to incline him to favour their Cauſe. *Waterland*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

invite him to come and curſe the *Iſraelites*: For ſo great an Opinion had they of this Man's Skill and Power in Divination, [d] that, by his *Benedictions* or *Imprecations*, they thought he could turn the Fate of War which Way he pleaſed.

Balak *ſends to* Balaam, *and why.*

SOME *Jews* are of Opinion, that this *Balaam* was a Sort of *Aſtrologer*, who, obſerving when Men were under a bad *Aſpect* of the Stars, pronounced a Curſe upon them, which ſometimes coming to paſs, in the neighbouring Nations gained him a great Reputation. Several of the *ancient* Fathers ſuppoſe him no more than a common *Soothſayer*, (for ſo he is [e] ſomewhere called) who pretended to foretel future Events, and diſcover Secrets, *&c.* but by no good and juſtifiable Arts. *Origen* will needs have it, that he was no Prophet, but only one of the Devil's *Sorcerers*, and that of him he went to enquire, but God was pleaſed to prevent him, and to [f] put what Anſwer he thought fit into his Mouth. It cannot be denied, however, but that [g] the Scripture expreſſly calls him *a Prophet*; and therefore [h] ſome later Writers have imagined, that he had been [i] once a good Man, and a true Prophet, till, loving the *Wages of Iniquity*, and proſtituting the Honour of his Office to his Covetouſneſs, he apoſtatized from God, and, betaking himſelf to idolatrous Practices, fell under the *Deluſion* of the Devil, of whom he learned all his *magical Inchantments*; though, at this Juncture, when the Preſervation of his People was concerned, it might conſiſt with God's Wiſdom, to appear to him, and vouchſafe him Revelations.

That Balaam *was a Prophet.*

[k] *BALAAM*, indeed, was a Man of no great Probity, and might, by Profeſſion, be a *Diviner*; but, by the free Acceſs he had to God, it ſeems to be apparent, that he was no common *Sorcerer*, or *Prophet* of the *Devil*. [l] For, did ever any *Sorcerer* addreſs his Prayers to, and receive Anſwers from, the Supreme God? Did ever any *Sorcerer* preſcribe a Law to himſelf, *to ſay nothing, leſs or more*, than what the Spirit of God ſhould dictate? The Spirit of God, when did it ever [m] *come upon* an Enchanter? Or, was it ever known, that an *Oracle*, upon a remote Event, and what God alone was capable of revealing, ſhould be declared by a meer *Magician*? Bad therefore though he was, a Slave to his Paſſions, and an Enemy to the People of God, yet it muſt be acknowledged, that this *Balaam* was a Prophet. "But if he "was a Prophet, and Servant of the True God, why did he [*] *ſeek for Inchantments*? "Or, what Service could he think to receive from them?" Now, in Anſwer to this, it may be conſidered, [†] that the Arts of Magicians and their Inchantments to procure Prodigies and Oracles, tho' the vulgar People did not underſtand the Foundation they were built on, were, to the wiſe Men and Philoſophers, that Produce of Learning and natural Science, *falſely*, indeed, *ſo called*, but really eſteemed by them to be true: And therefore as *Saul*, tho' he had before [‖] *put away thoſe who had familiar Spirits, and the Wizards, out of the Land*, was induced, [‡] *when the Lord anſwered him neither by Dreams, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets, to go to a Woman that had a familiar Spirit*, and to enquire of her; ſo *Balaam*, ſeeing nothing but a full Diſappointment of all his Views, in the ſeveral *Revelations*, which God was pleaſed to make to him; and being warmly inclined to purchaſe (if he might, with any Colour, be able to do it) the Advancement, which *Balak* had offered him, was tempted to try, what might be the Event, if he uſed ſome of the Arts, which the moſt learned Nations held in the higheſt Repute, and eſteemed to be of the greateſt Efficacy. To theſe he was no Stranger, and therefore he attempted to try them, but found, to his Sorrow, that [§] *there was no Inchantment againſt Jacob, nor was there any Divination againſt Iſrael*. To illuſtrate this Part of the Hiſtory, which *Moſes* hath given us of him, it may not be improper to lay down the following Obſervations.

[d] It was a received Opinion, among the *Gentiles*, that ſome People had Power, eſpecially Prophets and Diviners, by the Help of their Gods, to blaſt, not only private Perſons, but even whole Armies, ſo that they ſhould not be able to effect their Deſign. *Macrobius* has preſerved us a very remarkable Form of ſuch Imprecations, and brings in the Prieſt, that officiates, ſpeaking thus: *Dis Pater, ſive Jovis mavis, ſive quo alio nomine fas ſit nominare, ut omnem illam Urbem, exercitumque, quem ego me ſentio dicere, fugâ, formidine, terrore, compleatis; quique adverſus Legiones, exercitumque noſtrum, Arma telaque ferent, uti vos, eos exercitus, eos hoſtes, eoſque Homines, urbes, agroſque eorum, & qui, in illis Locis regionibuſque, agris urbibuſque habitant, lumine ſupremo privetis*, &c. *uti vos Urbes agroſque eorum, quos ego me ſentio dicere, capita, atateſque eorum devotas conſecrataſque habeatis.* —— *Uti me, meamque fidem, imperiumque Legiones, exercitumque noſtrum, qui in his Rebus gerendis ſunt, bene ſalvos ſinatis eſſe. Si hæc ita faxitis ut ego ſciam, ſentiam, intelligamque; tum quiſque votum hoc faxit, recte factum eſto, Ovibus atris tribus, Tellus mater, teque Jupiter, obteſtor*, Macrob. Saturn. Lib. III. c. 9. *ex Sammonico Sereno:* And *Patrick*'s Commentary on *Numb.* xxii. Joſh. xiii. 22.

This *Balaam* himſelf plainly diſcerned, and therefore calls himſelf, *he, who heard the Words of God*, Numb. xxiv. 4.

[e] 2 Pet. ii. 16. [h] Vid. *Patrick*'s Commentary on *Numb.* xxii. [i] For this Reaſon ſome have ſuppoſed, that he was the ſame Perſon, who, in the Book of *Job*, is called *Elihu*. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [k] *Vid.* Witſii Miſcel. Sacra, Lib. I. c. 16. [l] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [m] Numb. xxiv. 2. [*] Ibid. *ver.* 1. [†] *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. Lib. XII. [‖] 1 Sam. xxviii. 3. [‡] Ibid. *ver.* 6, 7. [§] Numb. xxiii. 23.

Some Obſervations thereupon.

1. THAT before the Giving of the Law, and the Conqueſt of the promiſed Land, [n] there were other true Worſhippers of God, beſides the Deſcendants of *Abraham*, diſperſed over the Face of the Earth. 2. That this Worſhip of God [o] was frequently mixed with *Superſtition* and Idolatry, even among them who profeſſed to adore the one God of Heaven and Earth. 3. That this odious Mixture did not hinder God [p] from revealing himſelf to thoſe, who practiſed ſuch a monſtrous and motly Religion. 4. That ſupernatural *Gifts* in general, and thoſe † of Prophecy in particular, tho' they *enlightened* the Minds of the Prophets, [q] yet, many Times, did not *ſanctify* their Hearts and Affections. And, 5. That the greateſt Weakneſs or Wickedneſs of Prophets never went ſo far, as to make them pronounce *Oracles*, contrary to what was dictated by the Holy Spirit; [r] *If* Balak *would give me his Houſe full of Silver and Gold, I cannot go beyond the Word of the Lord, to do either Good or Bad of my own Mind, but what the Lord ſaith, that muſt I ſpeak.*

Balaam's *Aſs ſpeaking, not incredible.*

[s] THE Speaking of *Balaam*'s Aſs is a known Paſſage in his Hiſtory; but the *Jews* have not been able to perſuade themſelves, that an *Event*, ſo extraordinary, really came to paſs. *Philo*, in his Life of *Moſes*, paſſes it over in Silence, and [t] *Maimonides* pretends, that it only happened to *Balaam* in a *prophetical Viſion:* But leaſt of all ſhould theſe Men, who are ſo apt to fancy *marvellous* Events without the leaſt Neceſſity, and to give *myſtical* Interpretations to the moſt *obvious* Occurrences, deny their Aſſent to this Miracle. The ſevereſt *Philoſophy* cannot deny, but that God is as able to make Creatures, deſtitute of Underſtanding, pronounce *articulate* and rational Words, [u] as it is for a *Muſician*, by the different Touches he gives any Inſtrument, to make it expreſs a Variety of Notes; nor can the *Heathens* reproach us with any Abſurdity in this *Story*, * ſince they themſelves relate ſo many of the like Nature, but not near ſo well ſupported. It may ſeem a little ſtrange indeed, that *Balaam* ſhould ſhew no Kind of Surprize, when he heard his Aſs ſpeak like an human Creature: But to this [x] ſome reply, that *Balaam* had probably imbibed the Doctrine of *Tranſmigration* of Souls, (which they prove to be very common in the *Eaſt*) and from thence might be leſs aſtoniſhed to hear any *Brute* ſpeak: Whereas [y] others ſuppoſe, that he was in ſuch a Rage and Fury, at the ſuppoſed Croſſneſs of the Beaſt, *cruſhing his Foot, and falling down under him*, that, for the preſent, he could think of nothing elſe; though the *Conciſeneſs* of *Moſes*'s Narration, that [z] muſt be preſumed to have omitted many Circumſtances, which, if rightly known, would diſpel this, and many more *Difficulties*, does certainly, in my Opinion, furniſh us with a better and more ſatisfactory Anſwer.

Why Balaam *was not ſurprized at it.*

Balaam's *Prophecy of Chriſt.*

AMONG the many Prophecies, which God put into the Mouth of *Balaam*, there is one of a more eminent and peculiar Nature; [a] *I ſhall ſee him, but not now; I ſhall behold*

[n] Thus *Job* and his Friends dwelt in *Arabia*, *Jethro* and his Poſterity in the Country of *Midian*; and *Abraham*'s Abode in *Meſopotamia* might leave behind him ſome *Proſelytes* to the true Religion. The *Moabites* and *Ammonites*, 'tis certain, were the Deſcendants of righteous *Lot*, who was of the ſame Religion with *Abraham*: The *Midianites* too (of whom moſt probably *Balaam* was) were the Poſterity of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, and therefore, for ſome Time at leaſt, could not but retain the Knowledge of the True God; which makes it not improbable, that God might plant ſome *Prophets* among them in thoſe *early* Days, in order to preſerve the *True Religion* and Worſhip, which they had received from their Progenitors, *Waterland*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

[o] The *Teraphims* of *Laban* prove this. [p] *Abimelech* and *Nebuchadnezzar* are Inſtances of this, *Gen.* xxvi. and *Dan.* ii. 1.

† *Balaam* had certainly the Gift of Prophecy, even while he was doing amiſs, and tempting Almighty God, for *the Spirit of God came upon him*, (Numb. xxiv. 2.) and made Uſe of his *Organs* in delivering ſeveral *remarkable Prophecies*, fulfilled in their Seaſon: Such as, the *riſing Strength* and *growing Greatneſs* of the *Iſraelites:* The Deſtruction of *Amalek*, which came to paſs in King *Saul*'s Time: The Fall of *Moab*, and of *Edom*, which was effected by King *David:* The Overthrow of the *Kenites*, which was done by the *Aſſyrians*; and, what is more than all, the *Conqueſt* of the *Aſſyrians* themſelves, by the Power of *Chittim*, i. e. of the *Macedonians*, which was executed under the Conduct of *Alexander the Great*. Theſe were great and valuable Prophecies: And from theſe we may learn, that the Spirit of God may ſometimes vouchſafe to come upon a very *wicked Man*, (ſo far as concerns the *extraordinary Gifts*) without *reforming* or influencing him, as to his Life and Morals, in the Way of *ordinary Operation*. *Waterland*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

[q] For ſo we read, *The Heads of God's People judge for Reward, and the Prieſts thereof teach for Hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for Money*, Micah iii. 11. [r] Numb. xxiv. 13. There is a remarkable Paſſage, in *Joſephus*, to this Purpoſe, where he brings in *Balaam* ſpeaking to *Balak* in the following Manner: "Can you then imagine, that, "in the Buſineſs of Propheſying, it depends on us to ſay, or not to ſay, what we think fit? It is God, who makes "us ſpeak, as he pleaſes, without any voluntary Concurrence of our own. I have not forgot the Requeſt, which the "*Midianites* made me: I came with a Deſign to ſatisfy them; and thought of nothing leſs, than of proclaiming the "Praiſes of the *Hebrews*, or relating thoſe Favours, which God has determined to heap upon them: But he has been "more powerful than I, who intended to have pleaſed Men, even againſt his Will. When he enters into our Hearts, "he makes himſelf abſolute Maſter of them; and, becauſe he has decreed to make this People happy, and to crown "them with immortal Glory, he has therefore put into my Mouth the Words, which I have now pronounced." *Antiq.* Lib. IV. c. 4. [s] Numb. xxii. 28. [t] More Nevoch. P. II. c. 42. [u] *Le Clerc*'s Commentary on *Numb.* xxii. * Witneſs what they ſay of the Aſs, upon which *Bacchus* rode; of the Ram of *Phryxus*; the Bull of *Europa*; the Horſes of *Achilles* and *Adraſtus*; the Elephant of *Porus* in *India*; and the Lamb in *Egypt*, when *Bocchoris* reigned there, *Patrick*'s Commentary. [x] *Le Clerc*, ibid. [y] *Patrick*, ibid. [z] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. [a] Numb. xxiv. 17.

behold him, but not nigh. There ſhall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter ſhall ariſe out of Iſrael, and ſhall ſmite the Corners of Moab, and deſtroy all the Children of Seth. All Opinions agree in this, that *Balaam* here ſpeaks of a *King* and *Conqueror*; and perhaps, in calling him a *Star*, he accommodates himſelf to the long eſtabliſhed Notion, that the Appearance of *Comets* denoted either the *Exaltation* or *Deſtruction* of Kingdoms; but the great Queſtion is, of what King or Conqueror it is he ſpeaks? [b] Some have applied it intirely to *David*, the moſt illuſtrious of the *Jewiſh* Monarchs, who extended his Conqueſts, and might very juſtly be ſaid to verify that Part of the Prediction, *he ſhall ſmite the Corners* (or [c] as ſome render it) *the Princes of Moab*. [d] Others have referred it, as entirely to the *Meſſiah*, ſuppoſing, that the *Metaphor* of a *Star* comports better with him, and his *Celeſtial* Origin, than with *David*, and the main Strokes of the Prophecy reſemble an *heavenly*, more than an *earthly* Conqueror. The Matter however may be compromiſed, if we will but allow of [e] a learned Man's Obſervation, *viz.* that the moſt remarkable Prophecies in the *Old Teſtament* bear uſually a *two-fold Senſe*, one relating to the Times before the *Meſſiah*, and the other either fulfilled in the Perſon of the *Meſſiah*, or in the Members of his Body, the *Church*: And of this Kind we may juſtly eſteem the preceding Prophecy. For though its *primary* Aſpect may be towards *David*, yet whoever conſiders it attentively, will perceive, that its Ideas are too *full* to extend no farther; and muſt therefore, in a *ſecondary* and more exalted Senſe, refer us to Chriſt, *whoſe Kingdom ruleth over all, and to whom all Things are put in Subjection under his Feet.* In this Senſe the Generality of *Jews*, as well as Chriſtians, underſtood it: And 'tis no improbable Conjecture, (whatever [f] ſome may think of it) that by the Strength of this Prophecy, kept upon Record among the *oriental Archives*, the *Magi* of that Country were directed to *Jeruſalem*, at our Saviour's Nativity, enquiring, [g] *where is the King of the Jews, for we have ſeen his Star in the Eaſt.*

THE *Prophetic* Benedictions, which *Balaam*, though ſore againſt his Will, poured out upon the Children of *Iſrael*, ſo provoked *Balak*, that being no longer able to reſtrain his Rage, he bad him haſte and be gone; [h] *I thought to promote thee to great Honour, but lo! the Lord hath kept thee back from Honour.* Whereupon, vexed at his Diſappointment, and reſolving to revenge himſelf on God's People, as the Occaſion of it, the Prophet [i] inſtructs their Enemies in a wicked *Artifice*, which was to ſend their Daughters into the Camp of *Iſrael*, in order to draw them into *Fornication*, and thence into *Idolatry*, as a ſure Method to deprive them of the Favour of that God, whoſe Aſſiſtance had made them ſo *formidable*. The Artifice ſucceeded: For the next Thing we hear is, [k] *that Iſrael joined himſelf to Baal-peor*. But what this *Baal-peor* was, is a Queſtion as yet undecided. Balaam's *wicked Advice.*

THE ancient *Jews* generally ſuppoſe, that he was no other than a *Priapus*, and that his Worſhip conſiſted in ſuch *obſcene* Practices, or *Poſtures* at leaſt, as are not fit to be named. But others have thought, that, as *Baal* is a general Term, which ſignifies *Lord*, *Peor* might poſſibly be the Name of ſome great Prince, tranſlated into the Number of the Gods; (as [l] it was a known Cuſtom among the *Heathens*, to *deify* the Souls of Men, and *canonize* them after Death) and to this the Pſalmiſt may be ſuppoſed to allude, where he tells us, that, when the *Iſraelites* worſhipped *Baal-peor*, [m] *they eat the Offerings of the Dead.* [n] Others have imagined, that as *Peor* is the Name of a Mountain, in the Country of *Moab*, where the Temple of *Baal* (by whom [o] they underſtood the Sun) was ſituated, from hence he might be called *Baal-peor*, even as *Jupiter* was called *Olympius*, becauſe he was worſhipped in a famous Temple, built upon the Mountain *Olympus*. Either of theſe Conjectures ſeem more probable, than the Baal-peor, *what.*

[b] *Le Clerc*'s Commentary. [c] So the LXX. τῆς ἀρχοντος Μοάβ, which alters not the Senſe. [d] *Vid. Patrick*'s Commentary on Numb. xxiv. [e] H. Grotius ad Matth. i. 22. [f] *Witſius*, in his *Miſcell. Sacra, Lib. I. c.* 16. ſeems to explode this Conjecture of *Origen*'s, but not upon ſufficient Grounds.

[g] Matth. ii. 2. [h] Numb. xxiv. 11. [i] This indeed is not mentioned in *Numb.* xxiv. where the Interview between *Balaam* and *Balak* ends, but *Moſes* (*Ch.* xxxi. 16.) plainly refers to the Counſel of *Balaam*, and lays the whole Blame on him. St *John* likewiſe, in his Revelation (*Ch.* ii. 14.) ſpeaking to the Church of *Pergamos*, in the Name of Chriſt, takes Notice of this wicked Advice: *I have ſome few Things againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt thoſe, that held the Doctrine of* Balaam, *who taught* Balak *to caſt a Stumbling-Block before the Children of* Iſrael, *to eat Things ſacrificed unto Idols, and to commit Fornication:* Where the Perſons, pointed to, were a wretched Sect of *falſe Teachers*, which ſtarted up in the very Infancy of the *Chriſtian* Church. They held it lawful to follow *Carnal* Luſts, to commit Fornication, Adultery, Inceſt, and other Impurities. This palatable Doctrine ſuited the Taſte of the *Voluptuous*, and brought the Teachers in much *Applauſe*, and many a fair *Preſent* from their *carnal* Hearers: And therefore, becauſe their Doctrine was very like *Balaam*'s, and the principal Motive to it was *Avarice*, and a Deſign of *flattering* and *pleaſing* others in their *Luſts*, as theſe Teachers were compared to *Balaam*, and their Doctrine to *his*, ſo they obtained the *Hebrew* Name of *Balaamites*, as their *Greek* Name was *Nicolaitans*, both of the ſame Signification, *i. e. Lords, and Leaders of the People. Waterland*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

[k] Numb. xxv. 3. [l] *Mede*'s Diſcourſes, Lib. III. c. 4. [m] Pſal. cvi. 28. [n] *Selden*, de Diis Syris. Synt. 1. c. 5. and *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries. [o] Vid. *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry, *c.* 4.

the other, becauſe [p] the ancienter the Books are, which treat of theſe Matters, the leſs Mention they make of any Impurities in the Worſhip of *Baal*.

Phineas's Act of Zeal. BUT whatever this *Baal-peor* was, 'tis certain, that the Crime of worſhipping him was very enormous, ſince it drew upon the *Iſraelites* ſo ſevere a Puniſhment. A Thouſand [q] *principal* Men, that had been guilty of this foul *Idolatry*, were, by God's Appointment, publickly executed, and three and twenty Thouſand deſtroy'd by a *Peſtilential* Diſeaſe, which was going to ſpread itſelf farther, [r] had not *Phineas*, the Son of *Eleazar*, and Grandſon of *Aaron*, (by the Command of *Moſes*, ſays *Philo*, but ſhould rather have ſaid, *by a divine Impulſe and Inſtigation*) at one bold Stroke, killing both *Zimri*, and his *Midianitiſh* Paramour, put a Stop to its Progreſs.

An Objection, * "BUT was not *Zimri* † *a Prince of a Chief-Houſe among the* Simeonites, an Head "of a powerful Family at leaſt, and conſequently, not accountable to *Phineas* for "his Behaviour? How then could he have a Right to execute this Vengeance upon "him? Or, what could be the Safety of even the higheſt *Magiſtrates*, in this *Oeco-*"*nomy*, if *private* Men put on an officious Zeal, and aſſaſſinate, at Pleaſure, thoſe, *Anſwered.* "whoſe Actions were unjuſtifiable, and deſerved Puniſhment?" *Zimri* indeed was a great Man; the Prince of a Tribe, (as ‖ *Joſephus* makes him) and one of the *ſupreme* Judges, whoſe Right it was to be *Aſſeſſors* with *Moſes* and *Aaron* in the Government of the People, and conſequently could not be regularly brought under the Judgment of any inferior Authority. *Moſes* had ordered juſt before, that all the People, *who had joined themſelves to* Baal-peor, ſhould be proceeded againſt according to Law, and puniſhed by their proper Officers; but ſo far was *Zimri* from paying any Regard to this, that we find him acting in open Defiance to it; and, inſtead of appointing the Judges of his Tribe to puniſh thoſe, who were under their Juriſdiction, openly, and in the Face of the Congregation, abetting, by his own Practice, what he ought to have uſed his Authority to correct and ſuppreſs ‡. *He brought unto his Brethren a* Midianitiſh *Woman, in the Sight of* Moſes, *and in the Sight of all the Congregation of the Children of* Iſrael, *who were weeping before the Door of the Tabernacle:* So that ſomething extraordinary was here neceſſary to be done, in order to puniſh a Crime, which appeared too daring to be corrected, in the Practice of a Perſon, who ſeemed too great to be called to an Account for it. God indeed is the *Fountain of* all Power, and whoever has a Right to command or puniſh another, muſt derive it, either by Way of Delegation from thoſe, whom he has appointed to *preſide*, or by an immediate Revelation and Commiſſion from Heaven: And therefore to juſtify *Phineas* in this warm Expreſſion of his Zeal, we may obſerve, that God had not only commanded, that the Perſons, who had committed theſe Abominations, ſhould be puniſh'd with Death, but had enjoined *Phineas*, in particular, even before he attacked *Zimri*, to cut off that bold Offender; for ſo the divine Declaration ſeems to import, ‖‖ *Phineas, the Son of* Eleazar, *the Son of* Aaron, *the Prieſt, hath* not only *turned away my Wrath, but, becauſe he was zealous for his God, has made an Atonement for the Children of* Iſrael. But what Merit could there be in the Death of *Zimri*? How could that expiate the Sins of the *Congregation*? Or, what had *Phineas* to do, to pretend to make *Atonement*, unleſs God had appointed him, ſince ‡‡ *no Man taketh his Honour to himſelf*, nor can perform this Office to any Effect, *but he who is called of God, as was* Aaron? All this is reſolved by what God orders *Moſes* to declare to the People; *Wherefore ſay unto them, Behold it was I,* (for ſo the *Hebrew* ſhould be rendered) *who gave to him my Covenant of Peace:* Intimating, that *Phineas* had not done a raſh Action, moved to it by an impetuous Spirit, but that God himſelf had directed him to what he had performed; made him an expreſs *Covenant* upon his performing it; aſſured him, that the doing it ſhould obtain Pardon for the People, and that, upon the Death of the two *Miſcreants*, ſlain by his Hand, the Wickedneſs, that had been committed in the Camp, ſhould be forgiven. In this View of the Fact all Things are clear; and the Behaviour of *Phineas* in it appears to be nothing more, than a zealous and intrepid Performance of what God, by an expreſs Revelation, had required him to do.

No Precedent for others. IT muſt not be diſſembled however, that upon this Fact the *Jews* found what they call the *Judgment of Zeal*, which authorized ſuch, as were full of this holy Fervour,

[p] *Patrick's* Commentary. [q] Thus the LXX, the *Vulgar*, and ſeveral other Interpreters underſtand it. And there is Reaſon for this Acceptation, if what the *Samaritan* Chronicle tells us be true, *viz.* that the Daughters of the *chief Men* of *Moab* were ſent, finely dreſs'd, to allure the *Iſraelites*, and one of the King's Daughters among the reſt, *Patrick*, ibid. [r] Numb. xxv. 8. * *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. III. Lib. XII. † Numb. xxv. 14. ‖ Antiq. Lib. IV. c. 10. ‡ Numb. xxv. 6. ‖‖ Ibid. xxv. 11. ‡‡ Heb. v. 4.

vour, to puniſh any violent Offenders, thoſe that blaſphemed God, or profaned the Temple, &c. in the Preſence of ten Men of *Iſrael*, without any formal Proceſs. But the Example of *Phinehas* countenances no ſuch Practice; nor can this Action, done upon an *extraordinary* Occaſion, by a Perſon in a *publick Authority*, moved thereunto by a *ſtrong divine Impulſe*, if not expreſs *Revelation*, (and what is a Circumſtance that ſome People add) in a *Commonwealth*, not perfectly ſettled, be made a Precedent for private Men, under a different Situation, to invade the Office of the Magiſtrate, without manifeſt Danger of *Enthuſiaſtick* Violence and Outrage, even againſt thoſe, that are moſt innocent; as we plainly find it happened among the *Jews*, when, in the latter Times of their Government, they put this Precedent in Execution; [t] of which, St *Stephen*, whom they inhumanly ſtoned, and St *Paul*, whom they vowed to aſſaſſinate, without any Form of Juſtice, are notorious Inſtances.

Iſrael's *General, and Victory over the* Midianites.

[u] WHETHER this *Phinehas* was ſent to command the Troops, which were inſtantly appointed by God, to take Vengeance of the *Midianites*, for having ſeduced his People into Whoredom and Idolatry; or whether he went along with the Army, only to perform ſuch *ſacred Offices*, as ſhould be required by the *General*, * who, with more Probability perhaps, is thought to be *Joſhua*, are Queſtions, ariſing from the Silence of Scripture, concerning the *chief Commander*. At this Time, indeed, it was not uſual to ſet Prieſts at the Head of Armies, but, in the Time of the *Maccabees*, (who were of the *Sacerdotal* Line) the Troops of *Iſrael* were commanded by them: And [x] therefore ſome have ſuppoſed, that *Phinehas*, being an extraordinary Perſon, of great Courage, and ſignalized by his late magnanimous Action, might poſſibly recommend himſelf (even contrary to the common Cuſtom) to the chief Command, in order to compleat the Revenge, he had begun. But whoever it was, that headed the ſmall Army of *Iſraelites*, 'tis certain, they obtained an abſolute and compleat Victory over their Enemies, and (what made it more wonderful) [y] without the Loſs of one Man on *Iſrael*'s Side, as appears from the Report of the Officers, made upon a *Muſter*.

Moſes's *laſt Admonitions to the People.*

THIS is the laſt memorable Action, which the *Iſraelites* did under the Adminiſtration of *Moſes*; for their forty Years Travels were juſt now expiring, and, conſequently, the Time of his *Diſſolution* drawing near. Being ſenſible of this therefore, and willing to take his laſt Leave of them, in a Manner ſuitable to the Care and Affection, he had all along expreſſed for them; he called them together, in the Plain of *Moab*, by *Jordan*, and there [z] briefly reminded them of all that had befallen them, and their Fathers, ſince they left *Egypt*; how graciouſly God had all along dealt with them; and how manifold their Rebellions and Provocations had been. [a] He repeated the chief Injunctions of the Law; exhorted them to a ſtrict Obſervation of it; promiſed they ſhould ſoon enter into the Land of *Canaan*, and commanded them to deſtroy the Idols, and extirpate the Inhabitants thereof. [b] He encouraged them to be faithful to God, upon Aſſurance, that, if they kept his Commandments, Bleſſings would be ſhowered down upon them; but if they neglected them, Curſes and Calamities. He renewed the *Covenant* with them in the Name of God; ordered the *Diviſion* of the Land, whereinto they were paſſing, among their ſeveral Tribes; and, after he had recorded all theſe Things in a Book, which he committed to the Care and Cuſtody of the *Levites*, and, by the Divine Direction, compoſed an *Hymn* for the People to learn, in Commemoration of God's Favours, and their Ingratitude; he appointed *Joſhua*, a Man every Way qualified for ſo high a Truſt, to ſucceed him in the Government.

Of the World, 2553, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 1451, &c.

His laſt Farewel, Death, and Burial.

HAVING thus diſcharged the Office of a *faithful Ruler*, and left them the beſt *Legacy* that he could, *Laws*, for the Direction of their Lives, and a Man of Worth and Ability, to be their *Leader*; [c] he took a *ſolemn Farewel* of them, in a *prophetical* Bleſſing, which he pronounced upon each Tribe, as *Jacob* had done before his Death; and ſo went up to the Top of [d] *Piſgah*, from whence he might [e] take a full View of the Countries round about. Here he feaſts his Eyes with the Proſpect of

[a] *Le Clerc*'s Comment. on *Deut.* xxv. [t] Acts vii. 58. and xxiii. 12. [u] *Saurin*'s Diſſertat. * *Patrick*'s Commentary. [x] *Patrick*, ibid. [y] *Vid.* Numb. xxxi. 49. [z] His Speeches, upon this Occaſion, are the Matter and Subſtance of that Book, which is called *Deuteronomy*, *i. e.* a ſecond Law, or Repetition of the Law. Vid. *Howell*'s and *Dupin*'s Hiſtories of the Bible. [a] *Vid.* Deuteron. paſſim. [b] Deut. xi. [c] Ibid. xxxiii. [d] *Piſgah* was the very Top of Mount *Nebo*, as *Nebo* was the higheſt Part of the Mountain *Abarim*, which is a long Ridge of Hills between the Rivers *Arnon* and *Jordan*, ſituate in the Plains of *Moab*. *Wells*'s Geography. [e] The *Jews* have a Notion, that God ſet before *Moſes* a compleat Map of *Canaan*, wherein every Part of it was exactly deſcribed; but as this might have been done on the Plain of *Moab*, without ever going up into the Mountain, it ſeems more reaſonable, that he *ſtrengthened* his Eyes with a greater Vigour than uſual, to enable him to take a larger Proſpect of the Country, than otherwiſe he could have done. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

that good Land, which he is not permitted to enter; views the delightful Town and Plains of *Jericho*; ſees *Lebanon*'s fair Cliffs and lofty Cedars; and then [f] reſigns his Soul into the Hands of *Angels*, waiting, *ſome of them*, to convey it to an happier *Canaan*, than what he had juſt before ſurvey'd, and *others*, [g] to inter his Body, in the Valley of *Beth-peor*, in the Land of *Moab*; but (to [h] prevent all *ſuperſtitious* Adoration of him) of the Place *of his Sepulchre, knoweth no Man, even unto this Day.*

SECT. II.

Of the Paſſage of Jordan, *and taking* Jericho.

Of the World, 2553, &c. Before Chriſt, 1451, &c.

UPON the Death of *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, by the Command of God, ſucceeded to the Government. He had been *Prime Miniſter* to *Moſes*, for the greateſt Part of thoſe *forty Years*, that the *Iſraelites* wandered in the Wilderneſs; had ſeen the wonderful Works, which God wrought by his Hand; underſtood well the Nature and Diſpoſition of the People; was one of thoſe twelve *Spies*, which were ſent to ſearch the *promiſed* Land; and one of the two, that gave a juſt Report of it: And, for theſe and ſome other Qualifications, he was *inſtalled* into his Office with great Solemnity. After this Ceremony was over, the great Expedition, the People were to go upon, was, to take Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*: But, becauſe it was bounded by the River *Jordan*, they were firſt to paſs that, in order to inveſt its chief Frontier-Town, which was *Jericho*.

The paſſing of Jordan.

JORDAN, according to the Account of [i] *Joſephus*, was the largeſt and moſt celebrated River in the *Holy Land*. Its Head was anciently thought to be *Panion*, but, in Truth, it paſſes thither under Ground; for the firſt Source of it is *Phiala*, an hundred and twenty Furlongs from *Cæſarea Philippi*, a little on the Right-hand, and not much out of the Way to *Trachonis*. From the Cave of *Panion*, it croſſes the Bogs and Fens of the Lake *Semechonites*, and, after a Courſe of an hundred and twenty Furlongs farther, paſſes under the City of *Julias* (or *Bethſaida*); then over the Lake of *Gennezareth*, and ſo running a long Way through a Wilderneſs, or Deſert, it empties itſelf at laſt into the Lake *Aſphaltites*, or the *Dead-Sea*. In the whole, it is about an hundred Miles long; but, at preſent, not above * twenty Yards broad; though certainly it was much larger at the Time, when the Children of *Iſrael* paſſed over it. It was then [k] *the Time of Barley-Harveſt*, or (as [l] it is expreſſed in another Place) in the *firſt Month*, *i. e.* the Month of *March*, when the Snow upon Mount *Lebanon* uſed to diſſolve, and ſwell the adjacent Rivers to a conſiderable Degree. But how large ſoever it then was, as ſoon as the *Prieſts*, who carried the Ark, and went firſt in the Proceſſion, approached the River, its Waters were parted; and whilſt the Waters above forgot to flow, and ſtood ſtill, as if they had been *congeal'd*, thoſe below ran down the Channel towards the *Dead-Sea*, as uſual, and ſo left the Ground dry for the People to paſs over. The *Jewiſh* Doctors have a Tradition, that the vaſt Heaps of Waters, piled one upon another, while the *Iſraelites* paſſed over the River, being ſeen to the People of *Jericho*, and other adjacent Places, occaſioned a general Conſternation. *Jericho*, [m] according to *Joſephus*, is diſtant from *Jordan* about ſeven Miles and an half, and the intermediate Country was a *Plain*; but whether this Circumſtance be true or no, we ſhall not contend; all that we ſhall ſay upon the Whole is this:—[n] That they, who look upon this Part of the divine Hiſtory as *improbable*, if not *incredible*, ſhould do well to conſider, what Shame it is to have leſs Faith,

[f] The *Jews* have a Saying of *Moſes*, that *his Soul departed with a Kiſs*, becauſe he is ſaid to die *Alpi*, at the Mouth, (as it is literally in the *Hebrew*) i. e. *according to the Word of God.* But, if there be any Senſe in the Expreſſion, it muſt be, that he parted with his Soul with great Chearfulneſs and Serenity of Mind. *Witſius* Miſcel. Sacra, C. 17. [g] Since the Circumſtances of *Moſes*'s Death are ſo fully recorded, it ſeems to be a frivolous Notion of the *Jews*, though ſupported by *Joſephus*, [Antiq. Lib. IV. c. 8.] and followed by ſome Chriſtian Fathers, that he did not die, but was tranſlated into Heaven, where he ſtands and miniſters before God. *Patrick* and *Witſius*, ibid. [h] *This very Reaſon we have in* R. Levi Ben. Gerſom: Fortaſſe ſi innotuiſſet locus, errando erraviſſent generationes ſequentes, & feciſſent ex eo Deum, per claritudinem miraculorum, quibus excelluit. Nonne vides quod in ſerpente æneo, quem fecerat *Moſes*, erraverint quidam Iſraelitarum? *Witſius*, ibid. [i] De Bell. Jud. L. III. * This is *Maundrell*'s Account of the River; [Journey from *Aleppo*, p. 83.] but it is very certain, that, as the Courſe of Rivers is liable to great Alterations, *Jordan* was a much larger Stream, when the *Iſraelites* came into *Canaan*, than it is now. In *Pliny*'s Time, it filled a larger Channel, and therefore he ſtiles it, *Amnis ambitioſus.* [Nat. Hiſt. Lib. V. c. 19.] When *Strabo* wrote, Veſſels of Burthen were navigated in it; [Geogr. Lib. XVI.] and therefore the ſame ingenious Traveller obſerves, that anciently it had covered a large Strand, and waſhed up an outer Bank, about a Furlong from the common Channel, *Maundrell*, *ubi ſupra.* [k] Joſh. iii. 15. [l] 1 Chron. xii. 15. [m] This agrees very well with Mr *Maundrell*'s Account, who tells us, that he arrived at the River *Jordan*, from *Jericho*, in two Hours. [n] *Patrick*'s Commentary.

Faith, than the *Heathens*; who, leſt their Gods ſhould be thought leſs powerful, than the God of *Iſrael*, forged [o] thoſe Stories, which the *Perſians* tell us of, *Zoroaſter*'s paſſing over Rivers, and the *Greeks*, of *Neptune*'s drying up *Inachus*, *&c.* why then ſhould they call in queſtion the Power of the true God; ſince it cannot be conteſted, but that, either by himſelf, or by his Angels, he could eaſily ſtop the Courſe of a River, make its Waters riſe up in an *Heap*, as high as he pleaſed, and ſo ſtand reared in Firmneſs and Solidity, as if they were congealed?

The Perſon, that appeared to Joſhua.

THIS wonderful Paſſage of the River *Jordan* ſo alarmed the neighbouring People, that they flocked in great Multitudes to *Jericho*, as the ſtrongeſt and moſt *tenable* Place in the Country, there to wait for *Joſhua*'s Approach, and to put a Stop to his intended Conqueſt. It was not long before *Joſhua* came up with his Army; and, while he was conſidering with himſelf in what Manner he was to attack *Jericho*, there appeared to him, in a *martial Habit*, a very extraordinary Perſon, who [p] gave him Inſtructions what to do: But who this Perſon was, it is not ſo well agreed among the Learned. [q] Several, both *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* Authors, are of Opinion, that the Perſon, who ſtiles himſelf here the [r] *Captain of the Hoſt of the Lord*, was an Angel, and particularly, the Angel *Michael*, who, in the Prophet *Daniel*, is ſtiled one of *the chief Princes of the People of God*, and ſuppoſed to have had the *Preſidence* over them, after that God (incenſed againſt them for making the Golden Calf) withdrew his immediate Preſence from them. 'Tis evident however, that *Joſhua* conceived an higher Opinion of him, becauſe he *fell on his Face, and worſhipped him*, which he would not have done, had he ſuppoſed him to be an *Angel* only; nor can we imagine, how the *other* could have accepted his Worſhip, much leſs why he ſhould command him to *put off his Shoes*, (which [s] was the higheſt Acknowledgment of a divine Preſence, that was uſed among the *Eaſtern Nations*) had he not been a divine Perſon: And therefore, the more probable Opinion is, "that this *Captain*, or *Guardian of the Lord's* "*Hoſt*, who ſuffered himſelf to be worſhipped, and by whoſe Preſence the Place "where he appeared was *ſanctified*, was no other than the *Son of God*, whom all the "Angels in Heaven are commanded to worſhip and adore."

The taking of Jericho.

ACCORDING to the Inſtructions of this divine Perſon, *Joſhua* cauſed all his Forces to march round the Place ſix Days ſucceſſively, and, on the ſeventh Day, when (after ſeven Times ſurrounding the City) the Prieſts *blew* with the Trumpets, and the People *ſhouted* with a loud Voice, the Wall thereof fell down flat, ſo that the Army marched directly up to it, and took it, and put all to the Sword (*Rahab* and her Family only excepted) *both Man and Beaſt*. It would be Madneſs to repeat what [t] ſome Authors (in order to depreciate this Miracle) have told us of a certain Fitneſs there is in *Sounds*, to break and demoliſh ſolid Bodies; and how, from the violent Effects of *ſubterraneous* Eruptions, or the blowing up of ſome *Magazines* of Powder, they have ſuppoſed, that the Fall of the Walls of *Jericho* might be imputed to a *natural* Cauſe. The Number of the Trumpets we find was but *ſeven*, and theſe made of *Rams Horns*, which could not be of the *ſhrilleſt* Sound; and tho' the Noiſe of ſo great a Number of People might be very loud, yet ſtill it would require a Miracle in *Joſhua* to know, what the juſt Proportion was between their Noiſe and the Strength of the Walls of *Jericho*. This is however but mere trifling with Matters of Fact. The *ſacred Hiſtory* has repreſented the whole Event, as an extraordinary Act of the divine Power, exerted for the Encouragement of the *Iſraelites*, and the Confuſion of their Adverſaries: And accordingly, if we peruſe the Account of the Conqueſt of the Land of *Canaan*, we ſhall find, that this was not the only Inſtance of the divine *Interpoſal*.

Of the Shower of Hail-ſtones, and the Sun's ſtanding ſtill.

NOT long after the taking of *Jericho*, all the People of that Country (except the *Gibeonites*, who, pretending to come from afar, drew *Joſhua* and the Heads of the Tribes unwarily into a League) confederated together, in order to defend themſelves againſt the *Iſraelites*: But *Joſhua*, coming upon them ſuddenly, put them to Flight, and, to compleat the Victory, God did two great *Miracles* for *Iſrael* that Day; he 1. caſt down great *Stones* from Heaven upon their Enemies, as they

[o] Theſe are collected by *Huetius*, in his Quæſtiones Alnetanæ, L. II. c. 12. [p] Joſh. vi. 2. [q] *Saurin*'s Diſſert. Vol. II. [r] Joſh. v. 15. [s] Vid. Dr *Alix*'s Book on this Argument, p. 234. [t] *P. Merſenne*, in his Comment on *Geneſis*, *and* D. Geo. Morhof. de Scypho vitreo, per certum humanæ vocis ſonum, fracto.

they were running away; and, 2. *ſtopped the Courſe of* the Sun in the Firmament, that his People might have the longer Space to deſtroy them, as they fled.

The Shower of Hail-ſtones.

1. THE learned *Calmet*, in a Diſſertation before his Commentary upon *Joſhua*, has taken great Pains to ſhew, that the Stones, which the Lord is ſaid *to caſt down upon the Amorites*, were not common *Hail-ſtones*, but *real ſolid* Stones; which he ſuppoſes may be ingendered in the Air, by a Whirlwind's carrying up Sand, or Gravel, into a Cloud, and there mixing it with ſome ſuch oily or *nitrous* Matter, as may conſolidate it; that ſo, when it comes to be fired, it may burſt through the Cloud, and, ſcattering itſelf upon the Exploſion, deſcend in the Nature of a perfect Shower of Stones: [u] "But beſides the Difficulty of conceiving, how ſuch a *Quantity* of Stones, as this Paſſage of Scripture ſeems to intimate, could, for any Time, be *ſuſtained* in a Cloud; there ſeems to be no Neceſſity for having Recourſe to ſuch an *uncommon Solution*, when the Thing is ſo notorious, that Hail-ſtones have frequently fallen, large enough to deſtroy ever ſo great a Number of Men, when naked and defenceleſs againſt their Blows. A Shower of Hail indeed may be ſuppoſed to proceed from a more *natural Cauſe*; but when the Event happened at the very Inſtant, wherein God promiſed to aſſiſt his People againſt their Enemies; when, though it might have annoyed either Army, it fell only on *that*, which God had before determined to ruin, and fell ſo very *heavily* upon it, as to deſtroy more, *than the Sword of the Conquerors had done*; ſuch an Event as this, I ſay, cannot but be looked upon as a *miraculous* Interpoſition of Providence, how *fortuitous* ſoever the Concourſe of ſecond Cauſes may ſeem to be. And much more then may we ſay ſo,

The Sun's ſtanding ſtill, in what Senſe to be underſtood.

2. OF God's ſtopping the Courſe of the Sun, at *Joſhua*'s Requeſt. [x] *Sun, ſtand thou ſtill upon Gibeon*, i. e. [y] ſtand immoveable in that Part of the Heavens, where I now ſee thee ſhining upon *Gibeon*; *and thou Moon, in the Valley of Ajalon, i. e.* of *Ajalon* [z] in the Tribe of *Dan*, which was fartheſt remote from *Gibeon*: For we muſt ſuppoſe, that theſe two Places were at ſome conſiderable Diſtance, otherwiſe *Joſhua* could not ſee the Sun and the Moon both appear at the ſame Time, as it is probable they were both now in his Eye, when he ſpake theſe Words. It is to be obſerved, however, that (even upon the *Hypotheſis* of the Motion of the Sun) the *Jewiſh General* cannot be ſuppoſed to ſpeak in a *proper* and *philoſophick* Senſe; for ſince the Sun is almoſt a *Million* of Times bigger than the Earth, and ſome Millions of Miles *diſtant* from it, to juſtify the ſtrict Senſe of the Words, a *Line*, drawn from the Center of the Sun to that of the Earth, muſt exactly paſs by *Gibeon*, which we know it cannot do, becauſe no Part of the *Holy Land* lies between the *Tropicks*: And therefore we may, with leſs Scruple, be bold to conclude, that the Words of *Joſhua* (even with Relation to the Motion of the Sun) are to be taken in a Senſe accommodated to the Notions of the *Aſtronomy*, that then prevailed, rather than according to the *Reality* of the Thing. The moſt ſuperficial Reader cannot but obſerve, that in Scripture nothing is more common, than to expreſs Things, not according to the ſtrict Rules of *Philoſophy*, but according to their *Appearance*, and the vulgar Apprehenſions concerning them. The *Sun* and *Moon*, for Inſtance, are called [a] *two great Lights*; but, however that Title may agree with the Sun, 'tis plain, that the Moon is but a *ſmall* Body, the leaſt that has yet been diſcovered in the *Planetary* Syſtem, and that it has no Light at all, but what it *borrows* and *reflects* from the Rays of the Sun; and yet, becauſe it is placed near us, it appears to us *larger* than other heavenly *Luminaries*, and, from that Appearance, the holy Scripture gives it ſuch an Appellation. And, in like Manner, becauſe the Sun ſeems to us to move, and the Earth to be at Reſt; the Scriptures ſpeak a great deal of the *Pillars*, and *Baſis*, and *Foundations* of the Earth, of the Sun's [b] *rejoicing like a Giant to run his Race, and of* [c] *his ariſing, and going down, and haſtening to the Place, where he aroſe*, &c. whereas it is certain, [d] that if the Sun were made to revolve about the Earth, the *univerſal*

Law

[u] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations, Vol. II. [x] Joſh. x. 12. [y] *Patrick*'s Commentary, *in locum.* [z] Joſh. xix. 42, Judg. i. 35. [a] Gen. i. 16. [b] Pſal. xix. 5. [c] Eccleſ. i. 5.

[d] *Keill*'s Aſtronomical Lectures. Beſides this general Argument of Mr *Keill*'s, Mr *Whiſton* has one, which he accounts no leſs than a *Demonſtration*. "If the Earth, *ſays he*, have an annual Revolution about the Sun, it muſt "affect the apparent Motions of all the other Planets and Comets, and, notwithſtanding the Regularity of their "ſeveral Motions in their own Orbits, muſt render the regular Motions, as to us living upon the moving Earth, "ſometimes *direct*, and that ſwiftly or ſlowly; ſometimes *ſtationary*, and ſometimes *retrograde*, and that ſwiftly or "ſlowly alſo; and all this, at ſuch certain Periods, in ſuch certain Places, for ſuch certain Durations, and according to ſuch certain Circumſtances, as *Geometry* and *Arithmetick* will certainly determine, and not otherwiſe. "Now that this is the real Caſe in Fact, and that every one of theſe Particulars are true in the *Aſtronomical* World, "all, that are ſkilful in that Science, do freely confeſs, even thoſe, who do not think fit to declare openly "for

Law of Nature would thereby be violated; the *Harmony* and *Proportion* of the heavenly Motions deſtroy'd; and no ſmall *Confuſion* and *Diſorder* brought into the Frame of the Univerſe. But, on the contrary, if the Earth, turning upon its own *Axis* every Day, be made to go round the Sun in the *Space of a Year*, it will then perform its *Circulation* according to the ſame Law, which the other Planets obſerve, and, without the leaſt Exception, there will be a moſt beautiful *Order* and *Harmony* of Motions every where preſerved thro' the whole Frame of Nature. As therefore the Scriptures were deſigned to teach us the Art of *holy Living*, and not to inſtruct us in the Rudiments of *natural* Knowledge; it can be deemed no Diminution, either to their *Perfection*, or divine *Authority*, that they generally ſpeak [e] according to the common Appearance of Things, and the vulgar Notions and Opinions, which the World have of them, not according to their Reality or *philoſophical* Verity.

UNDER this miraculous Aſſiſtance of Divine Providence, it was not long before *Joſhua* conquered moſt of the Land of *Canaan*; and, having divided it among the People, reaped, for ſome Years, the Fruits of his Victories in a quiet Enjoyment of Peace; till, at length, finding himſelf grow old, and his Death approaching, he aſſembled all *Iſrael* together, and having ſet before them the many great Bleſſings, which God had vouchſafed them, and their Anceſtors, he thereupon exhorts them, to have no Communication with the *Canaanites*; to have their idolatrous Practices in Deteſtation; to [f] *ſerve the Lord in Sincerity, and in Truth*; and to be [g] *courageous to keep all, that was written in the Book of the Law of Moſes*. Upon this Condition, he promiſes them an intire Conqueſt over all their Enemies; that, by God's Help and Aſſiſtance, [h] *one of them ſhould chaſe a Thouſand*, and *no Man ſhould be able to ſtand before them*; and, in the Concluſion, renews the *Covenant* between God and them: And ſo having done all, that could be required of a wiſe Governor, towards the Welfare of a People committed to his Charge, he took his final Leave of them, and, after he had ruled them [i] ſeventeen Years, (as the beſt Interpreters account) in the hundred and tenth Year of his Age, died, and was buried in [k] *Timnath-Serah*, which is in Mount *Ephraim*, the City, which (upon the Diviſion of the Land among the Tribes) the Children of *Iſrael* gave to him, in Token of Gratitude for the many Services and Benefits, which they had received by his Adminiſtration.

Of the World, 2590, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 1414, &c.

Joſhua's *final Exhortation, and Death.*

SECT. III.

The Government of the JUDGES.

AFTER the Death of *Joſhua*, we read of none, that was appointed to ſucceed him, and therefore the general Opinion is, that every Tribe was governed by their reſpective *Heads*, or [l] *Elders*; but how long this Form of Government ſubſiſted, has not ſo well been determined by *Chronologers*, tho' (according to the beſt Computation) it ſeems to have been no leſs than *thirty Years*; for ſo the Word *Generation*, in the ſacred Hiſtory, is thought, by ſome, to ſignify: And accordingly we read, that [m] *Iſrael ſerved the Lord all the Days of Joſhua, and all the Days of the Elders, which out-lived Joſhua*; [n] *but when all that Generation were gathered to their Fathers, there aroſe another Generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the Works, which he had done for Iſrael*. However this be, 'tis hardly to be imagined, but that, in ſuch a *looſe* Kind of Government, ſeveral *Corruptions* ſhould ſpring up; and, accordingly, the Hiſtory takes Notice, that, in this Period of Time, the People did not *deſtroy the Inhabitants of the Land*, as they were commanded, but, contenting themſelves with making them *tributary*, ſuffered them to live promiſcuouſly among them; that they not only ſhewed them this *Indulgence*, but entered into cloſe *Alliances*, and made *Intermarriages* with them, which Thing God had expreſſly forbidden; and, in Conſequence of this Familiarity, fell *gradually* into the ſame Crimes, and the

Of the World, 2592, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 1412, &c.

Judges inſtituted.

[e] for this annual Revolution of the Earth, which yet is the natural and certain Conſequence of that Conceſſion. *Whiſton*'s Aſtronomical Principles of Religion. The Reader, that is deſirous to know more upon this Subject, may conſult Dr *Derham*'s Preliminary Diſcourſe to his *Aſtro-Theology*.

[f] *Derham*'s Aſtro-Theology. [g] Joſh. xxiv. 14. [h] Ibid. xxiii. 6. [i] Ibid. *ver.* 9, 10. [k] *Patrick*'s Commentary, Vol. II. [l] This is alſo called (*Judg.* ii. 9.) *Timnath-heres*, becauſe of the Image of the Sun, which is engraven on *Joſhua*'s Sepulchre, in Memory of that famous Day, when the Sun ſtood ſtill, till he had compleated his Victory. [m] *Patrick*, ibid. [n] Joſh. xxiv. 31. [n] Judg. ii. 10.

the ſame Kind of Idolatry with them: For ſo we find it related, that [o] *the Children of Iſrael dwelt among the Canaanites, &c. that they took their Daughters to be their Wives, and gave their Daughters to their Sons*, and that *they forgot the Lord their God, and ſerved Baalim and the Groves.* Incenſed at theſe Provocations, God left them to themſelves, who, without his Care and Protection, made but a poor Defence againſt their Enemies; for, upon the King of *Meſopotamia*'s invading them, they were ſorely defeated, and enſlaved for eight Years; and 'twas on this unhappy Conjuncture, that the Office of *Judges* was firſt inſtituted.

The Nature of their Office.

THE *Judges* were a Kind of *Magiſtrates*, not much unlike the *Archontes* among the *Athenians*, and the *Dictators* among the *Romans*. *Grotius* compares them to thoſe Rulers, that were in *Gaul*, in *Germany*, and *Britain*, before the *Romans* introduced another Form of Government. Their Honour laſted for Life, but their Succeſſion was not always continued; for there were frequent Interruptions in it, and the People lived often under the Dominion of *Strangers*, without any Government of their own. According to the common Cuſtom, they were generally appointed by God; but, in Caſes of extreme Exigence, the People made ſometimes Choice of ſuch, as they thought beſt qualified to reſcue them out of their Oppreſſion, without waiting for any Divine Deſignation. Their Authority was not inferior to that of Kings; they arbitrated in all Affairs of *War* and *Peace*; had an *abſolute* Power to determine all Cauſes, but none at all to make any new Laws, or to lay any new Taxes upon the People. They were, in ſhort, the *Protectors* of the Laws, the *Defenders* of Religion, and the *Avengers* of Crimes, eſpecially of that of Idolatry: But then, even during this their Power, they lived without any Pomp or Splendor; had no *Guards*, no *Attendance*, no *Equipage*, no certain *Revenue*, nor any other Emolument, wherewith to ſupport their Dignity, but what aroſe from the *voluntary* Contributions of the People.

THIS Form of Government (if we reckon from the Death of *Joſhua* to the Beginning of *Saul*'s Reign) was about three hundred and thirty-nine Years. The firſt of this Order was *Othniel*. He defeated the King of *Meſopotamia*, and reſtored Peace to *Iſrael* for the Space of forty Years: But, after him, we ſhall think ourſelves concerned to take Notice of *ſuch only*, as are the moſt remarkable in ſacred Hiſtory: And therefore, to ſay nothing of [p] *Ehud*, who aſſaſſinated *Eglon*, King of the *Moabites*, an Action no Ways to be juſtified, but upon the Suppoſition, that he did it by God's expreſs Order; nothing of [q] *Shamgar*, who ſlew ſix hundred *Philiſtines* with an *Ox-Goad*, that no Weapon might be thought inſufficient in the Hand of *one*, excited by the mighty Power of God; nothing of [r] *Deborah*, who, together with *Barak*, vanquiſhed the mighty Army of *Jabin*, King of *Canaan*, and all his *nine hundred* Chariots of Iron; nothing of [s] *Jael*, the Wife of *Heber*, who, in murthering *Siſera*, Captain of *Jabin*'s Army, then in Amity with her Houſe, did an Act, which cannot be warranted [t] upon any other Suppoſition, but her being moved thereunto by an immediate Impulſe from God: To ſay nothing of theſe, and ſeveral other *Judges* of leſſer Note, the Characters and Exploits that ſeem to deſerve our more particular Attention, during this Period of Time, are thoſe of *Gideon*, *Jephtha*, *Sampſon*, and *Samuel*; which we ſhall now conſider in their Order.

[o] Judg. iii. 5, *&c.* [p] Ibid. *ver.* 21. [q] Ibid. *ver.* 31. [r] Ibid. iv. 14, *&c.*
[s] Ibid. *ver.* 18.

[t] Vid. *Patrick, in Locum*; but Mr *Saurin*, in his Diſſertation upon the Defeat of *Jabin* and *Siſera*, has another Way of juſtifying this Action, which ſeems not ſo very conſonant either to the Laws of God, or Nations. For having propoſed ſome Suppoſitions, mentioned by *Puffendorf*, and other *Civilians*, which he rejects, his next Words are theſe; " Il me ſemble, qu'on peut trouver dans le Charactére même de *Jabin*, & de ſes Miniſtres, l'apologie de *Jahel*. " *Jabin* étoit un Tyran; *Sizera* étoit le principal Fauteur de ſes Tyrannies. Les hommes les plus fourbes, & les plus " cruels, ont beſoin que leurs Alliez ſoient droits & bienfaiſans. Mais devons-nous avoir de la bonne foi & de l'humanité pour ces perſonnes exécrables, qui n'exigent ces vertus de nous, que lorſqu'elles leur fourniſſent les moyens " de les violer eux-mêmes impunément, de manquer à leurs promeſſes, de porter par tout le Sang & le Carnage? " J'avoue que je ne comprens pas ſur quoi cette Obligation ſeroit fondée. Il y à certains Monſtres dans la Nature, à " la perte deſquels toute la Societé eſt intéreſſée. Concourir à les conſerver, refuſer même de ſe prevaloir des occaſions, qui s'offrent pour en purger la Terre, c'eſt (quelque Liaiſon qu'on ait d'ailleurs avec eux) ſous prétexte de " fidélité envers un Allié, être perfide à ce qu'on doit à tous ces hommes, qui tôt ou tard deviendroient les victimes " de ſes concuſſions & de ces Barbaries: C'eſt manquer à ce qu'on ſe doit à ſoi même, & s'expoſer à être immolé à ce " monſtre, qu'on ſe fera un ſcrupule d'etouſer, pour arrêter le progrès de ſes Cruautés, *&c.*

Gideon's

Gideon's *Exploits.*

Of the World. 2739, &c. *Before Chriſt,* 1265, &c.

Gideon's *Deſignation to be Judge.*

I. AFTER the Death of *Deborah* and *Barak*, the People fell again into their old *Apoſtacy*; and, by their crying Sin of Idolatry, provoked God to deliver them into the Hand of their Enemies. The *Midianites* were a People ſituate beyond the River *Jordan*, whom the Children of *Iſrael*, in their Paſſage to the Land of *Canaan*, [u] had deſtroyed; [x] but it is not improbable, that ſome of that Nation, ſaving themſelves by Flight into other Countries, and, after the *Iſraelites* were ſettled in *Canaan*, returning again, might, in the Space of two hundred Years, re-people the Land, where they dwelt before, and ſtill retain the Name of *Midianites*. Theſe People, together with their Neighbours, the *Amalekites*, for ſeven Years, kept the *Iſraelites* in ſuch Subjection, that they were forced to betake themſelves to Dens in the Mountains, and Caves in the Earth, and to their fortified Places, from whence, as the Spring came on, they ſtole out, to ſow and cultivate their Land; but always, towards the Time of Harveſt, theſe Enemies made *Inroads* into their Country, and tarrying there till they had devoured all the Proviſion and Forage they could find, they then returned home, and left the poor *Iſraelites* nothing to ſupport Life. Under this ſore Calamity, the People began to be ſenſible of their Wickedneſs, and to humble themſelves under the afflicting Hand of God; who, upon their Humiliation, provided them an Inſtrument for their Deliverance, in the Perſon of *Gideon*, the Son of *Joaſh*, and, to encourage the Undertaking, ſent an Angel to him to *Ophrah*, while he was threſhing Wheat *privately*, in order to conceal it from the Enemy. Convinced by the Diſcourſe, as well as [y] by the Actions of the Perſon, that converſed with him, that he was in Reality an Angel ſent from God, *Gideon* began to take Courage, and that very Night (as the Angel very probably had ordered him) demoliſhed the Altar of *Baal*, which, in thoſe corrupt Times, had been erected; cut down the *Grove* thereof, and, building another Altar *to the Lord his God, on the Top of the Rock*, where the Angel had appeared to him, he there offered a Burnt-Sacrifice with the Wood of the Grove, which he had cut down. But this was not all.

His Victory over the Midianites.

IT was now about the Time, when the *Midianites*, paſſing over *Jordan*, to ravage and plunder the Country, came, and encamped in the Valley of *Jezreel*; whereupon *Gideon*, inſpired with more than ordinary Courage, ſummoned all thoſe of his own Family to come in to his Aſſiſtance; and, ſending Meſſengers through the Tribes of *Manaſſeh*, *Aſher*, *Zebulun*, and *Naphtali*, which lay towards the *North* of the Land of *Canaan*, he ſoon collected an Army to the Number of two and thirty thouſand Men, though much inferior to what the Enemy had brought againſt him. As ſoon as all the Forces were come together, *Gideon* (to ſatisfy them that he did not act this on his own Head, but was the Perſon appointed by Heaven to be their Leader and Deliverer) deſired of God to give them ſome Token of his Commiſſion. The Token that he inſtanced in was——that, upon laying a *Fleece* of Wool upon the Ground, the *Dew* might be upon the Fleece only, and the Earth round about it *dry*, which accordingly happened; and then, inverting the former Manner, he deſired that the Fleece might be dry, while the Ground round about it was wet, which accordingly came to paſs.

ENCOURAGED by this double Token, the *Iſraelites* were immediately for attacking the Enemy; but God, knowing the Folly and Ingratitude of the People, and rightly foreſeeing, that, if with this Army they ſhould conquer the *Midianites*, they would vainly impute it to their own Courage and Numbers, and not to his Aſſiſtance, ordered *Gideon* to make *Proclamation* in the Camp, that whoever was diffident of the Undertaking, ſhould have Liberty to return home; whereupon two and twenty Thouſand quitted the Field, and only ten Thouſand remained with *Gideon*. This was a very inconſiderable Number, in Compariſon of the numerous Hoſt of the *Midianites*; but ſtill, as few as they were, it came within the *Verge* of Poſſibility, that their Foes might be defeated with ſuch an *Handful* of Men; and therefore God, thinking them too many, and reſolving that the whole Action and Victory ſhould appear to be his doing, ordered *Gideon* to bring his Soldiers down to the Water, where he would give him a Signal what Men were fit for his Buſineſs; and the Signal was——that they, who took up Water in their Hands, and lapped it, ſhould go with him; but they, who

[u] Numb. xxxi. 7, &c. [x] Vid. *Patrick*, on Judg. vi. 1. [y] Judg. vi. 21.

who lay down to drink, ſhould not go; which Experiment reduced the Men to three hundred only.

INTERPRETERS are at a ſad Puzzle to conceive, for what poſſible Reaſon God made a Diſtinction between the Soldiers, that *lapped* Water in their Hands, and thoſe that laid themſelves down to drink. Some of the [z] *Jewiſh* Doctors are of Opinion, that all, except the three hundred, who *lapped*, had been accuſtomed to the Worſhip of *Baal*, which they unwarily diſcovered by their bowing down their Knees to drink; but this is a groundleſs and far-fetched Conceit. The Notion of [a] thoſe, who impute the three hundred Mens lapping, ſome to their *Sloth* and *Lazineſs*, and others, to their Timorouſneſs, and the great Fear they were in of being ſurprized by the Enemy, is not of more Validity: For tho' God, if he had thought ſo fit, might have employed the moſt daſtardly among them upon this Expedition, that the Glory of the Victory might entirely redound to himſelf; yet ſince (as we are told) all the fearful Perſons were diſmiſſed before, and ſince it but badly befits the Character of the Courageous to be lazy; this Action of *Lapping*, as I take it, is rather to be accounted a Token of their *Temperance*, and of the *Nobleneſs* of their Spirit, which made them ſo deſirous to engage the Enemy, that they would not ſtay to drink, but (though they were very thirſty) contented themſelves to moiſten their Mouth (as we ſay) with a little Water; whereas the reſt indulged themſelves ſo far, as to drink their Belly-full.

WITH this ſmall Number of Men however God promiſed to deliver into *Gideon*'s Hand the whole Hoſt of the *Midianites*; but then he directed him to obſerve this *Stratagem*——that each Man ſhould have a *Trumpet*, and a *Pitcher* with a burning *Torch* in it, and ſo march up to the Enemy's Camp; which, when they had done, they were all, at once, to break their Pitchers, ſound their Trumpets, and cry with a terrible Shout, *the Sword of the Lord and of Gideon*. The Thing was accordingly executed; and [b] the *Blaze* of ſo many Torches, the *Sound* of ſo many Trumpets, the *Clattering* of ſo many Pitchers, all increaſed by the Shouts and Horrors of the Night, put the Enemy, juſt awakened out of Sleep, and fancying an infinite Number breaking in upon them, into ſuch a Fright and Conſternation, that, miſtaking their own Party, they fell on each other's Swords: So that *Gideon* and his Army obtained an eaſy Victory, and, after the *Midianites* had quitted their Camp, had nothing to do, but to call in their Friends, to purſue, and ſlay them.

THIS Victory raiſed *Gideon*'s Name to ſuch an Height, that the People came voluntarily, and offered to ſettle the Government upon him and his Family; which he modeſtly and generouſly rejecting, and deſiring only, as an Acknowledgment of his Service, to have the *Ear-rings*, taken in the Plunder of the *Midianites*, given him; the People readily conſented, and, over and above the Ear-rings, threw in the rich Ornaments and Robes of the Kings, together with the Chains of Gold, which were upon their Camels Necks, and with theſe, it is ſaid, that he made an *Ephod*; but what that *Ephod* was, and for what Purpoſe it was made, has been a Matter of much Perplexity to *Commentators*.

The Ephod *which he made, what.*

AN *Ephod*, we know, was a common Veſtment belonging to *Prieſts* in general, but that of the *High-Prieſt* (which we had [c] Occaſion to deſcribe elſewhere) was of very great Value. This Veſtment however was not ſo peculiar to the *Prieſts*, but that ſometimes we find the *Laity* (as in the Caſe of *David* [d] bringing home the Ark of God) allowed to wear it; and therefore ſome have imagined, that the *Ephod*, which *Gideon* made, was only a rich and coſtly *Robe of State*, which, on certain Occaſions, he might wear, to denote the Station he held in the *Jewiſh* Republick. But, if his only Intent was to diſtinguiſh himſelf from others by ſuch a particular *Veſtment*, how could this give Occaſion to the People's falling into Idolatry, or any Way *become a Snare*

[z] Salom. Jarchi, *in* Judg. vii. 5. [a] Joſephus & Theodoret, ſecundum Patrick, in locum.

[b] *Plutarch*, in his Life of *Fabius Maximus*, tells us of a Stratagem, which *Hannibal* made Uſe of, not altogether unlike this, when his Guides, inſtead of conducting him to *Caſinum*, by miſtaking his Orders, led him to *Caſilinum*, where *Fabius* had gained the Advance-Ground, and poſted his Men ſo advantageouſly, as in a Manner to hem in *Hannibal*, and all his Army. Upon which Occaſion, *Hannibal* cauſed 2000 Head of Oxen, which he had in his Camp, to have Torches and dry Bavins faſtened to their Horns, and, lighting them in the Beginning of the Night, ordered the Beaſts to be fairly and ſoftly drove on, towards the Paſſages, that the Enemy had ſeized, and, at the ſame Time, made his Army, with great Silence, march after them. The Oxen, at firſt, kept a ſlow and orderly Place; but when the Fire began to burn their Horns to the quick, they no longer preſerved their regular Motion, but ran about at a wild Rate, toſſing their Heads, and ſcattering the Fire, wherever they went. Alarmed at this Spectacle, the *Romans*, who guarded the *Paſſes*, and were at ſome Diſtance from the main Body, thinking that the Enemy was coming upon them to ſurround them, quitted their Poſts, and, with great Precipitancy, fled to the Army. This gave *Hannibal* an Opportunity to ſecure the Paſſes, by that Means to gain the Advance Ground, and ſo extricate himſelf from the preſent Difficulty. [c] *Vid.* Pag. 440. [d] 2 Sam. vi. 14.

Snare to Gideon and his Houſe, we cannot perceive. Others therefore ſuppoſe, that the Word *Ephod* is a ſhort Expreſſion, to denote the High-Prieſt's Breaſt-plate, together with the *Urim* and *Thummim*; and hence, by an eaſy Figure, they are led to think, that, *to make an Ephod* is *to eſtabliſh a Prieſthood*, and hereupon conclude, [s] that *Gideon*'s Crime, in making this *Ephod*, was, not to give Divine Honour to any but God, but to inſtitute another Kind of *Prieſthood*, beſides that which God had appointed in *Aaron* and his Poſterity. And, to this Purpoſe, they ſuppoſe, that he erected likewiſe a private *Tabernacle* with Cherubims; that, being now made the ſupreme Governor, he might conſult God at his own Houſe in ſuch difficult Points, as might occur in his Adminiſtration. But, beſides that it is not eaſy to imagine, that a Man, familiar with God, and choſen by him, (as *Gideon* was) ſhould, after ſo ſignal a Victory, as he had obtained, immediately apoſtatize, as he muſt have done, had he ſet up an *Oracle* in his own Houſe; there ſeems to have been no Manner of Neceſſity for it, becauſe *Shiloh*, where the Tabernacle ſtood, was in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, which adjoined to that of *Manaſſeh*, whereunto *Gideon* belonged. And therefore, the moſt probable Opinion is, that this *Ephod* was deſigned for nothing more, than to be a ſimple Monument of his Victory, in the Manner that other Conquerors had done before him; only, that, as the common Cuſtom was to erect a *Pillar*, or hang up *Trophies*, upon the like Occaſion, he choſe rather to make an *Ephod*, or Prieſt's Habit, as a Token, that he aſcribed his Victory only to God, and triumphed in nothing ſo much, as in the Reſtoration of the true Religion by his Means. This was an Action of no bad Intent in *Gideon*; though in After-times, when the People began to return to Idolatry, and had this Fancy, among others, that God would anſwer them at *Ophrah*, where this *Ephod* was, as well as at his Tabernacle in *Shiloh*, where he dwelt, it proved a *Snare* (as the Scripture expreſſes it) both to his Family, and the whole Houſe of *Iſrael*.

Jephthah's *raſh Vow*.

II. THE Children of *Iſrael* had not long been delivered from the Oppreſſions and Depredations of the *Midianites*, before they fell into the ſame *Apoſtacy* again; whereupon God let looſe the *Ammonites* upon them, until, by their Repentance and Renunciation of Idolatry, they pacified his Diſpleaſure; and then he raiſed up *Jephthah*, the *Gileadite*, a Man of great Courage and Conduct, to be their *Chieftain* and Deliverer. *Jephthah*, as [t] the Text tells us, *was the Son of an Harlot*: But [u] ſeveral Interpreters are of Opinion, that his Mother was only a Woman of another Tribe, or of another Nation at the moſt; and therefore they obſerve, that [w] he reſents the Injury, which his Brethren, by another Wife, had done, in expelling him his Father's Houſe. Being however thus expelled, he retired into the Land of *Tob*, (very likely the ſame Country, where his Mother was born) which was not far from *Gilead*, upon the Borders of the *Ammonites*, in the Entrance of *Arabia Deſerta*; and here, getting together a Band of young Fellows like himſelf, he lived by the Plunder he got in making Incurſions upon the Publick Enemy. Renowned for his Valour, and perhaps reſpected for the Service, which, by this Means, he did his Country, he was at length invited to take upon him the Command of the Army, which was intended to be raiſed againſt the *Ammonites*, and, upon the Condition of his being made Governor, in Caſe he ſucceeded in the War, he accepted it. He is repreſented in Scripture as a Man of ſome Fire and Paſſion, and ſuch was his Zeal to avenge his Country's Wrongs at this Time, that, when he went out to War, * *He vowed a Vow unto the Lord, and ſaid, If thou ſhalt, without fail, deliver the Children of Ammon into mine Hands, then it ſhall be, that whatſoever cometh forth of the Doors of my Houſe, to meet me, when I return in Peace from the Children of Ammon, ſhall ſurely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a Burnt-Offering.* He went; he fought; he conquered the Children of *Ammon*: But, *when he returned to his Houſe, behold his Daughter came out to meet him, with Timbrels and with Dances, and ſhe was his only Child; beſide her he had neither Son nor Daughter. And it came to paſs, when he ſaw her, that he rent his Cloaths, and ſaid, alas, my Daughter, thou haſt brought me very low, and thou*

Of the World, 2834, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 1170, &c.

Jephthah's *Condition, and Vow.*

[s] Vid. Spencer, de Leg. & Rit. Hebr. & M. Le Clerc, in Judg. viii. 7. [t] *Patrick*'s Commentary, on *Judg.* viii. 1. [u] Judg. xi. 1. [w] *Joſephus* himſelf ſeems to think ſo; for he calls him, Ξένον περὶ τὴν μητέρα, *a Stranger as to his Mother's Side.* [x] Judg. xi. 7. * Ibid. *ver.* 30, &c.

art one of them that trouble me; for I have opened my Mouth to the Lord, and I cannot go back. And she said unto him, my Father, if thou hast opened thy Mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that, which hath proceeded out of thy Mouth, forasmuch as the Lord hath taken Vengeance for thee of thine Enemies, even of the Children of Ammon; only let me alone two Months, that I may go up and down upon the Mountains, and bewail my Virginity, I and my Fellows. And he said, go: And he sent her away for two Months, and she went with her Companions, and bewailed her Virginity upon the Mountains. And it came to pass, at the End of two Months, that she returned unto her Father, who did with her according to his Vow, which he had vowed, and she knew no Man. And it was a Custom in Israel, that the Daughters of Israel went yearly, to lament the Daughter of Jephthah, the Gileadite, four Days in the Year.

I HAVE set the whole Passage before the Reader, that he may the better judge of the depending Controversy; for a great Controversy there is among Commentators, whether this Daughter of *Jephthah*'s was really sacrificed or no. [x] The plain Narration, as it stands in our *Version*, without consulting any *Comment* upon it, would really induce one to think, that this Virgin was certainly sacrificed, and the concurrent Testimony of [y] *Jews*, as well as ancient Fathers of the Christian Church, do contribute not a little to the Confirmation of this Opinion. But then, on the other Hand, [z] to find a Man, and that not a wild *Barbarian*, but an *Israelite*, offering for a Burnt-Sacrifice a young, innocent, and, no doubt, beautiful and virtuous Maid: To find an indulgent fond Father burning the Fruit of his own Body, his own Child, nay, and his dutiful and obedient Child too, the Object of his Hopes, and present Comforts: To find him, whom the Apostle lists in the *Catalogue* of the most pious and faithful Worthies of the *Old Testament*, vowing to offer an human Sacrifice to God, at the very Time, in which the Scripture says, [a] *the Spirit of the Lord was upon him*; and putting his Vow afterwards in Execution, tho' human Sacrifices were hateful to the Lord, provoked him utterly to destroy the *Canaanites*, and kindled his Indignation against *Israel*, when they brought the King of *Moab* to the said Necessity [b] *of offering up his eldest Son for a Burnt-Offering upon the Wall of his City*: I say, to find all this is very puzzling and unaccountable; and therefore, the Interpreters, that take the *negative* Side of the Question, have devised a more *harmless* and less *offensive* Way of expounding the Words. They tell us, 1. That the Word, which we render *Door*, [Judg. xi. 31.] signifies likewise a *Gate*; and that the *House* is not to be strictly taken, but in a Sense, that comprizes the *Precincts*, and Places adjoining, even as the Temple, and the Courts belonging to it, are frequently included in the Denomination of *the House of God*. So that, by *whatever cometh forth out of the Doors of my House, to meet me*, we are to understand, whatsoever, coming out of *Jephthah*'s Gate, or any Place adjoining to his House, should happen to meet him in his Return, *that* he would sacrifice; but then it was upon the Supposition, that the *Beast* (if it happened to be one) was a clean one, because an unclean Beast he was not permitted to offer. 2. They observe, that the Word [*vah*] in the same Verse, which our Translation makes, *and*, in a great many Places of Scripture signifies, *or*; and that it should rather be taken in this Sense *here* they imagine, because the preceding Words, *it shall be the Lord's*, i. e. dedicated, and set apart for God's special Service, or *I will offer it up for a Burnt-Offering*; and in this they are the rather confirmed, because, where *Jephthah* is said to have [c] *done with her according to his Vow*, it is immediately subjoined, that *she knew no Man*, which would have been superfluous, had not *Celibacy* been the Thing, to which she was devoted. 3. They observe, that the Word, which we render *lament*, [*Ver.* 40.] signifies every whit as properly (and as the *marginal* Note indeed has it) to *talk* or converse with. [d] In some Places it imports to *speak* or *rehearse*; and from hence an [e] Interpreter of no mean Note makes it in this Place signify, to *praise* or celebrate, and thereupon it is inferred, that this Daughter of *Jephthah*'s was not slain, but only devoted to a State of perpetual Virginity, in some solitary and retired Place; whither *the Daughters of Israel went up four Days in the Year*, i. e. one Day every Quarter, either to converse with her, and comfort her, or to celebrate her Fame, with Verses composed in her Praise. According to these Explanations, the full Purport of *Jephtha*'s Vow will be this, —— "That if God would bless him with the Victory over his Enemies, "the

The Arguments of those, who maintain the Negative *of it.*

[x] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [y] *Josephus* and *Philo* are both of this Opinion. [z] *Howell*'s History of the Bible. [a] Judg. xi. 29. [b] 2 Kings iii. 27. [c] Judg. xi. 39. [d] Especially in *Judg.* v. 11. [e] Lud. de Dieu.

" the *Ammonites*, the firſt Thing that ſhould meet him upon his Return home, if " it belonged to him, and was fit to be ſacrificed, (were it never ſo precious) he " would offer it to the Lord immediately; but that, if it happened to be *ſuch*, as " was not proper to be ſacrificed, he would, nevertheleſs, devote it to his Service " for ever, in Commemoration of his great Mercy towards him." So that, according to this Senſe of the Words, there was no Neceſſity for him to ſacrifice his Daughter, when reſigning her up, as a *perpetual Virgin*, to the Service of God, anſwered the whole Purpoſe and Obligation of his Vow.

An Objection.

" BUT, if *conſecrating* his Daughter to a State of *perpetual Virginity* was all that " *Jephthah* intended by making ſo ſolemn a Vow, what Cauſe was there for *his* " *renting his Cloaths*, and bemoaning himſelf, as we find he does? Is the being " ſhut up, as a *Recluſe*, and entered into the Liſt of perpetual Virgins, a Matter of " ſuch bitter Complaint and Lamentation? Was this ſo ſore an Evil, an Affliction " ſo extraordinary, that, not only before ſhe underwent it, ſhe and her Companions " ſhould, for *two Months together*, be allowed to bewail it, but that (after ſhe had " undergone it) the Daughters of *Iſrael* ſhould be required to *lament it four Times* " *a Year?* If ſhe was actually put to Death, in Execution of her Father's Vow, it " is eaſy then to underſtand, why the particular Circumſtance of her dying without " Iſſue, when *ſhe was the only Daughter of her Father*, and he had no other Proſpect " of Poſterity to keep up his Family, ſhould be repreſented, as a ſore Aggravation " of her violent and untimely Death; but it ſeems very difficult to account for that " bitter Lamentation made by her Father, by herſelf, by her Companions, and by " all the Daughters of *Iſrael*, in ſucceeding Times, if ſhe ſuffered no other, no ſe- " verer Puniſhment, than that of being devoted to a ſingle Life †."

Anſwered.

THIS is the great Argument againſt ſuch, as ſuppoſe that this Virgin was really ſacrificed: But to this it is replied, [g] that, from ſeveral Places of the Old Teſtament, it appears, that the *being without Children*, and conſequently, in *perpetual Virginity*, was looked upon as a *Curſe* and *Reproach*; ſo that it is no way ſtrange to find *Jephthah* troubled, and *renting his Cloaths*, when his only Child was to live and die under this Reproach; when he ſaw his Family extinct, (for in her *Celibacy* he had the ſame Proſpect, as in her Death) and himſelf excluded from all Hopes of Poſterity, and particularly from the Hopes of having the *Meſſiah* to come of *his Seed*, which was the general Hope and Deſire of all the *Iſraelitiſh* Women. It may be alledged, perhaps, that *Jephthah* had no Right to oblige his Daughter to *perpetual Virginity*; but then it will follow, that, if the Want of Right to do a Thing be an Argument that the Thing is not done, the more Degrees of Injuſtice and Unlawfulneſs there are in any Thing, the more boldly we may conclude, that it has not been done. If therefore it follows, that *Jephthah* did not oblige his Daughter to perpetual Virginity, becauſe he had no Right to do ſo, then much more will it be evident, that he did not *ſacrifice* his Daughter, becauſe ſuch an Action was impious and barbarous, contrary to the Laws of God, of Nature, and Humanity. Her embracing perpetual Virginity, however, was an Act of her free Choice, not inflicted on her againſt her Will, but done with her Conſent, and at her own Entreaty: *In which*, (ſays [h] the Annotator above-cited) *ſhe deſerved greater Commendation than her Father. For he, as ſoon as he ſaw her come to meet him, repented of the Vow, he had raſhly made, and tore his Cloaths, lamenting the miſerable Condition, into which he had brought himſelf, and her: But ſhe moſt courageouſly comforted her Father, and, congratulating his Victory, deſired him not to be troubled about her; for ſhe was ready to ſubmit to what he had vowed.*

BUT

[f] *Smalridge's* Sermons.

† A very learned Prelate of our own, who has examined this Vow of *Jephthah* to the full, and ſeems plainly to be of the affirmative Side, ſums up his Arguments againſt the contrary Opinion, in theſe Words: " Since therefore this " Explication is *novel*, and therefore not to be over-haſtily embraced by thoſe, who have a Reverence for *Antiquity*; " ſince it is chiefly advanced by *Popiſh* Writers, in Favour of the Doctrine of perpetual *Celibacy*, and for that Reaſon " juſtly to be ſuſpected by us *Proteſtants*; ſince, moreover, it renders the Relation of this Matter confuſed, unintelli- " gible, and unaccountable, and for that Cauſe deſerves to be rejected by all, who profeſs an Eſteem and Veneration " for holy Writ; I think we have ſufficient Grounds to conclude, that when it is ſaid in the Text, that *Jephthah did* " *with his Daughter according to the Vow, which he had vowed*, we can underſtand no leſs, than that he did actually " put her to Death." This is the unanimous Opinion of the *Ancients*, and with theſe agree the Compilers of the *Homilies* of our Church, as to the Subſtance of the Fact, where we read, that *Jephthah, when God had given him Victory over the Children of Ammon, promiſed, of a fooliſh Devotion unto God, to offer, for a Sacrifice unto him, that Perſon, which, of his own Houſe, ſhould firſt meet him after his Return home; by Force of which fond and unadviſed Oath, he did ſlay his own and only Daughter, which came out of his Houſe, with Mirth and Joy, to welcome him home.* *Smalridge's* 22d Sermon.

[g] *Howell's* Hiſtory of the Bible. [h] Lud. de Dieu.

BUT whether it was *Death*, or perpetual *Virginity*, to which *Jephthah* had devoted his Daughter, ſince it is agreed, on all Sides, that his Vow, in itſelf, was unlawful; that his Child was intirely innocent, and had done nothing deſerving ſuch hard Treatment; that her running out to meet him, with Joy and Congratulation, was an Act of Piety, that properly intituled her to his Love; and that his giving her up, either to the *Altar* or a *Cloyſter*, either to be ſacrificed, or abdicated from his Preſence and Society for ever, was cruel Uſage to a loving Child, and a Thing abhorrent to the natural Affections of a tender Parent. The Leſſon, we are to learn from the great Imprudence of his Example, is this,——That, tho' * *when we vow a Vow unto God, we ſhould not defer to pay it*, yet, in Caſes of this Nature, we ſhould not *be raſh with our Mouths, nor let our Hearts be haſty to utter any Thing before God.*

Samſon's *Exploits.*

Of the World, 2864, &c. Before Chriſt, 1140, &c.

III. WHETHER *Samſon* was really the *Judge* and ſupreme Magiſtrate of *Iſrael*, or only a Man of great Might, born of an eminent Family, in the Tribe of *Dan*, as the *Jewiſh* Writers [i] tell us, and raiſed up by God, when *Eli* the High-Prieſt had the *Civil* Adminiſtration, to be a *Scourge* to the *Philiſtines*, who, at that Time, ſadly oppreſſed his Countrymen, is a Matter, wherein Commentators are not ſo well agreed. 'Tis certain, that he was a *very extraordinary* Perſon; for [k] his Birth, we find, was predicted by an Angel, and himſelf ordained, *from the Womb, to be a Nazarite unto God.*

His Nazaritiſm, *of what Kind.*

[l] A NAZARITE was one, who, under the *Levitical* Law, either to attain the Favour, or avert the Judgments, or acknowledge the Mercies of Almighty God, *vowed a Vow* of Particular Purity, *and ſeparated himſelf*, (for ſo the Word ſignifies) in an extraordinary Manner, to the Service of God. The Time of this Vow laſted uſually for eight Days; ſometimes for a Month; and, in ſome Caſes, for the Perſon's whole Life. During this Time, the Perſons (for Women, as well as Men, might enter into this Engagement) bound themſelves to abſtain from Wine, and all ſtrong Liquors; not to cut the Hair of their Heads; not to come near a dead Corps, nor aſſiſt at any *Funeral*; nay, the Matter was carried ſo high, that if any happened to die ſuddenly in their Preſence, the whole Ceremony of this their *Separation* was to begin a-new. After the Time of their Separation was expired, they were to offer ſuch Sacrifices, as the Law appointed, and then, being abſolved from their Vow by the Prieſts, they might drink Wine, and uſe the ſame Freedom, that other People did.

SAMSON's *Nazaritiſm* was to laſt the whole Term of his Life: [m] But his frequent Intercourſe with the *Philiſtines*, and the great *Havock* and Slaughter, that he ſo often made among them, may induce us to think, that he had a particular *Diſpenſation*, exempting him from a rigorous Obſervation of the Law: In this one Circumſtance, however, he was very *punctual*, that, till he was infatuated by *Delilah*, [n] *he ſuffered not a Razor to come upon his Head.* What the Adventures and Exploits of his Life were: How, when he grew up, he killed a *Lion*; ſlew thirty *Philiſtines* at one Time; at another, no leſs than a Thouſand with *the Jaw-bone of an Aſs*; burnt their ſtanding Corn with *Foxes* and *Firebrands*; carried away the Gates of *Gaza*; and did many ſtrange and prodigious Things, till, at length, diſcovering to *Delilah* where his great Strength lay, by her he was betrayed, and delivered into the Hands of his Enemies; who, putting out his Eyes, loaded him with Irons, and ſhut him up in Priſon, till, in Time, (his Strength returning with his Hair) he was ſufficiently avenged by pulling the Houſe of their God *Dagon* upon them, tho' he himſelf periſhed in the Ruins: Theſe Things are ſo fully recorded in the Book of *Judges* [o], that there is no Occaſion to relate them here: Only we may take Notice, that (what has been ſo common a Subject of *Ridicule)* the *three hundred Foxes*, which *Samſon* is ſaid to have caught, is not ſo incredible a Thing, as ſome may imagine. For we are to conſider, (as the learned *Bochart* [p] evinces) that the whole Country, eſpecially that Part of it, which belonged to the Tribe of *Dan*, abounded ſo with *Foxes*, [q] that from them ſeveral Places took

His Foxes.

* Eccleſ. v. 4, 2. [i] *Joſephus* and *Philo.* [k] *Vid.* Judg. xiii. [l] *Vid.* Numb. vi. and *Calmet's* Dictionary. [m] *Saurin's* Diſſertations, Vol. II. [n] Numb. vi. 5. and Judg. xiii. 5. [o] From Chap. xiii. to Chap. xvi. [p] Hieroz. Lib. iii. c. 13. [q] Judg i. 35. and Joſh. xix. 42.

took their Names: That, under the Name of Foxes, may not improperly be comprehended a Creature, very much like them, called *Thoes*, which go in ſuch *Herds*, that two hundred of them have been ſeen together at once; that the Manner of catching them was not (as we imagine) by Hunting only, but by Snares and Nets, as our Author plainly demonſtrates; and that *Samſon* did not this alone by himſelf, in a Day and a Night's Time; but that, being aſſiſted by his Servants and Neighbours, (as he was a Man of conſiderable Eminence in his Country) he might poſſibly be ſome Weeks in accompliſhing a Deſign, whereby he both injured his Enemy, and benefited his own Country, by freeing it of ſo many noxious Animals; for that poſſibly might be a *ſecondary* Reaſon for his getting together ſuch a Multitude of Foxes. "How impious then, as well as incongruous is it, ſays our Author, for "Men, who profeſs to believe the divine Authority of the Scriptures, to make a Jeſt "of this Tranſaction; when, at the ſame Time, they both believe and read, with "Admiration, what *Pliny* tells us, of *Lucius Sylla*, that when he was Prætor, he "ordered to be ſhewn on the *Amphitheatre* a thouſand Lions at once; and *Julius* "*Cæſar*, when he was Dictator, four Times as many; when they believe, what *Vo*-"*piſcus* teſtifies, that the Emperor *Probus* exhibited, at one Spectacle, a thouſand "*Stags*, three hundred *Bears*, an hundred *Lybian*, an hundred *Syrian Leopards*, and "an infinite Number of other ſtrange Creatures, and yet are ſtaggered at the Account "of *Samſon*'s taking three hundred Foxes?"

THE like is to be ſaid of his killing a Thouſand Men with *the Jaw-Bone of an Aſs*; that whatever the Inſtrument be in the Man's Hand, when God inſpires him with Courage againſt thoſe, whom he intimidates, 'tis the ſame Thing: But, in this Caſe 'tis preſumable enough, [r] that the *Philiſtines*, ſeeing *Samſon*, firſt [s] break the Cords, wherewith he was bound, ſo eaſily and ſuddenly, and then coming upon them with ſo much Fury, might be put into no ſmall *Confuſion*, and, ſtraggling about in their Flight, give him the Advantage of ſlaying them one by one, as he came up to them, till they amounted to the Number of a Thouſand. This indeed is the higheſt Inſtance of *Perſonal* Proweſs, that we read of, and yet profane Hiſtorians inform us of other Men, who by their mere natural Courage, unaſſiſted by any divine Power, (as the Scripture informs us *Samſon* was) have made great Havock among their Enemies. For [t] the above-cited Author reports, that, in the *Sarmatick* War, *Aurelian* ſlew forty-eight Men in one Day, and in ſeveral Days, [u] nine hundred and fifty; which diminiſhes the Wonder not a little, that a Man, aſſiſted by God, who could raiſe his Powers to what Degree he pleaſed, and equally enfeeble the Spirits of thoſe that were his Adverſaries, ſhould be able to deſtroy ſo many.

Killing ſo many with the Jaw-Bone of an Aſs.

* WHETHER *Samſon*'s Hair was the *Phyſical*, or only the *Moral* Cauſe of his Strength, needs not, I think, be made any Queſtion. For, though Plenty of Hair may be a natural Indication of bodily Strength; yet ſince he, that is naturally ſtrong, becomes not leſs ſo by having his Hair cut off, (though this was certainly the Caſe of *Samſon*) it muſt follow, that his Hair was no *natural* Cauſe of his Strength, which was a *ſupernatural* and *miraculous* Gift, [x] not, perhaps, always inherent in him, but only diſpenſed at certain Times, when the *Spirit* of God came upon him. [y] It depended indeed on the *Covenant*, made between God and him, the Sign of which Covenant was his Hair; and therefore when, in Compliance to his *Harlot*, he ſuffered his Hair to be cut off, he broke the Covenant with God, and forfeiting the Spirit of Strength and Courage, was left to his own natural Weakneſs, and ſo became an eaſy Prey to his Enemies.

And his Strength in his Hair accounted for.

WHAT Reſemblance ſoever there may be imagined between the Perfidy of *Delilah*, and that, [z] which is fabled of the Daughter of *Niſus*, King of *Megara*, the Fate of whoſe Empire depended upon one particular Hair of his Head, which ſhe enamoured with his Enemy *Minos*, then beſieging him in his *Capital*, impiouſly cut off, and ſent for a Preſent, to engage his Affections to her: Whatever there is in this, I ſay, there is certainly ſo near a *Similitude* between the *Heathen Hercules*, and the *Jewiſh Samſon*, that, in all Probability, they were one and the ſame Perſon. And,

Samſon *and* Hercules *compared.*

[r] *Patrick*'s Commentary on Judg. xv. [s] Vid. Judg. xv. 14, &c. [t] *Vopiſcus*. [u] Upon this Occaſion the Boys made a Song (not much unlike what *Samſon* made of himſelf, Judg. xv. 16.) which, after a military Manner, they ſhouted in their Dances, *mille, mille, mille, mille, mille, mille decollavimus unus homo; mille, mille, mille, mille decollavimus. Mille, mille, mille vivat, qui mille, mille occidit. Tantum vini habet nemo, quantum effudit ſanguinis.* * *Calmet*'s Dict. [x] Vid. *Patrick*'s Commentary. [y] *Collier*'s Introduction. [z] Vid. *Ovid*'s Metam. Lib. VIII.

to this Purpoſe, ſome Criticks have obſerved, that not only [a] their Names, [b] their Epithets, and the Time of their Appearance in the World were much the ſame, but that *Samſon*'s killing a Lion, ſlaying the *Philiſtines*, carrying away the Gates of *Gaza*, *&c.* were exemplified in other Inſtances by *Hercules*; and above all, that the *predominant* Paſſion of their Complexions, an immoderate Love for Women, was in both the ſame, attended with the ſame Effects, and the ſame ſad *Cataſtrophe* in both; that which *tarniſhed* the Glory of both their great Exploits, and brought them both, at laſt, to an untimely End. And therefore to conclude theſe Reflections, in the Words of the wiſe Man, [c] *Hearken unto me*, ſays he, *O ye Children, and attend unto the Words of my Mouth. Let not thine Heart* lead *thee to the Ways of a ſtrange Woman, even of a Stranger, who flattereth with her Mouth, which forſaketh the Guide of her Youth, and forgetteth the Covenant of her God; for her Houſe inclineth unto Death, and her Paths unto the Dead. With fair Words ſhe will cauſe thee to yield; with the Flattery of her Lips ſhe will force thee*; thou ſhalt *go after her ſtraightway, as an Ox goeth to the Slaughter, and as a Fool to the Correction of the Stocks*; but *none, that go unto her, return again, neither take they hold of the Paths of Life*; for *ſhe hath caſt down many wounded, and many ſtrong Men have been ſlain by her.*

Of Samuel *and the Prophets.*

Of the World, 2904, &c. Before Chriſt, 1100, &c.

DURING the Adminiſtration of *Eli*, the Affairs of *Iſrael* ran into great Diſorders. His two Sons, *Hophni* and *Phinehas*, led very looſe and irregular Lives; himſelf, by reaſon of his Age, had loſt all Power and Authority over them; the *Philiſtines* had vanquiſhed their Armies in the Field, and, when the Ark of the Covenant was brought into the Camp, in Hopes, [d] *that it ſhould ſave them from the Hand of their Enemies*, their Enemies ſtill prevailed againſt them; ſlew thirty thouſand of them in a pitched Battle, and took the *Ark of the Covenant* at the ſame Time. How the Ark of the Covenant was removed from *Eben-ezer* to *Aſhdod*, from *Aſhdod* to *Gath*, from *Gath* to *Ekron*, and all along carried heavy Judgments and Deſtruction to the Places, where it came, 'till, at length, the *Philiſtines* were glad to get rid of it, and ſent it back *honourably* to the Children of *Iſrael*; all theſe Particulars are ſo fully recorded in [e] the firſt Book of *Samuel*, that it were in vain to pretend to enlarge upon them: Only we may obſerve, [f] that it was a Cuſtom among the [g] ancient *Heathens*, to conſecrate unto their Gods ſuch Monuments of their Deliverances, as repreſented the Evils, from which they were freed; ſo the *Philiſtines*, hoping ſhortly to be delivered from the *Emrods* and *Mice*, wherewith they were ſorely afflicted, during the Stay of the Ark among them, ſent the Images of theſe Things to the God of *Iſrael*: [h] *If peradventure* (as their Prieſts adviſed them) *he will lighten his Hand from off you, and from off your Gods, and from off your Lands.*

The Schools of the Prophets inſtituted by Samuel.

AFTER the Death of *Eli*, the Government came into the Hands of *Samuel*, who judged the People for twenty Years: But as he was a *Prophet*, as well as a *Governor*, 'tis in this Light, that, at preſent, we conſider him; and ſhall hence take Occaſion to add ſomething to what we have ſaid, [i] in the Beginning of this Work, concerning thoſe *Schools*, or *Colleges* of the Prophets, which, in all Probability, were of his Inſtitution. [k] Some of the modern *Jews* indeed carry the Account of theſe *Schools* much higher, than they have any Authority for, pretending to trace them to *Abraham*, to *Noah*, to *Seth*, nay, even to *Adam* himſelf: But though it be granted, that the Spirit of Prophecy did, more or leſs, reſide among the *Patriarchs*, and others, from the earlieſt Ages; yet we meet with no Inſtance in Scripture of any Society formed, or Method of Education inſtituted, in order to attain it, but what was of much later Date. The firſt Mention indeed, that we have of this, is, when *Saul* is ſaid to meet, and join himſelf to [l] *a Company of Prophets, at the Hill of*

[a] The Word *Samſon* means the *Sun*, and *Hercules* is derived from the two Words *Our* and *Coll*, which ſignify *all Light*. [b] The *Perſians* call *Hercules Sandes*, which ſignifies *terrible*, which exactly agrees with *Samſon*. *Saurin*'s Diſſertations, Vol. II. [c] Prov. ii. 16. and vii. 21, *&c.* [d] 1 Sam. iv. 3. [e] Ch. vi. and vii. [f] *Patrick*'s Commentary on 1 Sam. vi. 4. [g] That this is ſtill a Practice among the modern *Indians*, we may obſerve, from what *Tavernier* relates, in his Travels to their Country, *viz.* That, when any Pilgrim goes to a *Pagod*, for the Cure of any Diſeaſe, he brings the Figure of the Member affected made either of Gold, Silver, or Copper, according to his Quality; which he offers to his God, and then falls a ſinging, as the Cuſtom is. [h] 1 Sam. vi. 5. [i] Vid. p. 28. [k] Vid. *Jacob. Alting*, de Republicâ Hebræorum, and *Abenda*, of the Eccleſiaſtical and Civil Polity of the *Jews*. [l] 1 Sam. x. 5. 10.

of God, as they came down from the High Place, with Muſick before them. [m] What the Text expreſſes, by *a Company of Prophets*, moſt Commentators, both *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian*, agree to interpret of *a Society of Students*, devoting themſelves to the Attainment of Prophecy. *Where*, and *what* the *Hill of God* was, is diſputed by Interpreters; but the moſt probable Conjecture is, that it was in *Gibeah* of *Benjamin*, the Place where *Saul*'s Father dwelt, and that it was called the *Hill of God*, both becauſe it was an high Place, whereon the People were uſed to offer Sacrifice, as alſo becauſe here dwelt a Company of Prophets, who had addicted themſelves to the Service of God. After this we read of a like [n] *Company of Prophets* at Naioth, *in* Ramah, *propheſying with* Samuel, *who ſtood as appointed over them*; of *the Sons of the Prophets*, who were [o] at *Bethel*; of others [p] at *Jericho*; of others [q] at *Gilgal*; and of others [r] at *Jeruſalem*: So that it ſeems as if they were diſperſed about all the Cities of the *Iſraelites*, that they might be every where at hand, to inſtruct and admoniſh them. Nay, ſo very numerous were they in the Days of *Ahab*, that [s] one good Man (*Obadiah* by Name) is ſaid to have hid an hundred of them, by fifty in a Cave, to preſerve them from *Jezabel*'s Perſecution, even after ſhe had taken off their main Body.

Their Manner of Life and Education.

IN theſe ſeveral Places the Prophets had convenient *Colleges* built for their Abode; and, living in *Communities*, had ſome one of diſtinguiſhed Note, very probably by Divine Election, ſet over them, to be their *Head* and *Preſident*. Here it was that they ſtudied the Law, and learned to expound the ſeveral Precepts of it: Here it was, that, by previous Exerciſe, they qualified themſelves for the Reception of the *Spirit of Prophecy*, whenever it ſhould pleaſe God to ſend it upon them: But (what is the moſt remarkable Part of their Employment) here it was, that they were inſtructed in the ſacred Art of *Pſalmody*, or (as the Scripture calls it) in [t] *propheſying with Harps, with Pſalteries, and Cymbals*; and the End of their uſing ſo much *Muſick*, was, to keep themſelves continually in ſuch a due Temper of Mind, as might the better diſpoſe them for the Divine Breathings of the Prophetick Spirit, which being of a mild, free, and gentle Nature, would not conſort with Sadneſs, or Melancholy, or turbulent Paſſions, but always choſe an eaſy, calm, and chearful Diſpoſition.

FROM theſe *Schools* of the Prophets, when any *Bleſſings* were to be promiſed, any *Judgments* to be denounced, or ſome extraordinary *Event* to be predicted, the Meſſengers were generally choſen, as being, by their preparatory Exerciſe and Diſcipline, more ſuſceptible of the *Divine Impulſe*: And tho' *Amos* declares of himſelf, that he [u] *was neither a Prophet, nor a Prophet's Son, but an Herdman, and Gatherer of Sycamore Fruit*, when the Lord appointed him to that Office; yet this ſeems to be a *particular* Caſe; becauſe, generally ſpeaking, the Prophets, of whom we have any Remains in ſacred Record, have diſcovered themſelves to be Men of a good Education. The *Elegance* of *Iſaiah*, the *Rhetorick* of *Jeremiah*, and the Skill of *Ezekiel* in *Architecture* and *Geography* are very remarkable; nor is there any Ground to imagine, that theſe Endowments were inſpired, or that they received them together with the *extraordinary* Influence or Operations of the Spirit, ſince * it appears, by the Practice of *Daniel* in particular, that even thoſe, who were actually endued with the *Holy Ghoſt*, ſtill uſed the ſame Diligence, or rather more than before, to gain what Knowledge and Aſſiſtance they could, by the Uſe and Help of ordinary Means: And this ſeems to point out the Reaſon, why St *Paul* adviſes *Timothy*, a Man extraordinarily endowed with the Gift of the Spirit, and marked out *by Prophecy* as one, that would prove *eminent* in the Work of the Miniſtry, [x] *to give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, and to Doctrine*; and why St *Paul* himſelf, who could boaſt of *Viſions*, and *Revelations*, and of *ſpiritual Gifts*, beyond all the Apoſtles, writes to *Timothy* to bring him his [y] *Book-caſe*, (for [z] ſo the Word φαιλόνης ſhould be rendered) *his Books, and his Parchments*, or Common-place-book; becauſe he wanted to make Uſe of them, as never thinking that his Abundance of ſpiritual Gifts ſuperſeded all Neceſſity to ſtudy.

SECT.

[m] *Wheatly*, on the Schools of the Prophets. [n] 1 Sam. xix. 20. [o] 2 Kings ii. 3. [p] Ibid. ii. 5. [q] Ibid. iv. 38. [r] Ibid. xxii. 14. [s] 1 Kings xviii. [t] 1 Chron. xxv. 7. [u] Amos vii. 14. * *Vid.* Dan. ix. 21, 22, 23. and Chap. x. 11, 21. [x] 1 Tim. iv. 13. [y] 2 Tim. iv. 13. [z] I am very ſenſible, that, in our *Engliſh* Tranſlation, it is called a *Cloak*; but it may as well be interpreted a Book-Caſe, or Scriptore. *Phavorinus* is of Opinion, that it ſignifies *folded Vellum*, or Parchment; and therefore Dr *Hammond* thinks it all one with the μεμβρανα, mentioned afterwards, becauſe the μάλιστα δὲ, *but more eſpecially*, ſeems to denote ſomething mentioned before. *Hammond, in locum.*

SECT. IV.

Saul *and his Actions.*

Of the World, 2944, &c. Before Christ, 1060, &c.

THE Miſconduct of *Samuel*'s Sons, whom he had appointed to be Judges of *Iſrael*, gave the People a fair Pretence to demand a *King* to be ſet over them, as other neighbouring Nations had; and God ſo far complied with their Requeſt (tho' [a] with ſome Signification of his Diſpleaſure) as to order *Samuel* to anoint *Saul*, the *Son* of *Kiſh*, [b] a Man of a tall and *majeſtick* Stature and Appearance, but not ſo well qualified, in his Mind, to ſuſtain that important Office. For though in the Beginning of his Reign, in two or three Actions, he behaved himſelf very well; yet he ſoon forgot his Duty to the God, who had raiſed him to that high Honour, and in the Matter of his ſparing *Agag*, and the beſt of the Spoil, contrary to his expreſs Command, provoked him to that Degree, that his Prophet is commiſſioned to tell him, that, *becauſe he had rejected the Word of the Lord, the Lord had rejected him from being King over* Iſrael; *and had given his Kingdom to a Neighbour of his, that was better than he.*

THIS ill News made ſuch an Impreſſion upon *Saul*, that it was not long before he fell into a deep Melancholy. The Scripture expreſſes it, by an *evil Spirit*'s *being ſent by the Lord to trouble him*; but this Spirit (according to *Joſephus* and others) was no more than a Mind, ſadly diſtracted with the ſeveral Paſſions of Jealouſy, Envy, Grief, Deſpair, Anger, and other Anxieties, which, [c] in the Opinion of many learned Writers upon the Subject, are often known to be diſſipated and appeaſed by *Muſick*; and accordingly the Text tells us, that, *when the evil Spirit from the Lord was upon* Saul, *David*, who was an excellent Muſician, *took an Harp, and played with his Hand*; *and* Saul *was refreſhed, and was well.*

HOW ungratefully *Saul* requited *David* for all his good Offices, eſpecially for his defending, in ſeveral Engagements, his Throne with the manifeſt Hazard of his Life, is ſo particularly related in [d] the firſt Book of *Samuel*, that thither we may refer our Reader, who, as he cannot but ſuppoſe, that ſuch wicked Proceedings could never be attended with the Bleſſing of God; ſo will he ſoon find this malicious and bloody-minded King, reduced to the laſt Extremity, forſaken by God, and betaking himſelf to the Powers of Darkneſs for Counſel and Relief. For this is what the Text informs us, that [e] *when* Saul *enquired of the Lord, and the Lord anſwered him not, neither by Dreams, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets, then ſaid he unto his Servants, Seek me out a Woman that hath a familiar Spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her.* His Servants accordingly inform him where there was one; and he, putting on a proper Diſguiſe, went to her, and requeſted of her *to bring up* Samuel, who had been dead for ſome Time: But whether it was really *Samuel*, or only a Cheat and Deception of the Woman; or, if it was *Samuel*, whether he was made to appear by her *Incantations*, and the Power of the Devil, or by the *Interpoſition* of Divine Providence only, are Queſtions, that have long exerciſed the Pens of the Learned.

Saul *and the Witch of* Endor.

Of the World, 2950, &c. Before Christ, 1054, &c.

THOSE who imagine that the Whole was a *Cheat* and a Juggle of the Woman, take Notice, [f] that the ſacred Story never once makes Mention of *Saul*'s *ſeeing Samuel*

[a] 1 Sam. viii. 7. [b] This was reckoned ſo neceſſary a Qualification in a King, that the *Lacedæmonians* (as *Plutarch* tells us in the Beginning of his Book περὶ παιδῶν ἀγωγῆς) ſet a Fine upon their King *Archidamus* for marrying a Wife of a low Stature, who was likely to bring them, οὐ βασιλέας ἀλλὰ βασιλίσκους, *not Kings, but Kinglings*, to reign over them. And therefore remarkable are the Words in *Pliny*'s Panegyrick to *Trajan*, "That the Strength and "Tallneſs of his Body, the Nobleneſs of his Aſpect, the Dignity of his Countenance, the Gracefulneſs of his Speech, "&c. *longè lateque, Principem oſtentant*, do every where proclaim a Prince." [c] All Authors are full of the Praiſe of the Power of Muſick, both to ſtir up Paſſions, and to allay them, according to the ſeveral Kinds of it. *Athenæus* [Lib. XIV.] praiſes it for the Virtue that is in it, to regulate Men's Manners, and to calm and ſoften the furious, and thoſe that are diſturbed in Mind. *Gerh. Voſſius* [in his Book *De Artibus Popularibus*, c. 3.] ſhews how Diſeaſes of the Body have been cured by Muſick, as well as thoſe of the Mind. *Bochart* reckons up many famous Artiſts among the Ancients, beſides *Orpheus* and *Amphion*, that are celebrated, not only by Poets, but by very good Hiſtorians, for their wonderful Skill in moving Men's Paſſions by Muſick: And (to name no more) the great *Eraſmus* hath obſerved the Force of Muſick, in curing Diſeaſes, and quite altering the Paſſions of Men's Minds, in his Preface to *Arnobius* upon the Pſalms. *Patrick*'s Commentary on 1 Sam. xvi. 23. [d] From Chap. xviii. to Chap. xxvii. [e] 1 Sam. xxviii. 6, 7. [f] *Scot* and *Webſter* upon Witchcraft.

Samuel with his own Eyes. It tells us indeed, that he knew him by the *Deſcription* which the Woman gave, and that he held ſome conſiderable Diſcourſe with him; but, ſince it is no where ſaid, that he *really* ſaw him, "Why might not the Woman counterfeit a Voice, and pretend it was *Samuel*'s? When he told her, he would have *Samuel* brought up to him, ſhe might withdraw from his Preſence into her *Cloſet*, or *Cell*, and there having her *Familiar*, *i. e.* ſome crafty confederate Knave, to aſſiſt her in making proper *Reſponſes*, might eaſily impoſe upon one, who was diſtracted with uneaſy Thoughts, and had already ſhewn ſufficient *Credulity*, in thinking there was any Efficacy in *magical* Operations to *evocate* the Dead."

That Samuel's *Appearance was real.*

BUT, [g] beſides that we find no Mention of a Cloſet, or any other Place, whereinto the Sorcereſs might retire, in order to impoſe upon *Saul*, 'tis very plain, from the whole Narration, that he actually did ſee *Samuel*; not ſo ſoon as the Woman did, we own, becauſe probably the Woman's Body, or ſome other Object, might interpoſe between him, and the firſt Appearance; but that he did ſee him is manifeſt, becauſe, when, *perceiving* (which Word in the Original ſignifies *ſeeing ſo*, as to be aſſured of our Object) *that it was* Samuel *himſelf*, *he ſtooped with his Face to the Ground, and bowed himſelf*, which a Man is not apt to do to bare *Ideas*, or Imaginations, and much leſs, a Perſon of *Saul*'s undaunted Courage, to a *Creature* of a ſilly Woman's Contrivance. For whatever uneaſy Thoughts the King might be under, as to the Event of the enſuing Battle, 'tis plain, that, upon this Occaſion, he had not loſt his Preſence of Mind. His Words to the Pythoneſs, *Bring up* Samuel *to me*, manifeſtly ſhew, that he had no Apprehenſion of Fear from the Thought of ſeeing him; and, when the Woman was frightened, and ſhrieked at the Sight of the Apparition, 'tis evident, that *Saul* was not; for he bids her *not be afraid*, and deſires to know what it was that occaſioned her Conſternation. The whole Tenor of his Diſcourſe with *Samuel* indeed is a ſufficient Indication, that he was under no Deliquium or Diſturbance of Mind at this Interview; but that the Woman ſhould be ſurprized, and *cry out*, *with a loud Voice*, when ſhe ſaw *Samuel* appear, or that the Sight of him ſhould convince her, that the Perſon, who was come to conſult her, was the King, is no Wonder at all. For though, at firſt, ſhe might not ſuſpect it, from his requiring her to raiſe up *Samuel*; yet when, without the Aid of Incantations, *Samuel* appeared, ſhe might well be amazed and affrightened. [h] She ſaw an Apparition, ſhe did not expect; ſhe knew the Prophet; ſhe knew the Veneration *Saul* had for him; ſhe knew that Prophets were only ſent to Kings; ſhe knew, the poor deluded Mortals, ſhe had to do with, had no Notion of having any Commerce with Perſons of a *ſacred Character*, and ſhe knew her Art (whatever that was) had never exhibited a Perſon of that Figure to her; ſo that, as ſoon as ſhe ſaw him, the Importance of his Appearance, and the Relation he had to *Saul*, brought the King preſently to her Mind, and with him, her Fears; and, that this was the true Cauſe of her *crying out*, is plainly intimated by what ſhe ſays, *Why haſt thou deceived me? Thou art* Saul.

THERE was undoubtedly then ſomething more in this Tranſaction, than a bare Contrivance of the Woman to impoſe upon *Saul*; [i] ſince, be the Apparition what it will, it certainly foretold him more, than any human *Penetration* could find out. [k] *Becauſe thou obeyedſt not the Voice of the Lord, nor executedſt his fierce Wrath upon* Amalek; *therefore the Lord will deliver* Iſrael, *and thee, into the Hand of the* Philiſtines, *and to-morrow ſhalt thou, and thy Sons, be with me. The Lord alſo ſhall deliver the Hoſt of* Iſrael *into the Hand of the* Philiſtines: In which Words, there are three ſeveral Predictions; the *firſt*, concerning the Victory of the *Philiſtines* over the *Iſraelites*; *the Lord ſhall deliver* Iſrael *and thee into the Hand of the* Philiſtines; the *ſecond*, concerning the Death of *Saul* and his two Sons; *to-morrow thou and thy Sons ſhall be with* me; and the *third*, concerning the Plunder, and Advantage, which the Enemy ſhould make of their Victory; *the Lord ſhall deliver the Hoſt of* Iſrael *into the Hand of the* Philiſtines: And, accordingly, if we attend to the Sequel of the Hiſtory, we ſhall find, that exactly thus it came to paſs. For [l] *when the* Philiſtines *fought againſt* Iſrael, ſays the Text, *the Men of* Iſrael *fled before them*; this is the Accompliſhment of the *firſt* Prediction: [m] *The* Philiſtines *followed hard upon* Saul, *and upon his Sons, and they ſlew* Jonathan, *and* Aminadab, *and* Malchiſhua, *his Sons*, whilſt himſelf *fell upon his own Sword*; this is the Accompliſhment of

[g] *Glanvil*'s Sadduciſmus Triumphatus. [h] Hiſtorical Account of the Life of *David*, Vol. I. [i] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations, Vol. II. [k] 1 Sam. xxviii. 18, 19. [l] Ibid. xxxi. 1. [m] Ibid. ver. 2.

the *Second:* [n] *And when the Men of* Iſrael, *that were on the other Side of the Valley, and they that were on the other Side* Jordan, *ſaw, that the Men of* Iſrael *fled, and that Saul and his Sons were dead, they forſook the Cities, and fled, and the* Philiſtines *came and dwelt in them*; this is the Accompliſhment of the *Third:* Nor were ever Predictions more clearly expreſſed, or more exactly fulfilled; which is enough to convince us, that there was ſomething more than human Foreſight concerned in them both Ways. The Truth is, had there been only the Witch and her Accomplice concerned in this Affair, 'tis certain, that they, knowing nothing of *Futurity*, can only be ſuppoſed to have ventured at a bold *Conjecture*; and, if they ventured to gueſs only, it ſeems more conſiſtent to Reaſon, that they ſhould have propheſied *grateful* and *pleaſant* Things to the afflicted King. [o] The Woman, by her courteous Entertainment of the King, and according to the Character, which *Joſephus* gives of her, ſeems to be a Perſon of no bad Nature; and therefore it is improbable, that either ſhe or her *Confederate* ſhould agree to lay an *additional* Load of Trouble and Deſperation upon him, when he was in ſuch Diſtreſs before. It is improbable, [*] that a little contemptible *Juggler*, or a poor daſtardly Woman, ſhould ever dare to treat the King of *Iſrael* with that Air of *Superiority* and Contumely, wherewith *Samuel* treats *Saul* upon this Occaſion. It is improbable, that any ſuch Impoſtor ſhould be ſo *zealous* (as we find *Samuel* here was) for a ſtrict Obſervance of the Commands of God, and ſo *rigid* in pronouncing divine Vengeance upon the Violation of them.

[†] EVERY one knows, that the Buſineſs of Impoſtors is to flatter, to delude, to deceive, to anſwer doubtfully, to promiſe Good, and put off the Evil: And therefore it was the Woman's Province, in a particular Manner, to act her Part in this Matter. Had ſhe promiſed *Saul* Victory, and the Succeſs had anſwered, ſhe was then ſure of conſiderable Advantage: Had the Fate of the Day turned againſt him, and he himſelf been ſlain in Battle, all then was ſafe: As no one was privy to the Affair, the Falſhood of the Prediction, upon his Death and Defeat, muſt of Courſe have been buried with him: Nay, had he eſcaped, and yet been worſted, her foretelling Succeſs would have paſſed for an Indication of her *good Will*, and *good Wiſhes* to the King, and his People, and ſo have been overlooked; whereas by prognoſticating Evil to the Royal Family, if the Event did not juſtify and ſave her, ſhe ran a manifeſt Hazard of being undone for ever.

And occaſioned not by the Power of the Devil, but by the Appointment of God.

FOR theſe, and ſeveral other Reaſons that might be produced, we think it evident, that there was no Cheat and Impoſture in this Appearance of *Samuel*, as it is recorded in Scripture; but [p] then, whether it was effected by a *diabolical* Power, or by the ſole *Appointment* of Divine Providence, is a farther Queſtion, that deſerves to be conſidered. Some of the [q] *Fathers* of the *Chriſtian* Church were of Opinion, that the Devil had a certain *limited* Power over the Souls of the Saints, before *Jeſus Chriſt deſcended into Hell*, and reſcued them from the Hands of that Prince of Darkneſs. [r] St *Auſtin*, in particular, thinks there is no more *Abſurdity* in ſaying, that the Devil was as able to call up *Samuel*'s Soul, as he was to *preſent himſelf among the Sons of God*, or to ſet our Saviour on one of the *Pinacles of the Temple*.

[s] A LEARNED Doctor of the *Jewiſh* Church ſeems to be perſuaded, that Devils have ſuch Power over human Souls, for the Space of a Year after their Departure, that they can make them aſſume what Bodies they pleaſe; whereupon he ſuppoſes, that it was not a Year from the Time of *Samuel*'s Death to his Appearance. But theſe are wild and extravagant Fancies, not deſerving a ſerious Confutation. [t] 'Tis abſurd to ſay, that the Souls of Saints (ſuch as we are now ſpeaking of) were ever in *Hell*; and more abſurd to ſay, that, if they are in Heaven, it is in the Power of any *magical* Incantations to call them down from thence. *Great*, without all Doubt, is the Power of Apoſtate Angels; but *miſerable*, we may ſay, would the State of the Bleſſed be, if they had any Licenſe to diſturb the other's Happineſs, when, and as long as they pleaſed: *God forbid then*, ſays [u] *Tertullian*, *that we ſhould believe the Soul of any holy Man, much leſs of a Prophet, ſhould be* ſo far under his Diſpoſal, as to be *brought up*, at Pleaſure, *by the Power of the Devil.* It cannot be denied indeed, that the Devil's *Knowledge* is vaſtly ſuperior to that of the moſt accompliſhed human Underſtanding; that his natural *Penetration*, joined with his long Experience, is ſuch, that the greateſt *Philoſophers*, the ſubtleſt *Criticks*, the moſt refined *Politicians*, or the moſt profound

[n] 1 Sam. xxxi. 7. [o] *Glanvil*'s Sadduciſmus Triumphatus. [*] Hiſtorical Account of the Life of King *David*, Vol. I. [†] Ibid. [p] *Calmet*'s Dictionary, on the Word *Samuel*. [q] Juſtin Mart. in Dial. cum. Tryph. *and* Origen in 1 Reg. Cap. xxviii. [r] De Diver. Quæſt. Lib. II. Q. 4. [s] R. Manaſ. Ben. Iſrael, de Reſurrectione Mortuorum, L. III. c. 6. [t] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations, Vol. II. [u] De Animâ, c. 57.

profound *Divines*, are but mere *Novices*, in Compariſon of him; yet what *Genius* (however exalted and improved) without a Divine Revelation, can be able to foretel Things, that were lodged in God's own Breaſt, *viz.* the preciſe Time of two Armies engaging, the Succeſs and Conſequence of the Victory, and the very Names of the Perſons, that were to fall in the Battle. This is what the Apparition plainly revealed to *Saul*; and yet this, we dare to maintain, is more, than any *finite* Underſtanding, by its own mere Sagacity, will ever be able to find out. None, but God himſelf, could *reveal* this Secret; * none but he is capable of ſeeing into *Futurity*, and of pronouncing upon it: And therefore we find the Prophet *Iſaiah* giving this Challenge to all falſe Gods and Devils: *Let them bring forth, and ſhew us what ſhall happen: Let them ſhew the former Things, what they be that we may conſider them: Let them declare the Things, that are to come hereafter, that we may know that they are Gods:* Which plainly implies, that the Fore-knowledge of future Events is an incommunicable Attribute and Prerogative of the true God only.

UPON the whole therefore, we may conclude, that the moſt natural, and indeed the moſt probable Opinion is——That it was the *real* Soul of *Samuel*, cloathed in ſome *viſible* Form, that was ſent to the King of *Iſrael*, not upon the *Call* of any *magical* Operations, but by the *Order* and Appointment of Almighty God, to tell him his Doom, and pronounce that Sentence upon him, which afterwards came to paſs. To this Purpoſe we may obſerve, that, through the whole Narration, *Samuel* is the only Thing that is mentioned. [y] 'Tis *Samuel*, whom *Saul* deſires to be *called up*; *Samuel*, who appeared to the Woman; *Samuel*, whom the Woman deſcribes; *Samuel*, whom *Saul perceives* and *bows himſelf to*, with whom he converſes ſo long, and, *becauſe of whoſe Words, he was* afterwards *ſo ſore afraid*. The Scripture indeed, we own, ſpeaks often according to the Miſapprehenſions of Men; but when it is ſo, there is uſually ſomething in the Context, or Nature of the Thing, that leads us to make this Judgment, which cannot, I think, be pretended in the Caſe now before us, becauſe we find the wiſe Son of *Sirach* (an excellent Interpreter of *Canonical* Scripture) telling us expreſsly, that *Samuel*, *after his Death*, *propheſied and ſhewed the King his End*. Unleſs there were therefore a cogent Reaſon to the contrary, the plain and literal Senſe of the Words muſt here be admitted.

An Objection.

" BUT is there not Reaſon enough to the contrary, *may ſome ſay*, when the very " Text tells us, that *Saul* was become ſo reprobate a Man, that God had wholly " withdrawn himſelf from him; [z] would neither anſwer him by Prophets, nor by " *Dreams*, nor by *Urim* and *Thummim*: And can we imagine, that he would ſend " *Samuel* to him from the Dead, (or that *Samuel* would be ſo ready to come, and that " at the Call of a *Witch*) when he would not favour him with any Revelation from " a living Prophet, or any other Method of Enquiry?" That the Souls of Men departed have Life, and Senſe, and Motion; have a *Capacity*, and, no doubt, an *Inclination* to be employed in the Service of Men alive, as having the ſame Nature and Affections, and being more ſenſible of our Infirmities, than any pure and abſtracted Spirits are, can hardly be conteſted; that, in their *abſent* State, they are embodied with aërial or *ætherial Vehicles*, which they can *condenſe*, or *rarify* at Pleaſure, and ſo appear, or not appear, to human Sight, is what ſome of the greateſt Men, both of the Heathen and [a] Chriſtian Religion, have evinced; and that frequent Apparitions of this Kind have happened, ſince the World began, cannot be denied by any one, that is converſant in its Hiſtory. But, at the ſame Time that we aſſert all this, and are verily perſuaded, that the Apparation of *Samuel* was no fictitious Thing, we utterly deny, that it was any Ways occaſioned by the Woman's *magical* Incantations. [b] It was indeed ſent immediately from God: And for this Reaſon perhaps, we find the Woman ſtruck with Horror and Amazement, (as we ſaid before) becauſe the Prophet might appear contrary to her Expectation, and before ſhe had performed her *Spells*.

Anſwered.

HAD the Prophet appeared to give *Saul* Comfort and Conſolation in his Affliction, this might have been thought a favourable Vouchſafement of God; but, when he appeared to the very contrary Purpoſe, it ſeems to be rather an Inſtance of his continued Diſpleaſure, and a Judgment perhaps, to which his Juſtice was farther provoked by this his freſh Sin, in dealing with a *Sorcereſs*. Since the Wiſdom of God however

* An Hiſtorical Account of the Life of King *David*, Vol. I.

[y] 1 Sam. xxviii. 11, *&c.*

[z] Ibid. xxviii. 6.

[a] This our learned Dr *Cudworth* and Dr *More* have largely ſhewn to be conſonant to the Doctrine of the greateſt Philoſophers, and moſt ancient and learned Fathers, as well as agreeable both to the Scriptures and Reaſon. *Glanvil*'s Sadduciſmus Triumphatus.

[b] Ibid.

however thought proper to diſpatch a Meſſenger to him upon this Occaſion, there is ſome Reaſon to be given, why the Soul of *Samuel* ſhould be thought moſt proper, and (upon the Suppoſition it were left to his Option) ſhould rather be deſirous to be ſent upon that Errand. *Samuel*, in his Life-time, had denounced God's Judgments againſt *Saul*, for his Diſobedience to the divine Command, in the Caſe of *Amalek*; and, when he did ſo, we are informed, that he was * clad in a *Mantle*; and therefore it cannot but be thought expedient, that he, more eſpecially, ſhould *now be* ſent to repeat, and ratify the Sentence *then* denounced, and, to ſtrike him with fuller Conviction, (as ſome † obſerve) ſhould appear in the ſame Dreſs, the ſame Mantle, in which he had denounced that Sentence before.

HOWEVER this be, 'tis certain, whatever may be ſaid in Diminution of *Saul*'s religious Character, that he was a brave Prince and Commander; had lived in a ſtrict Intimacy with *Samuel*, profeſſed a great Eſteem for him in all Things, and was by *Samuel* [c] not a little lamented, when he had fallen from his Obedience to God. Upon theſe Conſiderations we may imagine, that the Soul of *Samuel* might have ſuch a Kindneſs for him, as to be ready to appear to him in the Depth of his Diſtreſs, in order to ſettle his Mind, by telling him plainly the *Upſhot* of the whole Matter, *viz.* that he ſhould loſe the Battle, and he and his Sons be ſlain, that ſo he might give a *Specimen* (as the *Jews* love to ſpeak) of the braveſt Valour, that ever was atchieved by any Commander, in that he would not ſuffer his Country to be over-run by the Enemy, while he was alive, without Reſiſtance; but, though he knew certainly he ſhould fail of Succeſs, and he and his Sons die in the Fight, yet in ſo juſt and honourable a Cauſe, as the Defence of his Crown and Country, would give the Enemy Battle in the Field, and ſacrifice his own Life for the Safety of the People: Which gave Occaſion to *David*, in the Lamentation, which he makes over him, and over *Jonathan* his Son, to expreſs himſelf in theſe Terms; [d] *the Beauty of Iſrael is ſlain upon the High Places; how are the Mighty fallen! From the Blood of the ſlain, from the Fat of the Mighty, the Bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the Sword of Saul turned not empty; how are the Mighty fallen in the Midſt of the Battle!*

Of the Actions of David *and* Solomon.

His ſlaying Goliah.

DAVID was much about fifteen Years old, when *Samuel* privately anointed him King of *Iſrael*, after God had rejected the Houſe of *Saul*, and intended to make him his *Succeſſor*. There is one remarkable Action however, among many more, preceding his *Reign*, but after his *Anointment*, which muſt not be paſſed by without ſome Obſervation, and that is [e] his killing *Goliah* in ſo wonderful a Manner. For, while the *Iſraelites* and *Philiſtines* were encamped near each other, there came every Day, out of the Camp of the *Philiſtines*, a *Champion* of a prodigious Size, to challenge any in the Camp of *Iſrael*, that durſt engage him in *ſingle Combat*. Offended at this inſolent Challenger, and ſeeing his Men all *fearful and diſmayed*, the King made publick Proclamation, that whoever ſhould encounter and ſlay him, ſhould be amply rewarded; [f] ſhould have the King's Daughter in Marriage, and for ever be exempted from paying any Taxes or Tribute, juſt as *David* was coming to the Camp, to bring his Brethren ſome Proviſion; [g] for, in thoſe Days, the Cuſtom was for Men to go to War at their own Expence. *David* ſeeing the Champion, and hearing the Conditions of the Victory, was moved by a divine Impulſe to accept of the Challenge: But with what ſtrange Diſparity did the two Combatants meet! The *Philiſtine*, a Man of *gigantick* Stature, inured to War from his Youth, and with Arms and Armour proportionable: The *Iſraelite*, a young *Stripling*, accuſtomed to a Shepherd's Life, and without any Weapon, but a *Sling* and a *Stone*; and yet ſuch was the Direction of Divine Providence, that the Stone, when ſlung, [h] *ſmote the Philiſtine on his Forehead, and ſunk into it: So that David prevailed over him with a Sling and a Stone.* It would be injurious to the Power and Glory of God, to exclude him from an Action of this Importance, or otherwiſe we might ſay, that, upon a probable Suppoſition or two, all the Stupendiouſneſs of it would vaniſh, and nothing

* 1 Sam. xv. 27. † Hiſtorical Account of the Life of King *David*, Vol. I. [c] 1 Sam. xvi. 1.
[d] 2 Sam. i. 19. [e] 1 Sam. xvii. [f] Ibid. *ver.* 25. [g] Vid. *Patrick*'s Commentary, *in locum.*
[h] 1 Sam. xvii. 49, 50.

nothing remain in it exceeding human Strength. 'Tis but ſuppoſing, that this arrogant *Champion*, in Diſdain of his inferior *Combatant*, might come negligently toward him, [j] with his Helmet turned back, and his Forehead bare: Or, if this will not do, 'tis but ſuppoſing, that *David* might level his Stone ſo right, as to hit the Place, which was left open for his Adverſary's Eyes; or throw it with ſuch Force, as to penetrate both Helmet and Head together. And, to convince us of the Probability of theſe Suppoſitions, we need only remember (what we read in *ſacred* Hiſtory) of no leſs than [k] *ſeven hundred* Men in one Place, who were ſo expert with their *Left-Hands*, that every one could ſling Stones at an Hair's Breadth, and not miſs; or (what we read in [l] *profane* Hiſtory) of ſome *Slingers*, who threw Stones with ſuch a Violence, that nothing could reſiſt their Impreſſion; and that, when they made uſe of *Lead* inſtead of Stone, the very Lead would melt in the Air, as it flew, by Reaſon of the *Rapidity* of the Motion, which they gave it.

THIS then is eaſily accounted for: But then there is another Difficulty relating to this Action, which ſome Cavillers eagerly lay hold on. For, "whereas it is ſaid, "that, before this Combat with *Goliah*, *David* was well acquainted at *Saul*'s Court, "as being not only his *Muſician* in his melancholy Fits, but, in Reward for that "Service, promoted likewiſe to be [m] *his Armour-bearer*; how comes it to paſs, *ſay* "*they*, that, now he is going out againſt the *Philiſtine*, *Saul* ſhould know ſo little "of him, as [n] *to aſk Abner, the Captain of his Hoſt, whoſe Son is this Youth? And* "*Abner* ſhould anſwer, *as thy Soul liveth, O King, I cannot tell.* That *Abner*, a "military Man from his Youth, who had all along lived in Camps, ſhould not have "ſeen *David*, when he was at Court, is no Wonder at all; but that *Saul*, who had "received ſuch ſignal Benefit from the Charms of his Muſick, ſhould ſo ſoon forget "him, is a Thing incredible." It is to be obſerved however, [o] that the Queſtion, which *Saul* puts, is not, who *David* himſelf was, but who his Father was; for it is not incongruous to ſuppoſe, that the King, though he remembered his *Perſon*, might have forgot his *Parentage*, which now he was deſirous to be better informed in, when he ſaw him adventuring upon an Action, wherein, if he ſucceeded, he was, by Agreement, to be his *Son-in-Law*. However this be, he certainly muſt be a Stranger to Courts, to the Hurry of Buſineſs, and the Variety of new Faces, that are every Day ſeen there, who thinks it any Wonder at all, that *Saul* ſhould have loſt the Remembrance of *David*, after he had been ſome Time abſent, and was now dreſſed in his rough Shepherd's Coat and Habit. The Place of *Armour-bearer*, which he held, might be *honorary* only, and require no Attendance, or perhaps be *officiated* by ſeveral. 'Tis certain, from *David*'s Abſence, that it required no conſtant *Reſidence* at Court; and therefore ſuppoſe him gone, but for the Space of Six Months, yet this is enough to account for the Forgetfulneſs of a King, who not long before was under a melancholy Diſorder, and even then, beſides the *Diſtractions* inſeparable from his high Station, had the Concern and Fatigue of a very troubleſome and dangerous War lying heavy upon his Spirits.

And the Reaſons of his being not known to Saul afterwards.

AFTER the Death of *Saul*, *David* was only anointed King of *Judah*, 'till [p] upon the Murder of *Iſh-boſheth*, *Saul*'s Son, who reigned over the other Tribes, all *Iſrael* fell under his Government; and, when the whole Force of the Kingdom was thus happily united, it was not long before he did many great Exploits. He took the [q] Fortreſs of *Zion*, which was the Citadel of *Jeruſalem*, where the *Jebuſites* had fortified themſelves; he [r] routed the *Philiſtines*, in the Vale of *Aſtaroth*, and obtained ſeveral other Victories over them; he ſubdued the *Moabites*; gave Battle to *Hadadezer*; and the *Syrians*, who came to his Aſſiſtance, he quite vanquiſhed, and made *tributary*. All *Edom* he brought under his Subjection, and the King of the *Ammonites*, [s] who had groſsly affronted his Ambaſſadors, he beſieged in his *royal* City; took him, and ſlew him, and deſtroyed all his People. [t] *Thus*, as the Text tells us, *the Lord preſerved David, whitherſoever he went, and he reigned over all Iſrael, and executed Judgment and Juſtice unto all the People*; and his Felicity doubtleſs would have been compleat, had he not ſullied his Reputation with an Action, unbecoming a juſt Prince. What we mean is that, wherein the unhappy *Uriah* was ſo highly injured, whoſe Wife, *Bath-ſheba*, he firſt drew into his unlawful Embraces, and then, to conceal their mutual Shame, *perfidiouſly* deſtroyed her Huſband.

Of the World, 2957, &c. Before Chriſt, 1047, &c.

His Victories, when King.

[j] *Kimchi* has a Fancy, that when *Goliah* ſaid to *David*, *Come, and I will give thy Fleſh to the Fowls of the Air*, he looked up to Heaven, and his Helmet then fell off his Head. *Patrick*'s Commentary, *in locum*.
[k] Judg. xx. 16. [l] Diod. Sicul. Lib. V. [m] 1 Sam. xvi. 21. [n] Ibid. xvii. 55.
[o] *Saurin*'s Diſſertations, Vol. II. [p] 2 Sam. iv. [q] Ibid. *chap.* v. [r] Ibid. *chap.* viii. [s] Ibid. *chap.* x. [t] Ibid. viii. 14, 15.

His Sin and the Aggravations of it.

THIS mournful Story is ſo fully related [u] in the ſecond Book of *Samuel*, that there needs no enlarging upon it: Only we ſhall take Notice of what *Moraliſts* have made the Aggravations of the Crime, as well as for what Reaſons the Spirit of God hath recorded it. And, to this Purpoſe, ſome have obſerved, 1. That, as * *David tarried at* Jeruſalem, *at the Time, when Kings went forth to Battle*, he there indulged himſelf in Eaſe and Luxury, which is the Bane and Ruſt of the Mind; and ſo inſenſibly fell into thoſe looſe Deſires, which drew him into ſuch vile Perpetrations: So that *Idleneſs* was the firſt Cauſe of his Sin. 2. They obſerve it as an Aggravation of his Sin, [x] that he certainly knew ſhe was another Man's Wife, and yet deliberately and adviſedly committed the Sin; nay, that ſhe was the Wife of one, who was a *Proſelyte* to the *Jewiſh* Religion, and therefore added Scandal to his Wickedneſs; or, as the Text expreſſes it, [y] *gave great Occaſion to the Enemies of the Lord to blaſpheme.* 3. They obſerve, that there was Perfidy added to his Guilt, and ſinful Contrivance, [z] in cauſing *Uriah* to be ſent for home, in receiving him with great Tokens of his Favour, and in entertaining him with good Chear and great Plenty, that he might be the more deſirous to enjoy the Company of his Wife; and ſo have the Child, which was got in Adultery, reputed his own. 4. They obſerve, [a] from *Uriah*'s Anſwer, that, had not *David*'s Heart been *ſeared*, it could not but have felt a ſtrong *Remorſe*, upon thinking, how he had abuſed ſo brave a Man, and how vilely he indulged himſelf in ſinful Pleaſure, whilſt this Man, and the reſt of the Army, gloriouſly endured all Manner of Hardſhips, and refuſed the moſt innocent Pleaſure, for the Service of their Country. 5. They obſerve, [b] from his Deſign upon *Uriah*'s Life, when he could not otherwiſe conceal his Lewdneſs, how naturally one Sin paves the Way to another, and how, in a ſmall Proceſs of Time, the *Faſcination* of ſenſual Appetites is enough to change the very Nature of Mankind; ſince even he, who formerly ſpared *Saul* unjuſtly ſeeking his Life, when he could have deſtroyed him without any one's Privity, is now put upon contriving the Death of a very *faithful* Servant, in a very baſe and unworthy Manner. 6. They obſerve it as a farther Aggravation of his Crime of Murther, that he not only expoſed an innocent and faithful Servant to be killed, but that, together with him, [c] ſeveral more brave Men, ſet in *the Front of the Battle*, where the Service was hotteſt, muſt neceſſarily have fallen in the *Attack*. 7. They obſerve, from his Anſwer to the Meſſenger ſent by *Joab*, to acquaint him with *Uriah*'s Death, [d] *the Sword devoureth one as well as another*, the vile *Hypocriſy* and Obdurateneſs of his Heart, in imputing that to the *Chance of War*, or rather to the *Direction* of Divine Providence, which, his Conſcience could not but tell him, was of his own Contrivance. 8. And, laſtly, they obſerve, [e] from his Marriage with *Bath-ſheba*, even before her Huſband was cold in his Grave, how the Eagerneſs of his indulged Appetite had now extinguiſhed (what in ſome Sinners is laſt of all parted with, and for which, he himſelf had ſo lately embrued his Hands in Blood) all *Senſe of Shame*, and Regard to Reputation, or Decency.

Why recorded in Scripture.

THESE are ſome of the Aggravations obſervable in *David*'s Crime; which, beſides its Luſt and Cruelty, is loaded with too juſt an Imputation [f] of Perfidy, of Ingratitude, of Hypocriſy, of Deliberation, of Obſtinacy, and of Shameleſſneſs in Sin: And for theſe Purpoſes were they recorded in Scripture, that they might caution us againſt Sloth and Idleneſs, being always employed, and not giving ourſelves Liberty to gaze upon any Objects, that may endanger our Innocence; and that they might remind the very beſt of Men, how much they ſtand in Need continually of the divine Aſſiſtance; and therefore how much they are concerned to pray, *with all Prayer and Supplication*, and to watch, as well as pray, that they fall not into Temptation.

God's Reproof, and the Puniſhments ſent upon him for it.

HOW long it was, that *David* continued in this ſinful *Lethargy*, the Scripture has no where informed us; God however thought it expedient, at laſt, to ſend his Prophet

[u] 2 Sam. xi. &c. * Ver. 1. [x] Ver. 3. [y] 2 Sam. xii. 14. [z] Ibid. xi. 6, &c. [a] Ibid. xi. 11. [b] Ver. 15. [c] Ver. 17. [d] Ver. 25. [e] Ver. 27. [f] It has been a Matter of Surprize to ſome, why *David*, who was guilty of Sins of ſuch an heinous Nature, ſhould be ſtiled in Scripture, as we find he is, [1 Sam. xiii. 14. and xv. 28.] *the Man after God's own Heart*: But if we conſult the Occaſion of that Expreſſion, we ſhall find, that it ought to be taken in a *comparative* Senſe only, and in Derogation indeed to *Saul*, whoſe Tranſgreſſion, in invading the Prieſtly Office, and in ſparing *Amalek*, the Prophet *Samuel* was then reproving. 'Tis only in theſe two Reſpects then, that the Prophet may be ſuppoſed to call him *a Man after God's Heart*, or one, that would execute his Decrees, in abſtaining from the Prieſtly Office, and in deſtroying the idolatrous Nations round about him; which *David* effectually did, though *Saul* was found culpable in both Reſpects. But this I advance only as a probable Conjecture, and not in Oppoſition to the received Solution, that the *Severity* of his Repentance cleared him in the Sight of God, and made an Amends for the *Grievouſneſs* of his Tranſgreſſion.

Prophet † *Nathan* to awake him out of his Sleep, and to give him ſome Senſe of his Sins; which was done [g] in ſo appoſite a *Parable*, that many have very juſtly obſerved from hence, that there is never more Need for Wiſdom and Diſcretion, than in the Contrivance of *Reprehenſion*, eſpecially when it is intended for Princes and great Perſons. It is not neceſſary to apply every Word of the Parable to *David*'s Caſe, but (to give the Reader the common Explication of it) "The rich Man "plainly ſignifies *David*; his Flocks and Herds are his Wives and Concubines; the "poor Man repreſents *Uriah*; his Ewe-Lamb is his Wife *Bath-ſheba*; the Traveller "denotes *David*'s inordinate Affection, which he ſuffered to wander from his own "home; and the rich Man's taking the poor Man's Lamb, is his taking *Bath-ſheba*, "and lying with her." Thus far the Parable goes, and it would have made the Reſemblance more complete, if the Prophet had added, that the rich Man killed the poor Man, from whom he took the Lamb; but it is therefore omitted in the Parable, that *David* might not ſo readily apprehend *Nathan*'s Meaning, and ſo might be induced, unawares, to pronounce a Sentence of Condemnation upon himſelf. For hereupon the Prophet had a fit Opportunity to ſhew him, that if the rich Man, who took away the poor Man's Lamb, deſerved Death according to his own Judgment; how much more did he deſerve it, who had not only taken another Man's Wife, but alſo cauſed her Huſband to be ſlain by the Enemies of *Iſrael*? And, accordingly, we may obſerve, that, when the Prophet begins to make his Application, he deals very *roundly* with the King, and is [h] not afraid to declare any of thoſe ſore Judgments, wherewith God had ordered him to threaten *David* and his Houſe, for his crying Sin. And as he threatened, ſo the Event was: For, if we look into the Sequel of the Hiſtory, [i] the Death of the Child, begotten in Adultery; [k] the Rape of *Amnon* upon his Siſter *Tamar*; [l] the Murther of *Amnon* by his Brother *Abſalom*; [m] the Rebellion of *Abſalom* againſt his own Father; [n] *Shimei*'s Curſes; [o] *Abſalom*'s Death; and [p] *Sheba*'s Inſurrection, are all the declared Puniſhments of *David*'s Adultery and Murther. Nay, it is not unlikely, that [q] the dreadful Peſtilence, wherein God ſmote the Children of *Iſrael* not long after, (if not wholly derived from the ſame Fountain) [r] yet had ſome *Spice* and *Tincture* of it, which might add to the Sin of *numbering the People*, and improve its Heinouſneſs to deſerve ſo ſevere a Puniſhment.

DAVID, being now waxen old, and willing to prevent all Confuſion in the Succeſſion, appointed *Solomon*, whom he had by *Bath-ſheba*, to be anointed King in his Life-time: And, not long after, finding his End approaching, he called the young King to him, and, having given him his Inſtruction concerning the Government of the State, he recommended him to God [s] in a Prayer, which is indeed a Kind of *Prophetick* Declaration of the Greatneſs and Proſperity of his enſuing Reign; and ſo dying in the ſeventy-firſt Year of his Age, and the forty-firſt Year of his Reign, he was [t] buried in that Part of the City, he had formerly taken from the *Jebuſites*, which, from him, was called *the City of* David. David's Death.

SOLOMON

† Who this *Nathan* was, we learn little more from the *ſacred Writings*, than that he was *David*'s Prophet, intimate Counſellor, and *Hiſtoriographer*. *Joſephus* ſays of him, that he was a *polite* and *prudent* Man, who knew how to temper the Severity of Wiſdom with the Sweetneſs of good Manners; and *Grotius* compares him to *Manius Lepidus*, who had a Talent of turning away the Emperor *Tiberius*'s Mind from ſuch cruel Purpoſes, as the vile Flattery of others was apt to incline him to; but it muſt be owned, that *Nathan* knew how to do more than this: He knew how to reprove Princes with Authority, and yet without Offence, without being impaired in any Degree, either of Favour or Affection with his King: So far from this, that he increaſed in both; inſomuch, that (as Tradition tells us) *David* named one Son after him, and committed another, even his Favourite and Succeſſor, to his Tuition and Inſtruction, Hiſtorical Account of the Life of King *David*, Vol. III.

[g] Vid. 2 Sam. xii. 7. [h] Ibid. [i] Ver. 18. [k] Chap. xiii. [l] Ibid. [m] Chap. xv. [n] Chap. xvi. [o] Chap. xviii. [p] Chap. xx. [q] Chap. xxiv. [r] For this Conjecture there is the more Reaſon, conſidering, that except the Pride and Oſtentation of the Thing, no one Interpreter has given us one probable Reaſon, why God ſhould be ſo highly exaſperated at *David* for numbering the People: For *David*'s forgetting the half Shekel, that was due to the Service of God, upon ſuch Occaſions, *Exod.* xxx. 13. his numbering thoſe, who were under twenty Years old, contrary to the Order of the Law, *Exod.* xxx. 14. his covetous Deſign herein to lay a *Capitation-Tax* upon the People, together with ſeveral other Things of the like Nature, are all crude and groundleſs Conjectures. [s] The Prayer makes up the whole ſeventy-ſecond Pſalm.

[t] *Joſephus* [Antiq. Lib. VII. c. ult.] tells us, that *Solomon* laid up a vaſt Treaſure in his Father's Tomb, which *Hircanus*, the High-Prieſt, three hundred Years afterwards, when he found himſelf beſieged in *Jeruſalem* by *Antiochus*, and knew not what to do for Money, that he might bribe him to raiſe the Siege, made bold to open, and took thence three thouſand Talents, a good Part of which he gave to *Antiochus*. The ſame Author adds, that, ſeveral Years afterwards, *Herod the Great* broke open the ſaid Tomb, and took away a large Quantity of Wealth; but what Authority he has for all this, unleſs he met with ſome in the Records of his own Country, we cannot tell. *Calmet*'s Dictionary. We read indeed in the *Arabick* Memoirs, publiſhed in *M. le Jay*'s Polyglotts, that, when *Hircanus* was beſieged by *Antiochus Sidetes*, he opened a Treaſure, which belonged to one of the Deſcendants of *David*, and after he had taken a good deal of Money thence, and left ſome behind, he cloſed it up again. But this is nothing to *Joſephus*'s Story, which the Reader will find abundantly confuted in Dr *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part II. Lib. v.

Of the World, 2990, &c. *Before Chriſt,* 1014, &c.

Solomon's *Actions.*

SOLOMON had no ſooner taken Poſſeſſion of his Father's Kingdom, than he eſtabliſhed himſelf in his Throne, by cutting off all his Enemies. [u] *Adonijah,* his Brother, he put to death, for pretending to marry *Abiſhag,* his Father's *concubinary* Wife: *Abiathar,* the High-Prieſt, he depoſed and baniſhed, for adhering to *Adonijah*'s Party: *Joab,* the old bloody *General,* who had fled to the Foot of the Altar, he commanded *there* to be ſlain; and *Shimei,* who had *curſed* his Father, and, upon Pain of Death, was confined to *Jeruſalem,* he ordered to be killed for tranſgreſſing that Injunction. Having thus taken off the Heads of the Faction, which was againſt him, he thought it adviſable to enter into Alliance with *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt,* by eſpouſing his Daughter. And 'tis upon the Celebration of theſe Nuptials, (as

His Song.

ſome imagine) that * *the Song,* which goes under his Name, as well as the forty-fifth Pſalm, which ſeems to have an Aſpect that Way, were certainly compoſed. But how well pleaſed ſoever *Solomon* might be with this new Alliance, it proved of fatal Conſequence to him, as well as the whole Nation. [x] The holy Scripture ranks the Daughter of *Pharaoh* among the Number of thoſe *ſtrange Wives,* which perverted him from the Worſhip of the true God; which ſeems to intimate, that, though ſhe might ſeem a Convert at firſt, ſhe returned in Time to the old *Idolatry,* and, by her Allurements, engaged her Huſband in the ſame abominable Practice.

His great Wiſdom and Knowledge.

NEVER Prince certainly came to a Crown with a better Diſpoſition, both to Wiſdom and Religion, than did *Solomon.* [y] The Judgment he gave between the two *lewd Women* is a memorable Inſtance of his Wiſdom, in the Adminiſtration of *Juſtice:* The great Care he took of building the *Temple,* and of eſtabliſhing in it the true Worſhip of God, is a ſufficient Argument of his Senſe of *Religion:* And what vaſt Proficiency he had made in all *Natural, Moral,* and *Polite* Knowledge, the Scripture gives us this honourable Teſtimony, when it tells us, that [z] *he ſpake three thouſand Proverbs,* ſo that he was an excellent *Moral* Philoſopher; that *he wrote a thouſand and five Songs,* ſo that he was a very conſiderable *Poet*; and that he ſpake of Trees, *from the Cedar Tree, that is in* Lebanon, *even to the Hyſſop, that ſpringeth out of the Wall,* ſo that he underſtood the Nature of all *Plants*; and that *he ſpake alſo of Beaſts, and of Fowl, and of creeping Things, and of Fiſhes,* ſo that he underſtood the Nature of all *Animals:* And therefore no Wonder if Perſons, from all Nations, among whom we read of one, whom the Scripture ſtiles the *Queen of Sheba,* came to hear the Wiſdom of *Solomon*; but who this *Queen of Sheba* was, Interpreters are not ſo well agreed.

The Queen of Sheba *who.*

[a] *JOSEPHUS* (and with him many more) is of Opinion, that *Sheba* was the ancient Name of *Meroë,* an Iſland or rather *Peninſula,* in *Egypt,* before *Cambyſes,* in Complement to his Siſter, gave it her Name. The Natives of the Country have a Tradition, that this Queen's Name was *Marqueda* (*Joſephus* calls her *Nicaula*) that ſhe had a Son by *Solomon,* whoſe Poſterity reigned there many Years, and, to this very Day, have preſerved a continual Liſt of their Names and Succeſſions; nor can it be denied, but that it was uſual in theſe Parts for Women to have the ſupreme Command: And yet I cannot but think, that thoſe, who ſuppoſe that this Princeſs came from ſome Place in *Arabia Felix,* have a fairer Probability on their Side, not only becauſe it is generally allowed, that the *Sabæans* and *Ethiopians* lived in *Arabia,* and that [b] Women were allowed to reign there; not only becauſe our Saviour calls her [c] *the Queen of the South,* as *Arabia* certainly lies South of *Judea,* and ſays, that *ſhe came from the uttermoſt Parts of the Earth,* as *Arabia,* towards the South, is bounded by the *Ocean,* [d] which the Ancients knew no Land beyond; but more eſpecially, becauſe the *Preſents,* which ſhe made *Solomon,* [e] ſuch as *Spices,* and *Gold,* and *precious Stones,* were certainly the Product of *Arabia Felix,* though rarely to be found in the Place, which *Joſephus* aſſigns.

NOR

[u] 1 Kings ii. * The Song indeed is in the Form of an *Epithalamium.* It is diſtinguiſhed into ſeven Days or Nights, according to the Time appointed for the Celebration of *Nuptials,* and recounts the ſeveral Adventures of each; but then it is written in a lofty *poetick* Stile, and, to enter into the *myſtical* Senſe of it, we muſt carry our Conceptions above Fleſh and Blood, and therein contemplate the Marriage of Jeſus Chriſt with human Nature, with his Church, and with every pious and faithful Soul. *Calmet*'s Dictionary. [x] 1 Kings xi. 1, &c. [y] Ibid. chap. iii. [z] Ibid. iv. 32, &c. [a] Vid. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, on the Word *Saba,* viz. *la Reine,* and *Patrick*'s Commentary on 1 Kings x.

[b] ——————Medis levibuſque Sabæis
Imperat hic ſexus; Reginarumque ſub armis
Barbariæ pars magna jacet. CLAUD. *in* EUTROP.

[c] Matth. xii. 42.
[e] 1 Kings x. 2.

[d] Terra, fineſque, quæ ad orientem vergunt, Arabiâ terminantur. Tacit. Lib. V.

NOR was it only to hear the *Wiſdom* of *Solomon*, that this Princeſs took ſo long a Journey, but to ſee likewiſe the *Splendour* and *Magnificence*, wherein he was reported to live; for, after he had finiſhed the Houſe of the Lord, [f] he built ſtately Palaces, rebuilt ſeveral Cities, and fortified others. And well might he be ſufficient to do all this, ſince his own *annual Revenue*, without reckoning the *Tribute* of other Nations, or the *Subſidies* of his own Subjects, was [g] *ſix hundred threeſcore and ſix Talents of Gold*. The Bounds of his Kingdom he extended, from the River *Euphrates*, to the Country of the *Philiſtines*, and to the Borders of *Egypt*. All neighbouring Princes paid him Tribute. He had a numerous Court, a ſplendid Equipage, and a ſumptuous Table. [h] The *Throne*, whereon he ſat, was overlaid with Gold; [i] the *Guard*, that attended his Perſon, had their Shields and Targets made of Gold; every *Diſh* and *Plate*, that was ſerved up to him, was of ſolid Gold; nor was there [k] *any Veſſel, in all the Houſe in the Foreſt of* Lebanon, but what was *of pure Gold*; *none were of Silver*; *it was nothing accounted of in the Days of* Solomon. And if we ſhould enquire, what might be the poſſible Occaſion of all this Redundancy of Wealth, we ſhall find, that it chiefly aroſe from the *Importation*, which *Solomon*'s Navy ſo frequently made from the Gold Mines in *Ophir*; but in what Part of the World this *Ophir* lay, the Conjectures of the Learned have been, in a Manner, infinite.

His vaſt Riches.

[l] MOST People agree, that the Trade to *Ophir* and *Tarſhiſh* was the ſame, that is now in the Hands of our *Eaſt-India* Merchants, and hereupon ſome will have it to be the ſame with the Iſland *Zocatora*, which lies in the *Eaſtern* Coaſts of *Africa*, a little without the Streights of *Babel-mandel*; whilſt others rather think it to be the Iſland, anciently called *Tapobrana*, now *Ceylon*. The Rule, which [m] *Grotius* lays down, upon this Occaſion, I think is not amiſs: He tells us, that there is no better Way to gueſs, where this Place was, than by conſidering what *Commodities* were brought from thence, and inquiring of Merchants (who have been in the remote Parts of the World) where not only *Gold*, and *precious Stones*, but *Ivory* likewiſe, and *Almug-Trees*, and whatever elſe was brought from *Ophir*, is now to be found. [n] Now it is to be obſerved, that, though from *Eloh*, in the Land of *Edom*, (where the King's Fleet ſet out) to *Tarſhiſh*, was [o] a Voyage of three Years going and coming, yet it is no where ſaid, in what Compaſs the Voyage to *Ophir* was compleated; and therefore *Tarſhiſh* might be ſomewhere in the *Eaſt-Indies*, though *Ophir* might be any where nearer Home, within the Reach of thoſe Seas: So that any Place, in the *Southern*, or great *Indian* Sea, that can beſt furniſh Merchants with Gold, precious Stones, Ivory, and Almug-Trees, and with Gold in ſuch Plenty, as *Solomon* brought Home in one Voyage, may well be ſuppoſed to be the *Ophir*, which the Holy Scriptures make Mention of. [p] Only thus much I cannot forbear ſaying, that if the *Southern* Part of *Arabia* did, in thoſe Times, furniſh the World with the beſt Gold, and in the greateſt Quantity (as good Authors ſeem to ſay) they that would have the *Ophir* of the Holy Scriptures to be there ſituated, ſeem, of all others, to have the beſt Foundation for their Conjecture.

The Gold of Ophir, *whence.*

THUS great and glorious was *Solomon* in all his Actions for a conſiderable Time of his Reign. [q] *How wiſe waſt thou in thy Youth*, (as the Son of *Sirach* handſomely epitomizes *Solomon*'s Perfections) *and as a Flood filled with Underſtanding! Thy Soul covered the whole Earth, and thou filledſt it with dark Parables. Thy Name went far into the Iſlands, and for thy Peace thou waſt beloved. The Countries marvelled at thee, for thy Songs, and Proverbs, and Parables, and Interpretations. By the Name of the Lord God, which is called the Lord God of Iſrael, thou didſt gather Gold as Tin, and didſt multiply Silver as Lead.* This was his Character at firſt: But the latter Scenes of his Life ſpoiled and disfigured all. For he not only gave himſelf up to the wanton Embraces of many Women, but of many [r] *ſtrange Women*, ſuch as were not *Iſraelites* by Nature or Profeſſion, but of *idolatrous* Nations, with whom the Lord had expreſſly [s] prohibited *Iſrael* in general, but more eſpecially their King, to contract Marriage; and by their Allurements he was ſeduced to worſhip filthy and abominable Idols, ſuch

Solomon's Character.

[f] 1 Kings vii. [g] Ibid. x. 14. This amounts to four Millions, ſeven hundred ninety-five Thouſand, two hundred Pounds of our *Sterling* Money. [h] 1 Kings x. 18. [i] Ibid. *ver.* 16. [k] Ibid. *ver.* 21. [l] See *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. II. [m] *Vid.* Epiſt. 483. ſecundum Patrick. [n] *Prideaux*, ibid. [o] 1 Kings x. 22. [p] *Prideaux*, ibid. [q] Ecclus. xlvii. 14, &c. [r] 1 Kings xi. 1. [s] Deut. vii. 3.

such as [t] *Aſtaroth*, the Goddeſs of the *Sidonians*; [u] *Moloch*, the God of the *Ammonites*; and [x] *Chamos*, the God of the *Moabites*. And in theſe Impieties he continued ſo long, that it is now become a famous Queſtion, whether he be in a State of Salvation or no; though conſidering [y] the Promiſe, God makes to his Father concerning him, I think it more rational, as well as more charitable to conclude, that God's Mercy did not finally depart from him; but that, in his old Age, he was brought to a Senſe of his Tranſgreſſions, and, humbling himſelf before God, wrote his Book called *Eccleſiaſtes*, or the *Preacher*, as an Acknowledgment of his own *Apoſtacy*, and a Warning and Admonition to all others; that, however they might think of doing (as he had done) [z] *whatever their Eyes deſired, to keep nothing from them, and not to with-hold their Heart from any Joy*; yet, in the Event, they would find, what his Experience had taught him ſo late, *that all was Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*; and that *there was no Profit* in any Kind of Wickedneſs *under the Sun*.

[t] *Aſtaroth*, in the *Syrian* Tongue, ſignifies *Sheep*, particularly *Ewes, when their Dugs are turgid*, and they give Milk; and, from the Fecundity of theſe Creatures, which in *Syria* breed a long Time, the *Tyrians* and *Sydonians* framed the Notion of a Deity, which they called *Aſtarte*, and muſt, without Diſpute, be the *Venus* of the *Syrians*; for ſo *Cicero*, in his Book *de Naturâ Deorum*, tells us, that *the fourth Goddeſs* is *Venus*, who was conceived at *Tyre*, and is called *Aſtarte*. [u] *Moloch*, both in the *Hebrew* and *Ethiopick*, ſignifies a King, denoting the *Sun*, which the Heathens called the *King of Heaven*. See *Calmet*'s Diſſertations before *Leviticus*. It is repreſented by a large Statue made hollow, into which, ſome ſay, they put their Children, and burnt them; others, that they put the Children into the Arms of the Statue, and then ſet fire to the combuſtible Matter w thin it. But, be the Manner of ſacrificing Children to this Idol how it will, it is certain, that they offered them to him by Fire. See 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Jer. xxxii. 35. [x] *Chamos*, in *Arabick*, ſignifies *to make Haſte*; and from hence ſome have imagined, that he is the ſame with the *Sun*, whoſe Motion is ſuppoſed to be ſo rapid. From the near Reſemblance between the *Hebrew* Word, *Chamos*, and the *Greek*, *Comos*, others have thought him the ſame with *Bacchus*, the God of Drunkenneſs; but *Calmet*, in his Diſſertation before *Numbers*, has ſufficiently evinced, that he is no other, than *Adonis*. [y] 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15. [z] Eccleſ. ii. 10, 11.

CHAP. VI.

The moſt memorable Tranſactions from the Diviſion of the Kingdom, to the End of the Captivity.

Of the World, 3029, &c. Before Chriſt, 975, &c.

The Diviſion of the Kingdom.

HOWEVER God might be pleaſed, upon *Solomon*'s Repentance, to forgive the *eternal* Puniſhment due to his Tranſgreſſions; yet the *temporal* Puniſhment, which he threatened to inflict in his Son's Days, [a] *by rending the Kingdom from* his Poſterity, *and giving it to his Servant*, he thought fit no longer to defer. For, immediately upon his Death, when *Rehoboam* his Son refuſed to hear the Petitions of his *Subjects*, and was reſolved to impoſe more burthenſome *Taxes* upon them, than his Father had done; all the Tribes, except thoſe of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, unanimouſly revolted, and choſe *Jeroboam*, his [b] *Father's Servant*, to reign over them. No ſooner was *Jeroboam* promoted to this Honour, but, fearing leſt his Subjects, if permitted to go up to *Jeruſalem* to offer Sacrifice, might, in Time, return to their former *Allegiance*, he erected two *Golden Calves*, in the two extreme Parts of his Kingdom, one at *Bethel*, and the other at *Dan*, with two Altars belonging to them, ſuch as he had ſeen conſecrated to the God *Apis* [c] in *Egypt*; and then publiſhed a *Proclamation*, forbidding all his Subjects to repair any more to *Jeruſalem*, and enjoining them to pay their Adorations at the Places which he had appointed: And, to give the better Sanction to this new Inſtitution, he ordained a ſolemn *Feſtival*, and himſelf went up to *Bethel* to attend the Ceremony, and countenance the Impiety by his own Example. But while he was ſtanding at the Altar, to offer Incenſe, [d] a Prophet, that came

[a] 1 Kings xi. 11. [b] He was a bold and daring Man, and therefore *Solomon* made him the Collector of the Tribute, which the Houſe of *Joſeph*, i. e. the two Tribes of *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh*, were to pay. *Calmet*'s Dictionary. [c] For thither he had fled, being in Rebellion againſt *Solomon* before his Death. 1 Kings xi. 40. [d] *Joſephus*, St *Jerom*, and others, would fain have this Prophet to be *Iddo*, who wrote the Acts of *Solomon*, 2 Chron. ix. 29. but this is very unlikely: For, beſides the Variation of the Name, which they mangle very much

came from *Judah*, [e] foretold him, that the Altar ſhould one Day be deſtroyed by a Child of the Houſe of *David*, *Joſiah* by Name, and, as a Proof of the Truth of his Prediction, he added, that it ſhould inſtantly be ſplit. Provok'd at this Freedom of Speech againſt his new Religion and Altar, *Jeroboam* ſtretched out his Hand, and called to ſome of his People to ſeize the Prophet; but, to his great Surprize, he found his Hand *withered*, i. e. the Muſcles and Sinews thereof ſo ſhrunk, that he perfectly loſt the Uſe of it, and, at the ſame Time, ſaw the Altar ſplit aſunder. Upon the Prophet's Prayer however the King's Hand was reſtored; and, when the King hereupon invited him to dine with him, and to accept of a Reward, he abſolutely refuſed both; urging the Command of the Lord to the contrary.. But tho' he declined *Jeroboam*'s Invitation, yet his eaſy Credulity betrayed him to his Ruin: For an *old Prophet*, who lived at *Bethel*, hearing which Way he took, went after him, and, with falſe Aſſurances, prevailed with him to go back and refreſh himſelf. But for this Compliance he paid very dear, having not been far gone, before a Lion, out of the Wood near *Bethel*, fell upon him, and ſlew him.

The Death of the Prophet that came to Bethel, *accounted for.*

THAT the Death of the Prophet was not a Matter of *Chance*, but occaſioned by the Interpoſition of Divine Providence, is apparent from the Circumſtances of the Story. For, that a Lion, contrary to his Nature, [f] ſhould not eat his dead Body, nor kill the *Aſs*, whereon he rode, nor meddle with the *Travellers*, that paſſed by, nor moleſt the *old Prophet*, when he came to take the Carcaſe away; but, on the contrary, ſhould ſtand quietly by it, until this ſtrange News was carried into the City, as if he were ſet to *guard* it againſt the Violence of any other Creature; this plainly ſhews the Hand of God in the whole Tranſaction, by whoſe Appointment the Lion was ſent to execute what he had threatened, but could not move one Step beyond his *Commiſſion*. And, that it may not ſeem too great a Severity in this *Diſpenſation*, that one Prophet, [g] deluded by another, equally pretending to a *divine Revelation*, and a Revelation ſeeming to ſuperſede the Injunction, he lay under, ſhould come to ſo untimely an End, merely for refreſhing himſelf a little at a Brother's Houſe; it may not be improper to conſider, [h] that, whenever God, in an *extraordinary* Manner, diſcovers his Will to a Prophet, he always makes ſuch a ſenſible *Impreſſion* upon his Mind, that he cannot but perceive himſelf actuated by a divine Spirit, and conſequently, cannot but be aſſured of the Evidence of his own Revelation. This Evidence, the Prophet, that was ſent to *Bethel*, had: For as he was able, by the Power, that was given him, to work Miracles, he could not but be ſenſible of his Divine Miſſion, and that the particular Injunction *of his not eating nor drinking in the Town of Bethel*, was as much the Will of God, as any other Part of his Commiſſion.

Now the Deſign of God in this Prohibition was, to expreſs his Abhorrence of that idolatrous Place; and therefore, the other pretended Revelation of the *old Prophet*, who lived therein, was juſtly to be *ſuſpected*, not only becauſe it was repugnant to God's main Deſign, but becauſe it came from a Perſon, who had given no great Teſtimony of his *Sincerity*, in chuſing to live in a Place, notoriouſly infected with Idolatry, and yet making no publick *Remonſtrances* againſt it. The Conſideration of this one Circumſtance, ſhould have made the young Prophet diffident of what the other told him, at leaſt, 'till he had ſhewn him ſome Divine Teſtimony to convince him; for it argued a great deal of *Levity*, if not Infidelity of his own Revelation, to liſten to that of another Man, in Contradiction to what he had abundant Reaſon to believe was true: And the Leſſon we are to learn from God's Severity in this Inſtance, is, —— not to ſuffer our Faith to be perverted by any Suggeſtions, that are made againſt a Revelation, that is of unconteſted Divine Authority; but, [i] *if an Angel from Heaven* (as the Apoſtle words it) *ſhould preach any other Goſpel, than what we have received, to deteſt, and denounce him accurſed.*

much to make it like, *Iddo*, there is this Circumſtance, which plainly ſhews it could not be *Iddo*; becauſe this Prophet died too ſoon, to have Time to write the Acts of *Solomon*, being inſtantly killed by a Lion; whereas the *Iddo*, who wrote *Solomon*'s Acts, lived at leaſt ſeventeen Years after *Solomon*, becauſe [in 2 *Chron.* xiii. 22.] he is ſaid to have wrote the Acts of *Abijah*, King of *Judah*. *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible.

[e] This was propheſied three hundred and fifty Years before it came to paſs; and the Prediction is more wonderful, becauſe it expreſsly names both the Family, and Perſon. *Howell*, ibid. and *Patrick*, in locum.

[f] 1 Kings xiii. 24, *&c.*

[g] Ibid. *ver.* 18, *&c.*

[h] *Stillingfleet*'s Origines Sacræ.

[i] Gal. i. 8, 9.

SECT.

SECT. I.

Elijah's *Actions.*

Of the World, 3068, &c. *Before Chriſt,* 136, &c.

AFTER five Reigns from *Jeroboam*, (wherein no great Matter of *Theological* Enquiry occurs) *Ahab* ſucceeded to the Crown of *Iſrael*, a Prince that ſurpaſſed all his Predeceſſors in Wickedneſs: For he not only walked *in the Sins of Jeroboam*, but (to compleat his Crimes) married *Jezebel*, the Daughter of *Eth-baal*, King of the *Zidonians*, whereby he introduced all Manner of Idolatry among the *Iſraelites*. Provoked at theſe Abominations, the Lord ſent [k] *Elijah* the *Tiſhbite*, whom next to *Moſes*, the *Jews* ſtile *the Prince of the Prophets*, to remonſtrate his Iniquity to him, and to denounce this Judgment againſt the Land, that, for ſome Years, [l] *there ſhould be neither Dew nor Rain, but according to his Word*; and having delivered his Meſſage, he withdrew, and, as he was ordered by God, went and lived by the Brook *Cherith*, where the *Ravens* [m] brought him Food twice every Day.

Elijah's being fed by Ravens.

RAVENS, as *Naturaliſts* relate, are Creatures ſo deſtitute of any Concern for their *Young*, that they forſake them before they are *fledged*, and therefore Providence has taken care to feed them with Worms, which are produced by their *Dung*, and out of the Carcaſſes, that have been brought into their Neſts, until they are able to fly, and to provide for themſelves; and to this the *Pſalmiſt* is ſuppoſed to allude, when he tells us, [n] *that the Lord giveth to the Beaſt his Food, and to the young Ravens, which cry.* The greater therefore was the Interpoſition of Providence, in over-ruling theſe Creatures to ſuch a Degree, as to make them more ſubſervient to his Prophet, than they are to their own Young: But [o] thoſe *Jews* ſeem to carry the Miracle needleſsly too high, who pretend that the Proviſion, which theſe Ravens brought, came either from *Ahab*'s Houſe, or from *Jehoſhaphat*'s, as if the Prophet was fed with nothing but *Royal Dainties*. 'Tis ſufficient for us to ſay, in the Words of the *Pſalmiſt*, [p] *that the whole World is the Lord's, and all that is therein*; that *he knows the Fowls of the Mountains, and the wild Beaſts of the Field are in his Sight*; and therefore, if any Man *be hungry*, and he is minded to provide for him, he need not *tell any one thereof*; for he can either ſend us Suſtenance by unknown and unexpected Hands, or enlarge the [q] *Handful of Meal in* our *Barrel*, and *the little Oil in our Cruſe* (as in the Caſe of the *Sareptan* Widow) to a long Subſiſtance.

His Conteſt with the Prophets of Baal.

THE Drought, which occaſioned the Famine, continued as *Elijah* had foretold; but, [r] *in the third Year*, God, being willing to withdraw this heavy Judgment, ſent his Prophet to *Ahab* with ſome Intimations of Relief, upon Condition, that he would order his Subjects, and eſpecially the Prophets of *Baal*, and of [s] the *Groves*, to meet him

[k] The Name *Elijah*, which in *Hebrew* is *Elijahu*, carries ſomething divine in it: For it is compounded (as *Ægid. Camartus* imagines) of three of the Names of God, *viz. Eli*, *Jah*, and *Hu*. He was indeed an eminent Meſſenger ſent from God, but thoſe *Jews* carry the Matter too far, who ſay, that he was no *mortal* Man, but an *Angel*, ſent to reduce them to the true Religion, becauſe his Original is unknown; there being no Mention made of his Father or Mother in holy Writ. *Patrick*'s Commentary on 1 *Kings* xvii. [l] 1 Kings xvii. 1. [m] This ſeems ſo very ſtrange, that ſome will have the Word *Orebim* not to ſignify *Ravens*, but *Merchants*, as others will have it to be *Arabians*. But, beſides that the Word (as *Bochart* obſerves) never ſignifies *Merchants*, and the Thing is notorious, that there were no *Arabians* inhabiting in the Country, where *Elijah* now was, there is this one Argument, ſufficient againſt all Suggeſtions of this Nature, *viz.* that *Elijah*'s Retreat would have ſoon been diſcovered to *Ahab*, if Merchants, or any other People, that travelled that Way, had been acquainted with it. Thoſe therefore, who make ſuch loud Outcries upon hearing this Miracle, ſhould do well to remember what the Heathen Stories tell us, of *Jupiter*'s being fed in the Cradle by Bees, *Æſculapius* nouriſhed by a Goat, *Janus*, the Son of *Apollo* and *Evadne*, by Dragons, that brought him Honey, and the like; and then they will leſs wonder at the miraculous Care, which God took of his faithful Servant, in a Time of general Famine. *Vid. Bochart*, Hieroz. Part II. Lib. II. c. 13. *Huetii* Quæſt. Alnet. Lib. II. c. 12. and *Patrick*'s Commentary on 1 *Kings* xvii. [n] Pſal. cxlvii. 9. and Job xxxviii. 41. [o] *In* Gemara Sanhedrim, c. 11. [p] Pſal. l. 11, &c. [q] 1 Kings xvii. 12. [r] Ibid. xviii. 1. 'Tis very certain, that both our bleſſed Saviour, [*Luke* iv. 25.] and his Apoſtle, St *James*, [Chap. v. 17.] do aſſure us, that this Drought continued three Years and ſix Months; and yet this does not diſagree with the Lord's ſending his Prophet to *Ahab in the third Year*. At the Beginning of this Drought, very probably *Ahab* might impute the Want of Rain to *natural* Cauſes, and thereupon not ſeek to ſlay *Elijah*: But, after ſix Months, *neither the former nor the latter Rain* falling in their Seaſons, he began to be enraged at him, as the Cauſe of the Drought, which forced *Elijah*, at God's Command, to ſave himſelf by Flight; and, from that Time, the three Years, here mentioned, are to be computed. One Year he was at the Brook *Cherith*, and two Years he lived with the Widow of *Sarepta*; at the End of which, God took Pity upon the Land, and ſent his Prophet to *Ahab*. *Patrick*'s Commentary on 1 *Kings* xviii. [s] By the *Prophets of the Groves*, (as we tranſlate it) Mr *Selden* underſtands the Prophets of *Aſtarte*, the great Goddeſs of the *Zidonians*, which he proves by comparing many Places of Scripture together. *De Diis Syris*, Syntag. 2. c. 3. But *Maimonides* has a peculiar Notion, that the Prophets of *Baal* and of the *Groves* were ſuch, as had imbibed the Opinions of the ancient *Zabii*, who made Images to receive the Influences of the Stars, *Golden* ones for the Sun, *Silver* ones for the Moon, &c. whereby they attained the Gift of Prophecy. *More Nevoch.* Part III. c. 29.

him at Mount *Carmel*. When all the People were come together, *Elijah* propoſed to the idolatrous Prieſts, that, ſince there was a manifeſt Difference between them, in Point of Religion, and the People now aſſembled might poſſibly deſire to know, who was in the right; tho' he was but one, and they many, he would put the whole Streſs of the Cauſe upon this one Iſſue——That two Bullocks ſhould be brought, and ſlain, one of which they ſhould lay upon Wood, without putting any Fire under it, and that *he* would do the like by his; that they ſhould then call upon their *Gods*, and he would call upon the Name of the *Lord*; and that the Deity, which ſhould make it appear he heard their Prayers, by conſuming the Sacrifice with Fire, the ſame ſhould be owned as *God*. This Propoſition was generally liked: Whereupon the Prieſts of *Baal* fall to work, make ready their Altar, kill their Bullock, lay it upon their Altar, and then begin to invoke their Gods. But all in vain: Their Gods are deaf, and cannot hear. Whereupon they dance and caper round the Altar, ſlaſh themſelves with Knives, and, by their many wild and extravagant Freaks, give the Prophet an handſome Opportunity of Banter; [t] *cry aloud; for he is a God; either he is talking, or he is purſuing, or he is in a Journey, or peradventure he ſleepeth.*

ELIJAH, having allowed them ſufficient Time to try all their Inventions to no Purpoſe, invited the People at laſt to draw near to him; and, taking *twelve* Stones, according to the Number of the twelve *Tribes*, he built an Altar, made a Trench round it, laid the Bullock on the Wood, and poured Water on the Sacrifice, the Wood, and the Altar three Times, until the Trench was quite full; and then, drawing near to the Altar, he implored of God, by ſome viſible Inſtance, to demonſtrate to the People, that he was the only *true God*, and himſelf no more than his *Miniſter*, acting by his Authority, and according to his Injunctions. Whereupon immediately Fire fell from Heaven, and conſumed, not only the Burnt-Offering, but the Wood and Stones, nay, the very Duſt and Water, that was in the Trench about the Altar. This ſtruck the People with ſuch Admiration, that, falling on their Faces, they devoutly acknowledged the God of *Elijah* to be the only true God: Whereof the Prophet taking the Advantage, ordered them to ſeize the *idolatrous* Prieſts, and put them all to Death; and then, going up to the Top of the Mountain, he prayed to God with great Earneſtneſs, that he would be pleaſed to ſend Rain upon the Land, and he did ſo.

IT may well exerciſe our Wonder, why God ſhould ſo far liſten to the Prayers of a Man, as to ſuffer him to *lock* and *unlock* (as it were) the *Store-Houſes* of Heaven, at his Pleaſure; but that Wonder will begin to abate, when we come to conſider, that he was in ſo great Eſteem with God, as to be vouchſafed [u] the Sight of his glorious and *Majeſtick Preſence*; as to have * *Angels* ſent to comfort and refreſh him, when he was weary; as to have [x] *Fire* ſent down from Heaven to avenge him of his Enemies, when they came to apprehend him; and, at laſt, by the Miniſtry of Angels, in the Form of a bright *Chariot* and *Horſes*, [y] to have his Body tranſlated into Heaven, without undergoing the common Fate of Mortals: Whereupon the Son of *Sirach* has given us this *Epitome* of his Actions, in Commemoration of God's Vouchſafements to him: [z] *Elias*, ſays he, *ſtood up as Fire, and his Word burnt like a Lamp. He brought a ſore Famine upon the People, and by his Zeal he diminiſhed their Number; by the Word of the Lord he ſhut up the Heavens, and alſo three Times brought down Fire. O Elias! How waſt thou honoured in thy wonderous Deeds! and who may glory like unto thee! Who didſt raiſe up a dead Man from Death, and his Soul from the Place of the Dead, by the Word of the moſt High:* [this he ſpeaks of the Widow of *Sareptha*'s Son] *Who broughteſt Kings to Deſtruction, and honourable Men from their Bed to the Grave:* [this he means of *Ahab*, *Ahaziah*, and *Jezebel*] *Who anointedſt Kings to take Vengeance,* [*viz. Jehu* and *Hazael*] *and Prophets,* [*viz. Eliſha* and his Brethren] *to ſucceed after thee:* Who *waſt taken up in a Whirlwind of Fire, and a Chariot of fiery Horſes. Bleſſed are they that ſaw thee, and ſlept in Love; for we ſhall ſurely live.*

[t] 1 Kings xviii. 27. [u] Ibid. *chap.* xix. * Ibid. *ver.* 5. [x] 2 Kings i. 10, *&c.*
[y] Ibid. ii. 11. [z] Ecclus. xlviii. 1, *&c.*

Eliſha's *Actions.*

Of the World, 3108, &c. *Before Chriſt,* 896, &c.

Eliſha's *Miracles,*

AFTER the Aſſumption of *Elijah* into Heaven, *Eliſha* ſucceeded him both in the Gift of Prophecy, and in that of working Miracles. He divided the Waters of *Jordan,* [a] by ſtriking them with the Mantle, which *Elijah* had left him; he [b] cured the unwholſome Waters of *Jericho,* and the Barrenneſs of the Soil, with nothing elſe but a little Salt; and, as he went up to *Bethel,* [c] he curſed the Children, that inſulted and reviled him, and immediately two She-Bears came out of the Wood, and revenged his Quarrel. He [d] multiplied the Oil for one of the minor Prophet's Widows to ſuch a Quantity, as abundantly enabled her to pay her Debts; and [e] for the *Shunamite*-Woman, that entertained him hoſpitably, he firſt procured a Son, and, upon his Death, reſtored him to Life again. At *Gilgal,* [f] he ſweetened the bitter Herbs, that had been dreſſed for the Sons of the Prophets; and, in the Time of great Scarceneſs, [g] fed a great Number of Perſons with a ſmall Quantity of Bread. In *Samaria* [h] he cured *Naaman*'s Leproſy, by ordering him to waſh ſeven Times in the River *Jordan,* and [i] inflicted it upon his own Servant, for his Fraud and Covetouſneſs, for ever. In *Jordan,* [k] he made Iron ſwim; and when the King of *Syria* ſent to apprehend him, [l] he ſtruck all the Forces, which came on that Errand, with Blindneſs, and delivered them up into the Hand of the *Iſraelites,* their Enemies.

and Predictions.

[m] THE Generoſity of the *Iſraelites* however, in letting the *Syrians* go, was not long remembered by *Benhadad* their King. For he, not long after, raiſing a great Army, laid cloſe Siege to *Samaria,* and [n] reduced the City to ſuch Diſtreſs by Famine, that an Aſs's Head was ſold for fourſcore [o] Pieces of Silver, three Quarters of a Pint [p] of Pulſe for five; and thoſe, that were not able to procure ſuch Proviſions, were driven to the laſt Extremity, and forced to eat their own Children. In which diſconſolate Circumſtances, the Prophet foretels, that, in one Night's Time, there ſhould be ſuch a Plenty of all Things, that a *Meaſure* of fine Flour ſhould be ſold for a *Shekel,* and two Meaſures of Barley for the ſame Price, which accordingly came to paſs: For God had ſo ordered the Matter in the Night, that, by the *Miniſtry* of *Angels,* he made ſuch a *Rattling,* like that of Chariots and Prancing of Horſes, that the *Syrians* imagined a great Army was not only marching towards them, but ready to fall upon them; which put them into ſuch a Conſternation, that it immediately ſpread thro the whole Army, and, leaving their Camp ſtanding, every Man ſhifted for himſelf, and made the beſt of his Way home. Whereupon the *Iſraelites* had nothing to do, but to go out and plunder the Tents of the *Syrians*; in which they found ſuch Store of Proviſion, as made the ſudden Alteration in the Price of Corn, which the Prophet had foretold.

NOT long after this Defeat, *Benhadad,* King of *Syria,* fell ſo ill, that [q] *Hazael,* one of his *Prime Miniſters,* was ſent with a coſtly Preſent, to conſult *Eliſha,* whether his Maſter would recover of his Sickneſs. His Sickneſs, as *Joſephus* tells us, was no more than a deep *Melancholy,* occaſioned by the ſhameful Flight of his Army from before *Samaria*; and therefore the Prophet told him, that, though his Diſtemper was not incurable, yet he foreſaw he was not to live, becauſe *Hazael* himſelf would ſpeedily murther him, uſurp his Throne, and commit great Outrages againſt the People of *Iſrael*; [r] which accordingly came to paſs. Theſe, and ſeveral others, were the *Predictions* and *Miracles,* which *Eliſha* performed in his Life-time; and, even after his Deceaſe, a divine Power did not depart from him: For, when the *Iſraelites,* going to bury a certain Perſon in the Country, ſaw a Band of *Moabites,* who, at that Time, invaded the Land, coming upon them, they rolled away the Stone from *Eliſha*'s Sepulchre, and laid the dead Corps by his; which no ſooner touched the Prophet's Bones,

[a] 2 Kings ii. 14. [b] Ibid. *ver.* 19. [c] Ibid. *ver.* 23, &c. [d] Ibid. iv. 3. [e] Ibid. *ver.* 16, 36. [f] Ibid. *ver.* 38. [g] Ibid. *ver.* 42. [h] Ibid. v. 1. [i] Ibid. *ver.* 27. [k] Ibid. vi. 6. [l] Ibid. *ver.* 18. [m] Ibid. *ver.* 22. [n] Ibid. *ver.* 25. [o] Reckoning theſe *Pieces of Silver,* or Shekels, at fifteen Pence a-piece, they come to five Pounds *Sterling. Howell*'s Hiſtory.

[p] What we, in this Place, call *Pulſe,* our Tranſlation has rendered *Dove's Dung:* But Interpreters have been at a great Loſs to let us know, upon what Account the Inhabitants of *Samaria* ſhould be obliged to buy ſo ſmall a Quantity of it at ſo great a Price. For Salt, for Food, for Firing, for dunging their Gardens within the Walls, ſeveral Interpreters have ſeverally applied it: But, upon a ſmall Examination, it will appear, that none of theſe Uſes could ſuit with the Circumſtances of a City, ſo ſtraitly beſieged; and therefore the learned *Bochart* has obſerved, that the *Arabians* give the Name of *Dove's Dung,* or *Sparrow's Dung* to two ſeveral Things, *viz.* to a Kind of *Moſs,* which grows on Trees and ſtony Ground, and to a Sort of *Peaſe,* or Pulſe, which was very common in *Judæa,* as may be ſeen in 2 *Sam.* xvii. 28. and therefore he ſuppoſes, that the Word *Chirſonim* may very well ſignify *Fitches* or *Pulſe,* which, though very ordinary Food, were ſold at ſo high a Rate. *Vid. Hieroz. P. II. L. I. c. 7.* and *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. [q] 2 Kings viii. 7, &c. [r] *Vid.* 2 Kings xiii. 22.

Bones, but immediately the Perſon revived, and was reſtored to his perfect Health: Whereupon the Son of *Sirach* has this ſhort Deſcant, in Commendation of the Prophet: *Eliſha was filled with God's Spirit; while he lived, he was not moved with the Preſence of any Prince; and, after his Death, his Body propheſied*; *i. e.* by reviving the Man, gave Teſtimony of a future Reſurrection. *He did Wonders in his Life, and, at his Death, his Works were marvellous.*

SECT. II.

The State of the Kingdoms of Judah *and* Iſrael.

Of the World, 3120, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 884, &c.

The Revolutions in the Kingdoms of Iſrael *and* Judah.

ELISHA, before his Death, knowing that the Time was now come, for *Ahab*'s Family to be *extirpated*, and *Jezebel* puniſhed for her Wickedneſs, ordered one of the *Sons of the Prophets* to go, and anoint *Jehu*, the Son of *Jehoſhaphat*, the Son of *Nimſhi*, King; and to give him, at the ſame Time, full Inſtructions, what he was to do upon his Advancement. How ready and punctual *Jehu* was to execute God's Judgments upon the whole Houſe of *Ahab*; how he ſlew *Jehoram*, King of *Iſrael*, and *Ahaziah*, King of *Judah*; ordered *Jezebel* to be thrown down from a Window, and all the Princes of the Blood to be beheaded: How, in his Way to *Jeruſalem*, he ſlew the Brothers and Kindred of *Ahaziah*; and, when he came thither, cut off all that remained of *Ahab*, without ſparing one; how he deſtroyed the Prieſts of *Baal*, pulled down and burnt his Images, and, demoliſhing his Temple, made it no better than a common *Draught-houſe*: And, while theſe Things were tranſacting in *Iſrael*, how *Athaliah*, the Queen-Dowager of *Judah*, and Mother to the late King *Ahaziah*, hearing that her Son was ſlain, uſurped the Government of *Judah*; and, in Revenge of the Death of her Father *Ahab*'s Family, murthered all the Blood-Royal, in order to extinguiſh the Race of the good *Jehoſhaphat*, and ſecure to herſelf, and her other Children, the Succeſſion of the Kingdom; but how God diſappointed her, and brought her to Puniſhment, by the wonderful Preſervation of young *Joaſh*, to ſucceed in the Throne of his Anceſtors; and how, in the Beginning of his Reign, this *Joaſh* behaved like a juſt and religious Prince; reſtored the Worſhip of the true God, and greatly reformed the *Eccleſiaſtical* State; but, when his good Friend and Counſellor, *Jehoiada*, the High-Prieſt, was dead, the Princes of *Judah* ſoon drew him over to the Worſhip of Idols, inſomuch, that when *Zechariah*, the Son of his Friend *Jehoiada*, went about to reprove him, at his Command he was *ſtoned* to Death in the Porch of the Temple, for which heinous Act, neither he nor his People went unpuniſhed: Theſe Things, I ſay, are ſo fully recorded [s] in the ſecond Book of *Kings*, that it would be tedious to the Reader to detain him, either with a Repetition, or any jejune Reflections upon them. The State of the Kingdoms both of *Judah* and *Iſrael* was, for ſome Time after this, ſo torn with *Convulſions*, the Murthers of their Princes were ſo many, their Succeſſions ſo quick, and ſo frequently interrupted, while all Manner of Violence, and eſpecially Superſtition and Idolatry, like a common Deluge, overflowed the Land; that we have little or nothing but Accounts of this Kind, (which furniſh no Matter for *Theological* Enquiry) until we come to the Reign of good *Hezekiah*, King of *Judah*.

Of the World, 3278, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 726, &c.

The Iſraelites *made Captives by* Shalmanezer.

ABOUT the Beginning of the Reign of *Hezekiah*, [t] *Sabacon*, the *Ethiopian*, having invaded *Egypt*, and taken *Boccharis*, King of that Country, Priſoner, cauſed him, with great Cruelty, to be burnt alive, and then, ſeizing his Kingdom, reigned there in his Stead. He is the ſame, who, in [u] Scripture, is called *So*: And, having thus ſettled himſelf in *Egypt*, he ſoon grew ſo powerful, that *Hoſhea*, King of *Samaria*, entered into Confederacy with him, hoping, by his Aſſiſtance, to ſhake off the Yoke of the *Aſſyrians*; and, in Confidence of this, withdrew his Subjection from *Shalmanezer*, and refuſed to pay him any more Tribute. But *Shalmanezer* ſoon marched againſt him with a powerful Army, and, having ſubdued all the Country round about, pent him up in *Samaria*, and, after a Siege of three Years Continuance, took the City, and, putting *Hoſhea* in Chains, ſhut him up in Priſon all his Days, and carried the People into Captivity.

IN

[s] From 2 Kings ix. to xiii. [t] *Prideaux*'s Connection, P. I. L. I. [u] 2 Kings xvii. 4.

The Book of Tobit.

IN this Captivity, *Tobit* was taken out of his City of *Teſbe*, in the Tribe of *Naphthali*; and, with *Anna* his Wife, and *Tobias* his Son, carried into *Aſſyria*, where his Piety was conſpicuous to all, and ſo won upon the Conqueror *Shalmanezer*, that he made him his *Purveyor*, with Liberty to go whither he pleaſed, which gave him an happy Occaſion to viſit and relieve his diſtreſſed Countrymen: But of this we may read at large in the Book which goes under his Name. The Book, indeed, in its *original* Draught, ſeems to have been the *Memoirs* of his Family, firſt begun by *Tobit*, then continued by *Tobias*, then finiſhed by ſome other of the Family; and, at laſt digeſted, by ſome *Babylonian Jew*, in the Form, wherein we have it. It is generally looked on, both by *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, as a *genuine* and true Hiſtory, though there ſeems to be good Reaſon for * our not placing it among the *Canonical* Books of Scripture, [x] becauſe there are ſome Matters in it, (ſuch as that of the Angel's accompanying *Tobias* in a long Journey, under the Shape of *Azarias*; the Story of *Raguel*'s Daughter; the frightening away the Devil by the Smoke of the Heart and Liver of a Fiſh, and curing of *Tobit*'s Blindneſs by the Gall of the ſame) which are not ſo reconcileable to a rational Credibility. They look, indeed, more like the Fictions of *Homer*, than the Writings of a *ſacred Hiſtorian*, and give ſuch an Objection againſt this Book, as does not lie againſt any other; though it is certainly of great Uſe, to repreſent to us the Duties of Charity and Patience, in the Example of *Tobit*'s ready helping his Brethren in Diſtreſs, to the uttermoſt of his Power; and his bearing, with a pious Submiſſion, the Calamities of his Captivity, Poverty, and Blindneſs, as long as they were inflicted on him.

The Samaritans, *whence.*

SHALMANEZER, having thus carried away the *Iſraelites* into *Aſſyria*, drew out ſeveral Colonies of his own People from *Babylon*, and other Provinces, and ſent them into *Canaan*, where they took Poſſeſſion of the Cities, and dwelt therein: But as they polluted the Holy Land with their Idolatries, [y] *the Lord ſent his Lions among them, which deſtroyed them.* The People imputing this Affliction to their not adoring the God of the Country in ſuch a Manner, as he might deſire, ſent into *Aſſyria* for one of the Prieſts of the *Iſraelites*, who, coming and dwelling at *Bethel*, taught them how to worſhip the God of *Iſrael*. [z] But then they only took him into the Number of their former *Deities*, and worſhipped him jointly with the Gods of the Nations from whence they came; ſo that, what with worſhipping their own Idols, and the true God at the ſame Time, they fell into a ſtrange and unaccountable Mixture of Religion, which was the firſt Beginning of that *mungrel* Set of People, which were afterwards called *Samaritans*.

Hezekiah's *Piety.*

THE Kingdom of *Judah* was of a longer Duration, and, at that Time, was governed by *Hezekiah*, a truly religious Prince, who allowed of no other Worſhip, through all his Dominions, but that of the Lord only, and as it was appointed in the Law of *Moſes*. To this Purpoſe [a] he cauſed the Gates of the Temple, which his Father *Ahaz* had ſhut up, to be opened, and its Fabrick to be repaired; ordered the Prieſts and *Levites* to cleanſe it; and, when it was ſanctified, renewed the uſual Sacrifices, celebrated the Paſſover, and, in ſhort, reſtored the ancient Worſhip in all its former Solemnity. Nay, not only ſo, but he deſtroyed the Altars of the falſe Gods; removed the high Places; cut down the Groves where the People went to worſhip; and [b] brake in Pieces the Brazen Serpent, which *Moſes* had ſet up in the Wilderneſs, becauſe, *until that Time, the Children of* Iſrael *had burnt Incenſe unto it.*

Sennacherib's *Army deſtroyed, and how.*

This Piety his God rewarded with a *proſperous* Reign, and a very *ſignal* Deliverance from the violent Attempts of *Sennacherib*, King of *Aſſyria*. For, while he was on his full March towards *Jeruſalem*, the very Night (as ſome think) that his Army came before it, with a thorough Purpoſe to deſtroy the Place, and all that was therein, [c] *an Angel of the Lord went forth, and, in one Night ſmote, in the Camp of the* Aſſyrians,

* The Church of *Rome* has received this Book into their Canon, but without a ſufficient Warrant: For even ſuppoſing the Hiſtorical Ground-Plot of the Book to be true, (which is the moſt that can be ſaid of it) yet it is certainly interlarded with many Fictions, which are purely the Invention of him that wrote it. *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. i. [x] *Prideaux*, ibid. [y] 2 Kings xvii. 25. [z] Ibid. ver. 33. [a] 2 Chron. xxix. 3. [b] Notwithſtanding this poſitive Declaration of the Holy Scripture, that the Brazen Serpent was in this Manner deſtroyed by *Hezekiah*; in the Church of St *Ambroſe* in *Milan*, the *Romaniſts*, at this Day, ſhew a Brazen Serpent, which they pretend is the very ſame, that *Moſes* ſet up in the Wilderneſs; and, upon this Belief, the Ignorant pay an idolatrous Devotion to it; though it muſt not be diſſembled, that, among their learned Men, there are ſome, that acknowledge the Cheat, and diſclaim it. *Prideaux*, ibid. [c] 2 Kings xix. 35. *Herodotus*, from the Relation of the *Egyptian* Prieſts, gives us [Lib. II.] a Kind of diſguiſed Account of this Deliverance from the *Aſſyrians*, in a fabulous Application of it to the City *Peluſium*, inſtead of *Jeruſalem*, and to *Sethon*, the *Egyptian* King, inſtead of *Hezekiah*; by whoſe Piety, he ſaith, it was obtained, that while the King of *Aſſyria* laid Siege to *Peluſium*, a great Number of *Rats* were miraculouſly ſent into his Army, which, in one Night, did eat

Aſſyrians, *an hundred fourſcore and five thouſand Men*; ſo that, when *he aroſe*, he found almoſt all his Army *dead Corpſes*. This was ſo terrible a Judgment upon him, that he fled out of *Judea* in the utmoſt Confuſion, and made all the Haſte he could back again to *Nineveh*, where, by the Tyranny and Cruelty of his Government, he became at laſt ſo intolerable to his own Family, that even [d] two of his Sons conſpired againſt him, and ſlew him. Some of the *Jewiſh* Doctors are of Opinion, that this Deſtruction upon *Sennacherib*'s Army was occaſioned by *Lightning*; but it ſeems moſt likely, that it was effected by bringing on them an hot *peſtilential* Wind, which [e] is frequent in thoſe Parts; and often, when it lights among a Multitude, deſtroys great Numbers of them in a Moment; as it frequently happens in thoſe vaſt *Caravans* of the *Mahometans*, who go their *annual* Pilgrimages to *Mecca*.

The Sun's Receſs *upon* Ahaz's *Dial.*

But by what Means ſoever this Deliverance was effected, it was certainly done by the Interpoſition of Providence, as was likewiſe his Recovery from a dangerous Diſeaſe, whereof he had Aſſurance by the *Receſs* of the Sun, as it appeared, upon the Dial of *Ahaz*: But of what Nature this Receſs was, there is ſome Uncertainty among Commentators. Moſt of the Moderns are of Opinion, that, whereas in the twentieth Chapter of the ſecond Book of *Kings* (wherein this Event is particularly related) no Mention is made of the Sun's going back, but only *of the Shadow upon the Dial*, which is repeated three ſeveral Times; and whereas the *Degrees*, or Lines in the Dial, may denote either Hours, or half Hours, (or [f] as ſome think) Minutes; they from thence conclude, that the Miracle was wrought upon the *Dial only*, and not upon the *Body of the Sun*, or that God, upon this Occaſion, made no Alteration in the Motion of the Heavens, but only, [g] by the Means of ſome extraordinary *Meteors* or *Refractions*, ſo diſpoſed the *Rays* of the Sun, and directed its Light, that no Shadow ſhould be projected, but where the Prophet foretold. The Prophet however, where himſelf gives the Account of the Miracle, tells us expreſsly, that [h] *the Sun returned ten Degrees*; and from hence the Opinion of the Ancients, both *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, has been, that the Miracle was not wrought upon the *Shadow*, but upon the *Body* of the Sun; or, *that the Sun*, (as [i] our excellent Biſhop *Uſher*, in his *Annals*, expreſſes it) *and all the heavenly Bodies went back, and as much was detracted from the next Night, as was added to this Day.* [k] The *Retrogradation* however was not of ſo long a Continuance, as to make any conſiderable Alteration in the heavenly Bodies. As ſoon as the Miracle was exhibited, we may ſuppoſe, that they all returned to their proper Stations, though, for the preſent, the Change was remarkable enough to raiſe the Wonder of the neighbouring Countries, eſpecially ſuch as had any Skill in Aſtronomy; for which Reaſons we read, that *Berodach Baladan*, King of *Babylon*, ſent Embaſſadors unto *Hezekiah*, not only to *congratulate* him upon his Recovery, but [l] *to enquire* likewiſe *of the Wonder that was done in the Land.*

Thus favoured and beloved of God, *Hezekiah* reigned in Peace, and, at his Death, was highly honoured by all *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*: For they buried him with great Solemnity, in the chiefeſt and higheſt Place of [m] the *Sepulchres of the Sons of* David, expreſſing thereby their Opinion of him, that he was the worthieſt and beſt of all,

eat all their Shield-ſtraps, Quivers, and Bow-ſtrings; ſo that, on their riſing the next Morning, finding themſelves without Arms to carry on the War, they were forced to raiſe the Siege and be gone. Now it is very remarkable, that *Herodotus* calls the King of *Aſſyria*, to whom this happened, by the Name of *Sennacherib*, as the Scriptures do; which plainly enough ſhews, that this is the ſame Fact, though it be diſguiſed in the Relation. And, that it ſhould be thus diſguiſed, we need not wonder, when we conſider, that it comes to us through the Hands of ſuch, as had the greateſt Averſion both to the Nation and Religion of the *Jews*; and therefore would relate nothing in ſuch a Manner, as would give a Reputation to either. *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. i. [d] Some Commentators will have it, that he had vowed to ſacrifice his two Sons, *Adrammelech* and *Sharezer*, in order to appeaſe his Gods, and make them the more favourable to him in the Reſtoration of his Affairs; and that, to prevent this, they made bold and ſacrificed him firſt: But for this there is no Foundation, except that no other Thing can be thought on, to excuſe ſo wicked and deteſtable a Parricide. *Prideaux*, ibid. [e] Vid. *Thevenot*'s Travels, Part II. Lib. 1. c. 20. [f] Vid. *Voſſ. de Orig. & Progreſſ. Idol.* Lib. II. c. 9. [g] *Derham*'s Aſtro-Theology. [h] Iſa. xxxviii. 8. [i] A. M. 4001. [k] *Patrick*'s Commentary on 2 Kings xx. 11. [l] 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. [m] This Burial-Place, which is called *the Sepulchres of the Kings of the Houſe of* David, is a very ſumptuous and ſtately Work. It lies now without the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, but (as it is ſuppoſed) was formerly within them, before the City was deſtroyed by the *Romans*. It conſiſts of a large Court, of about 120 Feet ſquare, with a Gallery, or Cloyſter on the Left-Hand, which Court and Gallery, with the Pillars that ſupport it, were cut out of the ſolid Marble-Rock. At the End of the Gallery, there is a narrow Paſſage or Hole, through which there is an Entrance into a large Room or Hall, of about 24 Feet ſquare, within which are ſeveral leſſer Rooms, one within another, with Stone-Doors opening into them; all which Rooms, with the great Hall, were likewiſe cut out of the ſolid Marble Rock. In the Sides of theſe leſſer Rooms are ſeveral *Niches*, in which the Corpſes of the deceaſed Kings are depoſited in *Stone-Coffins*; and in the innermoſt, and chiefeſt of theſe, was the Body of good *Hezekiah* laid, in a Nich cut out on Purpoſe, in the upper Part of the Room, to do him the greater Honour. The whole ſeems to have been the Work of King *Solomon*: For it could not have been made without vaſt Expence. It is ſtill entire to this Day, and is the only true Remainder of old *Jeruſalem* now to be ſeen in that Place. *Prideaux*, ibid.

that had reigned over them, of that Family, ſince him, that was the Founder of it.

Of the World, 3396, &c. *Before Chriſt,* 608, &c.

IT was the Misfortune of King *Hezekiah* to be ſucceeded by a Son, who was the wickedeſt, and worſt of all his Race: For after him reigned [n] *Manaſſeh*, who being a *Minor*, of twelve Years old only, when he came to the Crown, had the Misfortune to fall into the Hands of ſuch of the Nobility, for his *Guardians* and chief *Miniſters*, as, being ill-affected to his Father's *Reformation*, took effectual Care to breed him up in the greateſt Averſion to it, and to corrupt his Youth with the worſt of Principles, both as to Religion and Government; inſomuch, that when he grew up, he proved the moſt impious towards *God*, and the moſt tyrannical and wicked towards his *Subjects*, of any, that ever reigned, either in *Jeruſalem*, or *Samaria*. For he not only reſtored all Kinds of Idolatry, but converted the Houſe of God into an Idol-Temple, ſet up an Image in the *Sanctuary*, erected Altars to *Baalim*, and all the Hoſt of Heaven, in both the Courts; made his Children *paſs through the Fire to Moloch*; and, in ſhort, brought in all Manner of idolatrous Profanations, whereby the true Religion might be moſt corrupted, and all Manner of Impiety the moſt promoted in the Kingdom. And, to this Purpoſe, he not only practiſed theſe Abominations himſelf, but raiſed a terrible *Perſecution* againſt all, that would not comply with them; whereby he filled the whole Land with *innocent Blood*, and put many of the *Prophets*, who adventured to reprove him (and, among theſe, the Prophet *Iſaiah*, who was *ſawn aſunder*) to violent and very barbarous Deaths. Provoked at theſe horrid Impieties, God ſolemnly declared, that he would [o] *ſtretch out over Jeruſalem the Line of Samaria, and the Plummet of the Houſe of Ahab, and wipe Jeruſalem clean*, of all its Inhabitants, *as a Man wipeth a Diſh, and turneth it upſide down*: Which, in Proceſs of Time, was fully executed; but, for the preſent, he only ſtirred up the *Aſſyrians* to make an Incurſion into *Judea*, who committed great Outrages in the Country, and, ſeizing the King, put him in *Irons*, and, with a great Number of his People, carried him away Priſoner to *Babylon*. But when his Chains and Priſon had brought him to himſelf, he repented of his Sins, and (God mollifying the Heart of the King of *Babylon* towards him) was reſtored to his Liberty, and returned to *Jeruſalem*; where he deſtroyed the idolatrous Worſhip, he had before eſtabliſhed, and, for the Remainder of his Days, devoted himſelf entirely to the Service of God, for which he vouchſafed him a very *ſignal* Deliverance.

Manaſſeh's *Wickedneſs, and Reformation.*

NABUCHODONOSOR, King of *Aſſyria*, having defeated and taken *Arphaxad*, King of the *Medes*, propoſed to himſelf to ſubdue the Nations of *Aſia* to the *Weſtward*. On which Expedition he ſent his General *Holofernes* with a mighty Army, who, ſpreading Terror in all Parts, made himſelf Maſter of *Meſopotamia*, *Syria*, *Lybia*, and *Cilicia*; and, at length, coming into *Judæa*, and laying Siege to [p] *Bethulia*, was there deſtroyed, and all his Army cut to pieces, in ſuch a Manner, as is related at large in the Book of *Judith*: But whether this Book be true, or feigned Hiſtory only, is what learned Men are not ſo well agreed in.

The Book of Judith *conſidered.*

THE *Romaniſts* indeed will have it to be all true; for they have received it into the Canon of divine Writ: But many *Proteſtant* Writers [q] account it rather a *parabolical*, than *real* Hiſtory, deſigned for the Comfort and Inſtruction of the *Jews* under a *Figure* or *Allegory*, but not to be a *Narrative* of any Thing really done. [r] *Grotius*, in particular, is very poſitive, that this Book was written in the Time of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, when he came into *Judæa* to raiſe a Perſecution againſt the *Jewiſh* Church; and that the Deſign of it was, to confirm the *Jews*, under that Perſecution, in their Hopes, that God would ſend them a Deliverance. He tells us, "that therein by "*Judith* is repreſented *Judæa*; by *Bethulia*, the Temple or Houſe of God; and "by the Sword, which went out from thence, the Prayers of the Saints; that *Na*"*buchodonoſor* doth there denote the Devil; and the Kingdom of *Aſſyria*, the Devil's "Kingdom, Pride; that by *Holofernes* is meant the Inſtrument of the Devil in that "Perſecution,

[n] 2 Kings xx. 21. [o] Ibid. xxi. 13. [p] *Bethulia*, according to *Calmet*, [before his Commentary on the Book of *Judith*] was the ſame with *Bethul*, [Joſh. xix. 4.] a City in the Tribe of *Simeon*, where ſtood a famous *Pantheon*, or Temple dedicated to all the Gods, ſituate on a riſing Hill, and ſo overlooking the whole City; from whence, very probably, the Place was called *Bethul*, i. e. *the Houſe of God*. Travellers indeed tell us of another Place, called *Bethulia*, ſituate in the Tribe of *Zebulon*, to the North of *Scythopolis*: But that is of too modern a Date, to be the Place here intended, ſince neither *Joſhua*, nor *Joſephus*, nor *Euſebius*, nor St *Jerome*, make any Mention of it. [q] What hath led theſe Men to account the whole an *Allegory* is its utter Inconſiſtency (if taken in a true and literal Senſe) with all the Times, where it has been placed, either before or after the Captivity of the *Jews*: But the Objections, brought to this Purpoſe, are all taken off, by our placing it in the latter Part of *Manaſſeh*'s Reign. *Prideaux*'s Connection, P. I. L. I. [r] In Præfatione ad Annotationes in Librum.

" Perſecution, *Antiochus Epiphanes*, who made himſelf Maſter of *Judæa*, that fair " Widow, ſo called, becauſe deſtitute of Relief; and that *Eliakim* ſignifies God, who " would ariſe in her Defence, and at length cut off that Inſtrument of the Devil, who " would have corrupted her." All this Explication is very ingenious; but then it muſt be owned, that, as there is not much of the Air of a Fiction or Parable in the Book, ſo both the *Jews* and ancient Chriſtians always looked upon it as a true Hiſtory, and have accordingly quoted it, though the former never admitted it into the Number of their *Canonical* and Inſpired Writings.

Joſiah's *great Piety.*

AFTER *Manaſſeh*, reigned [s] *Amon* his Son, who imitating the *firſt* Part of his Father's Reign, rather than the *latter*, gave himſelf up to all Manner of Wickedneſs and Impiety; whereupon the Servants of his Houſe conſpired againſt him, and ſlew him, ſo that, after two Years Reign, he was ſucceeded [t] by his Son *Joſiah*, who was then but eight Years old: But having the Happineſs to fall under the Conduct of better *Guardians*, in his Minority, than did *Manaſſeh*, his Grandfather, he proved, when grown up, a Prince of very extraordinary Worth, and not only *equalled*, but even *excelled*, in all Kinds of Piety and Goodneſs, the very beſt of his *Predeceſſors*. For immediately, upon his Acceſſion to the Throne, he not only deſtroyed the Idols, and Altars of *Baal*, but that of *Bethel* likewiſe; and thoſe, that were in the *High-Places*, together with all other Things, that tended to Idolatry. Nay, himſelf viſited *Bethel* in Perſon, cauſed the Bones of the idolatrous Prieſts to be dug up, and burnt upon one of the Altars, according to the Predictions, that had been made of him ſome hundred Years before; and, in this Manner, carried on a general Reformation, through all the Cities of *Samaria*, that were ſubject to his Dominion. In the mean Time, he ordered the Temple at *Jeruſalem* to be repaired and beautified, which while the High-Prieſt was narrowly ſurveying, in order to ſee what was proper to be done, he found the *authentick* Copy of the Law of *Moſes*, which ought indeed to have been laid up on the Side of the Ark of the Covenant, in the moſt Holy Place, but was taken out from thence, and hid elſewhere, in the Reign of *Manaſſeh* (as is conjectur'd) for fear it might be deſtroyed by him, in the Time of his Impiety. [u] By the Behaviour of the High-Prieſt, as well as the King, at the finding of the *Book of the Law*, it plainly appears, that neither of them had ſeen any *Copy* of it before; which ſhews into how corrupt a State the Church of the *Jews* was then ſunk, until this good King reformed it. For, though *Hezekiah* * kept Scribes on Purpoſe to collect together, and write out Copies of the holy Scriptures; yet, through the Iniquity of the Times that afterwards followed, in the Reigns of *Manaſſeh* and *Amon*, they had either been ſo deſtroyed, or elſe ſo neglected and loſt, that there were none of them left in the Land, unleſs in ſome few *private* Hands, were they were kept and concealed, till this Copy was found in the Temple: And therefore, after this Time (by the Care, we may be aſſured, of this religious Prince) were tranſcribed thoſe Copies of the Law, and other holy Scriptures then in being, out of which *Ezra*, after the Captivity, made his Edition of *Canonical* Books, as we ſhall take notice of hereafter.

A Copy of the Law found in the Temple.

Of the World, 3392, *&c. Before Chriſt*, 612, *&c.*

IT was in the 29th Year of the Reign of *Joſiah*, that *Nabopollaſer*, King of *Babylon*, having made an Affinity with *Aſtyages*, the eldeſt Son of *Cyaxares*, by the Marriage of *Nebuchadnezzar*, his Son, with *Amyitis*, Daughter to *Aſtyages*, entered into a Confederacy with him againſt the *Aſſyrians:* Whereupon, joining their Forces together, they beſieged *Nineveh*, took it, and ſlew the King thereof; and then, to gratify the *Medes*, utterly deſtroyed that great and ancient City. For [x] though there was another erected out of the Ruins of it, which, for a long Time, bore the ſame Name; yet it never attained to the Grandeur and Glory of the *Mother* City. It is, at this Time, called *Moſul*, and is ſituated on the *Weſt-Side* of the River *Tigris*; whereas the ancient *Nineveh* ſtood on the *Eaſt-Side* of it, where are to be ſeen ſome of its Ruins, of great Extent, even to this Day. And indeed the Extent of it could not but be very large, when, according to the Account of [y] an Author of good Authority, the Circuit of it was four hundred and eighty Furlongs, which, in our Computation, makes ſixty Miles; and, when, even in *Jonah*'s Time, the Number of thoſe, who [z] *could not diſcern between their Right-Hand and their Left, i. e.* of Infants, that had not yet attained to the Uſe of Reaſon, being *more than ſixſcore thouſand Perſons*, could not fail [a] of making the whole amount to above ſix hundred thouſand Souls.

The Deſtruction of Nineveh.

THE

[s] 2 Kings xxi. 19. [t] Ibid. *chap.* xxii. [u] Ibid. xxii. 8, *&c.* * Prov. xxv. 1.
Thevenot's Travels, P. II. L. I. c. 11. [y] Diodorus Siculus, L. II. [z] Jonah iv. 11.
Calmet's Dictionary, on the Word *Nineveh*.

The Death of Joſiah,

THE *Babylonians* and *Medes*, having thus deſtroyed *Nineveh*, became ſo very formidable, that they raiſed the Jealouſy of all their Neighbours; and therefore to put a Stop to their growing Greatneſs, *Necho*, King of *Egypt*, marched with a great Army towards *Euphrates*, with a Deſign to make War upon them: But, taking his Way through *Judæa*, and deſiring of *Joſiah* a free Paſſage, which *Joſiah* refuſing, and poſting his Army at proper Places, in order to obſtruct his March; they ſoon came to an Engagement, wherein the King of *Judah* received a Wound, of which he ſhortly after died. The Death of ſo excellent a Prince was deſervedly lamented by all his People; and by none more than by *Jeremiah* the Prophet, who, having a thorough Senſe of the Greatneſs of the Loſs, as well as a full Foreſight of the ſore Calamities, which were afterwards to follow upon the whole People of the *Jews*, while his Heart was full with the View of both theſe, he compoſed the greateſt Part of that mournful Song, which is called *the Lamentations of Jeremy*.

and why occaſioned.

IT is the Notion of many, that *Joſiah* engaged raſhly and unadviſedly in this War, upon an *Over-Confidence* in the Merit of his Undertakings. But this would be a Preſumption very unbecoming ſo religious a Perſon, and what there is no Occaſion for ſuppoſing, ſo long as there is a much better Reaſon to be given for what he did. [b] From the Time of *Manaſſeh*'s Reſtoration, the Kings of *Judah* were *Homagers* to the Kings of *Babylon*, and bound by Oath to adhere to them againſt all their Enemies, and eſpecially to defend that Border of the Empire, againſt the *Egyptians*: For which Purpoſe they ſeem to have had a Conceſſion of the other Parts of the Land of *Canaan*, which were inhabited by the Children of *Iſrael*, before their Captivity; as it is certain that *Joſiah* exerciſed a Juriſdiction over them. And therefore had *Joſiah*, under ſuch an Obligation, permitted an Enemy of the King of *Babylon* to paſs through his Country to make War upon him, without any Oppoſition, it would have amounted to the *Breach* of his *Oath*, and a Violation of that *Fidelity*, which he had, in the Name of his God, ſworn unto him; and this, ſo good and juſt a Man, as *Joſiah* was, could not but abſolutely deteſt. 'Twas not from any Preſumption of his own Merit therefore, but from a real Senſe of his Duty, that he engaged in this War, wherein he unhappily fell, and with him fell all the Glory, Honour, and Proſperity of the *Jewiſh* Nation. For, after this Time, nothing elſe enſued, but a *diſmal Scene* of God's Judgments upon the Land, till, at length, all *Judah* and *Jeruſalem* were ſwallowed up by a woeful Deſtruction.

The Captivity of Judah, *and Deſtruction of* Jeruſalem.

FOR (not to mention the intermediate Reigns, which were remarkable for nothing ſo much, as for their Wickedneſs) ſoon after *Jehoiakim* came to the Throne, [c] *Nebuchadnezzar*, King of *Babylon*, invaded *Judæa*, beſieged *Jeruſalem*, and took it, and carried away the King, and Part of the Veſſels of the Temple, into *Babylon*; but afterwards, upon Condition, that *Jehoiakim* ſhould become *tributary* to him, he releaſed him, and reſtored him to his Dominions. It was not long however before *Jehoiakim* revoked his Subjection; whereupon *Judæa* was again invaded, *Jeruſalem* again beſieged, and *Jehoiakim* in a Sally taken and ſlain; and when *Jehoiachin* his Son ſurrendered the Town, he obtained no other Favour, than barely to ſave his Life: For he was immediately put in Chains, and carried to *Babylon*, and with him a vaſt Number of Captives, his Mother and Wives, his Officers and Princes, the mighty Men of Valour to recruit the King's Army, and Artificers of all Kinds to carry on his Building at *Babylon*, together with all the Treaſures of the Houſe of the Lord, and all the Riches, that were found in the King's Houſe. He left, in ſhort, none behind, but the very *Refuſe* of the People; yet over theſe he made *Mattaniah* (giving him the Name of [d] *Zedekiah*, and requiring an Oath of Subjection of him) King. But, after ſome Time, *Zedekiak*, having entered into a League with *Pharaoh Hophra*, King of *Egypt*, and thereupon broken his Oath to the King of *Babylon*, the King of *Babylon* drew together a great Army; and, in a ſhort Time, coming before *Jeruſalem*, he ſo cloſely begirt it, that the People were reduced to the laſt *Extremity*, and forced to feed upon one another for Want. In this ſad Condition the City was taken by *Storm*, and when the King, with ſome of his beſt Forces, had broken through the Enemy's Camp, and endeavoured to eſcape over *Jordan*, he was ſoon overtaken in the Plains of *Jericho*, where the few, that were with him, were diſperſed, and himſelf, being

[b] *Prideaux*'s Connection, P. I. L. IV. [c] 2 Kings xxiv. 10. [d] *Zedekiah*, in the *Chaldee* Tongue, ſignifies *the Juſtice of the Lord*, and *Nebuchadnezzar*, in giving *Mattaniah* that Name, intended to remind him continually of the Vengeance, which he was to expect from the Juſtice of the Lord his God, in Caſe he violated that Fidelity, which he had, in ſo ſolemn a Manner, ſworn unto him. *Prideaux*'s Connection, P. I. L. I.

being made Priſoner, was carried to *Nebuchadnezzar*, then reſiding at *Riblah* in *Syria*, who (to augment his Grief) having cauſed his Sons, and all the Princes that diſſuaded the *Surrender* of the Town, to be put to death before his Face, commanded his Eyes to be put out, and, binding him in Fetters of *Braſs*, carried him in Triumph to *Babylon*, where he died in Priſon. Soon after this, *Nebuzaradan* Captain of his Guards, having plundered the Houſe of the Lord, and every Houſe in *Jeruſalem*, of all the Wealth, that he could any where find, ſet the Temple and the City on Fire, overthrew the Walls, Fortreſſes, and Towers belonging to them; and utterly razed every Building therein, until he had brought it to a *perfect Deſolation*. And in this Condition it remained for fifty-two Years after, when, by the Favour of *Cyrus*, the *Jews* were releaſed from their Captivity, and, returning to their own Land again, *repaired* theſe Ruins, and *rebuilt* their holy City.

SECT. III.

Occurrences during the Captivity.

Of the World, 3417, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 587, &c.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, returning to *Babylon*, after the End of the *Jewiſh* War, and the full Settlement of his Affairs in *Syria* and *Paleſtine*, out of the Spoils, which he had taken in that Expedition, made a *Golden Image* to the Honour of [e] *Bel*, his God, whoſe [f] *Height was threeſcore Cubits, and the Breadth thereof ſix Cubits, which he ſet up in the Plains of* Dura, with a poſitive Injunction for every one of his Subjects to worſhip it. The whole Story is at large related in the third Chapter of *Daniel*; but how *Daniel* eſcaped the *fiery Furnace*, to which his three Friends, upon this Occaſion, were condemned, is made a Matter of Enquiry by ſome. That he did not fall down and worſhip the Idol is moſt certain, becauſe ſuch an impious Act could no where comport with the Character of ſo religious a Man: And therefore we muſt ſay, that, either he was abſent, or elſe, being preſent, was not accuſed. *Nebuchadnezzar*, we read, had ſummoned all his Princes, Counſellors, Governors, Captains, and other Officers and Miniſters, to come to the Dedication of this Image; and therefore it is hardly ſuppoſable, that *Daniel*, who was become one of the Chief of them, ſhould be abſent. That he was preſent therefore ſeems moſt probable; but his Enemies thought it not adviſable to begin with him, becauſe of the *ſingular* Eſteem which the King had for him, for having ſo lately interpreted his Dream of the *Image*, made up of different Metals, which all the *Magicians*, and *Aſtrologers*, and *Sorcerers*, and *Chaldeans*, that were in his Kingdom, could not do. They thought it more proper therefore to fall firſt on his three Friends, and by that Means to pave their Way to the other's Deſtruction afterwards. But the miraculous Interpoſition of Providence in Behalf of his Friends quaſhed all farther Accuſations about this Matter, and ſo *Daniel*'s Name was not once called in queſtion.

Why Daniel *was not thrown into the fiery Furnace with his three Friends.*

DANIEL, who was deſcended from the Royal Race of *David*, was one of thoſe *noble Youths*, [g] who, at the firſt Captivity of *Judah*, was made choice of for his Wit and Beauty, and carried away to *Babylon*, with his three Companions, to be inſtructed in the Language and Learning of the Country, in order to qualify them to ſtand before the King, and ſerve him. He had made great Proficiency in all the Arts and Sciences of the *Chaldeans*; but *Nebuchadnezzar*, perceiving that there was a Power ſuperior to all Sciences communicated to him, advanced him to be [h] *Chief of the Governors of the wiſe Men, and Ruler over all the Province of* Babylon. With

[e] *Bel*, or *Baal*, is the ſame with *Belus*, who, being the firſt King of *Babylon*, had, after his Death, divine Honours paid him, and a noble Temple built in that City, and conſecrated to him; which ſtood, until *Xerxes*, in his Return from his *Grecian* Expedition, demoliſhed, and laid it in Rubbiſh, after he had plundered it of its immenſe Riches. Vid. *Calmet*'s Dictionary on the Word *Bel*, and *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. i. [f] When this Image is ſaid to be 60 Cubits, *i. e.* 90 Feet *high*, it muſt be underſtood of the Image and Pedeſtal all together: For, ſince it is but *ſix Cubits broad* or thick, its Height (if 60 Cubits) muſt have been ten Times its Breadth or Thickneſs, which exceeds all the Proportions of a Man; becauſe no Man's Height is above ſix Times its Thickneſs, meaſuring the ſlendereſt Man living at the Waiſt. 'Tis very likely therefore, that this Image was the very ſame with that which, as *Diodorus Siculus* tells us, was ſet up in the Temple of *Belus*, and was no more than 40 Feet high, or thereabouts; for this makes the Proportion between its Height and Breadth very juſt: Beſides that the ſame *Diodorus* tells us, that this of 40 Feet high contained a thouſand *Babyloniſh* Talents of Gold, which amounts to three Millions and half of our Money, and therefore to advance the Height of the Statue to 90 Feet without the Pedeſtal, will increaſe the Value to a Sum utterly incredible. *Prideaux* ibid. [g] Dan. i. 3, 4. [h] Ibid. ii. 48.

him he lived in great Credit and Eſteem: And when he had interpreted his Dream, concerning the great and ſpacious *Tree, that was hewn down*, ſo as to import his own approaching Calamity, he had nevertheleſs that Authority with him, as to interpoſe this wholeſome Counſel: [i] *Wherefore, O King, break off thy Sins with Righteouſneſs, and thine Iniquities by ſhewing Mercy to the Poor, if* peradventure *there may be a lengthening of thy Tranquillity.*

Nebuchadnezzar's *being turned into a Beaſt, and the Occaſion of it.*

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, who had ſeen the verifying of *Daniel*'s Propheſies, and likewiſe been Eye-witneſs of God's great Power and Providence, might have been depreſſed in Mind, one would think, upon the Apprehenſions of ſuch an impending Judgment: But, inſtead of humbling himſelf, and deprecating it by Repentance; as he was walking, not long after, in his Palace at *Babylon*, moſt likely in his hanging Gardens, and in the uppermoſt Terraſs of them, from whence he might have a full Proſpect of that vaſt and overgrown City, he oſtentatiouſly ſaid, [k] *Is not this great* Babylon, *which I have built, for the Houſe of the Kingdom, by the Might of my Power, and for the Honour of my Majeſty?* But while the Words were yet in his Mouth, there came a Voice to him from Heaven to rebuke his Pride, which told him, that his Kingdom was departed from him, and that he ſhould be driven from the Society of Men, and thenceforth, for ſeven Years, have his Dwelling with the wild Beaſts of the Field, there to live like them in a brutal Manner. Immediately hereupon he fell into a Diſtemper, which made ſuch a Change in his Imagination, that he thought himſelf *transformed* into an *Ox*; and accordingly aſſumed the ſame Inclinations and Manner of Life, eating Graſs as Oxen do, and taking his Lodging on the Ground, in the open Air, [l] *until his Hair* (as the Text expreſſes it) *was grown like Eagles Feathers, and his Nails like Birds Claws.*

SEVERAL Interpreters indeed impute his abſenting himſelf from all human Society, and retreating into the Fields in this Manner, not to any *Diſtemper* of his own, but to a *Compulſion* put upon him by his *Subjects* Rebellion; who, weary of his Tyranny, conſpired againſt him, and forced him to fly, placing, in the mean Time, his Son *Evil-Merodach* upon the Throne. But, though it ſeems not unlikely, that, during his Diſtraction, his Son might be admitted to the Adminiſtration of the Government; yet, at the End of the ſeven Years, when his Underſtanding returned to him again, his Subjects, we find, were ſo far from being *offended* at any Miſconduct of his, that they ſent a *Deputation* of his Lords and Counſellors to *re-call* him, and re-eſtabliſh him in his Kingdom, with more Glory and Majeſty than ever; whereupon he extolled and honoured the King of Heaven, [m] *whoſe Dominion is an everlaſting Dominion, whoſe Works are Truth, and his Ways Judgment, and to whom all the Inhabitants of the Earth are reputed as nothing*; and, by a publick Decree, made Acknowledgment hereof, through all the *Babyloniſh* Empire, praiſing the Almighty Power, and magnifying the divine Mercy and Goodneſs, in his late Reſtoration: And in this good Diſpoſition 'tis preſumable he died; becauſe one of the laſt Acts of his Life [n] is ſaid to have been his foretelling his Subjects of the Coming of the *Perſians*, to deſtroy the *Babyloniſh* Empire; [o] wherein he teſtified the Faith and Confidence he had, in what the God of Heaven had declared unto him by the Mouth of his Prophet *Daniel.*

NEBUCHADNEZZAR was ſucceeded by his Son *Evil-Merodach*, who took Compaſſion on *Jehoiachin*, the Captive King of *Judah*, and releaſing him from his Impriſonment, in the ſeven and thirtieth Year of his Captivity, treated him with great Reſpect, and allowed him an honourable Maintenance, with the Right of Precedence before all other Princes in *Babylon*. He reigned but two Years, and was ſucceeded by his Son *Belſhazzar*, a profane and luxurious Prince, who, in the Midſt of his Rioting and Drunkenneſs, fell a Sacrifice to the *Medes* and *Perſians*, when they took his Royal City by a *Stratagem*, (which we ſhall ſhortly have Occaſion to mention) and, at the ſame Time, deſtroyed the *Babyloniſh* Empire, after it had continued from the Beginning of the Reign of *Nabonaſſar* (who firſt founded it) two hundred and nine Year. After *Belſhazzar*, *Cyaxares*, whom the Scripture calls *Darius the Mede*, aſſumed the Throne, and, beſtowing great Marks of his Favour on *Daniel*, intended to have made him his prime Miniſter, as he had been in ſome preceding Reigns; but the Thoughts of this ſtirred up ſo great Envy againſt him among the other Courtiers, that they laid [p] ſuch a Snare for him, as caſt him into the Lions Den. But the Providence of God appeared ſo viſibly in his Preſervation from all Harm,

Daniel *delivered from the Lions.*

[i] Dan. iv. 27. [k] Ibid. *ver.* 30. [l] Ibid. *ver.* 33. [m] Ibid. *ver.* 34, &c. [n] Abydenus apud Euſeb. Præp. Evan. Lib. IX. [o] *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. i. [p] Dan. vi.

Harm, that this malicious Contrivance ended in the Deſtruction of its Authors, the Manifeſtation of God's Glory, and the Eſtabliſhment of *Daniel* in the Prince's Favour.

His Prayers to God,

THE Time, which the Prophet *Jeremiah* had prefixed for the Continuance of *Judah*'s *Captivity*, being now drawing towards a Concluſion, *Daniel* thought it his Duty to humble himſelf before God, and to make his ardent Supplications to him, [q] that he would remember his People, and grant a *Reſtoration* to *Jeruſalem*, and make his *Face ſhine* again upon his holy City, and upon his *Sanctuary which was deſolate*. Whereupon, he had, in a Viſion, Aſſurance given him, by the Angel *Gabriel*, not only of the Deliverance of *Judah* from their *temporal* Captivity, under the *Babyloni-ans*; but alſo of a much greater *Redemption*, which God would give his Church, in his delivering them from their *Spiritual* Captivity, under Sin and Satan, to be accompliſhed at the End of ſeventy Weeks, from the going forth of the Commandment to rebuild *Jeruſalem*. The Words of the Propheſy are theſe: [r] *Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy People, and upon thy holy City, to finiſh the Tranſgreſſion, and to make an End of Sins, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in everlaſting Righteouſneſs, and to ſeal up the Viſion and Propheſy, and to anoint the moſt holy. Know therefore and underſtand, that, from the going forth of the Commandment to reſtore and to build* Jeruſalem, *unto the Meſſiah the Prince, ſhall be ſeven Weeks; and threeſcore and two Weeks, the Street ſhall be built again, and the Wall, even in troublous Times. And after threeſcore and two Weeks ſhall the Meſſiah be cut off, but not for himſelf: And the People of the Prince, that ſhall come, ſhall deſtroy the City, and the Sanctuary, and the End thereof ſhall be with a Flood, and to the End of the War Deſolations are determined; and he ſhall confirm the Covenant with many for one Week; and, in the Midſt of the Week, he ſhall cauſe the Sacrifice and the Oblation to ceaſe; and for the overſpreading of Abominations, he ſhall make it deſolate, even until the Conſummation, and that determined ſhall be poured out upon the Deſolate.* Now to ſet theſe Words in a right Light, we muſt conſider, 1. That the main Purport and Intendment of them is to foretel the Coming of the *Meſſiah*, his aboliſhing the *Jewiſh*, and ſetting up a *new*, and more perfect *Religion*; which is ſo manifeſt to every common Reader, that the *Jews* (to avoid the Force of this one Propheſy) have adventured to exclude the whole Book of *Daniel* from the Number of inſpired Writings. 2. It is agreed by moſt Interpreters, [s] that the ſeventy Weeks here ſpoken of (according to the *Prophetick* Stile) are to be taken for *Weeks of Years*, every one of which contains *ſeven Years*, and ſo, the ſeventy Weeks will amount to 490 Years: At the *Expiration* of which Term, the Matters contained in this Propheſy were to have their Accompliſhment. But then the Queſtion is, at what Point of Time the ſeventy Weeks, or, what is all one, theſe 490 Years, either began or expired; for, if we can happily find out one of the *Periods*, there will be leſs Difficulty in ſtating the other. Now, 3. It ſeems pretty plain, that the ſeveral Events, ſpecified in the Beginning of the Propheſy, *viz.* 1. *To finiſh*, or reſtrain *Tranſgreſſions*; 2. *To make an End of Sins*; 3. To make Expiation, or, *Reconciliation for Iniquity*; 4. *To bring in everlaſting Righteouſneſs*; 5. *To ſeal up*, or compleat, and fulfil *Viſion and Propheſy*; and, 6. *To anoint the moſt Holy*, were all accompliſhed in that great Work of our Salvation, by the Death and Paſſion, and by the Doctrine and Reſurrection of our Saviour Chriſt. For, being born without *original*, and having lived without *actual* Sin, he truly was *the moſt Holy* of all, that ever bore our Nature; and, being thereby fully qualified for this great Work, he *was anointed* with the Holy Ghoſt, and *with Power*, to be our *Prieſt*, our *Prophet*, and our *King*. As our *Prieſt*, he offered himſelf a Sacrifice upon the Croſs, and thereby made Atonement for our Sins, which is *making an End of them*, by taking away their Guilt; and, in ſo doing, *working Reconciliation* for us with God. As our *Prophet*, he gave us the Goſpel, *a Law of everlaſting Righteouſneſs*, and the only Revelation we are to expect; and, as our *King*, he ſent his holy Spirit into our Hearts, to guide and influence us according to this Law; whereby he has taken an effectual Method *to reſtrain and extinguiſh in us all Manner of Tranſgreſſions*; and, in doing all this, *he hath ſealed up*, *i. e.* fulfilled and thoroughly finiſhed *all*, that, *by Viſions and Propheſies*, had been before revealed concerning him. Since therefore all theſe Events were brought to paſs, and accompliſhed, at the Time of Chriſt's Death, this muſt determine us *where* to fix the End of the *Weeks*, wherein the Events were to be accompliſhed: And if the End of theſe Weeks

and famous Propheſy ſtated and explained.

[q] Dan. ix. [r] Ibid. *ver.* 24, *&c.* [s] *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. v.

Weeks is to be fixed at the Death of Chriſt; then, 4thly, This will determine us where to place the Beginning of them, *viz.* 490 Years before; which is [t] the very Year and Month, wherein *Ezra* had his Commiſſion from *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, King of *Perſia*, for his returning to *Jeruſalem*, there to reſtore the Church and State of the *Jews*.

An Objection againſt this Explanation anſwered.

THE only Objection againſt this Computation is, "that the Words of the Pro-"pheſy ſeem to denote a *real* Building of the City, ſince it makes mention of its "*Streets* and *Walls*; whereas that Work was executed, upon the Decree granted by "*Cyrus*, ſeveral Years before *Ezra* was in Commiſſion." But this Objection will appear of little Force, if once it be conſidered, that *figurative* Expreſſions are in a Manner neceſſary in *Propheſies*, and that nothing is more common in Scripture, than, by *Jeruſalem* in particular, to mean the whole *Political* and *Eccleſiaſtical* State of that People. The Commiſſion itſelf however determines the Controverſy. For, if we look into it, we ſhall find, that the King gave *Ezra* full Power and Authority to reſtore the Law of *Moſes*, and fully re-eſtabliſh it both in Church and State; to appoint Magiſtrates and Judges; to govern the People according to it; and to puniſh all ſuch, as ſhould be refractory and diſobedient, either by Death, Baniſhment, Impriſonment, or Confiſcation of Goods, according to the Nature of their Crimes; which *is reſtoring and building* Jeruſalem in a *figurative* Senſe.

THERE is another Difficulty, obſervable in this Propheſy, which deſerves our Attention, and that is, the *Diviſion* of the *ſeventy* Weeks into three *diſtinct Periods*, *i. e.* into *ſeven* Weeks, *ſixty-two* Weeks, and *one* Week; to each of which a different Event is aſſigned. In the *ſeven* Weeks, or forty-nine Years, *from the going forth of the Commandment*, the Streets and Walls of *Jeruſalem*, *i. e.* the Reſtoration and Eſtabliſtment of the Church and State of the *Jews* is to be accompliſhed. In the *ſixty-two* Weeks, or 434 Years more, the *Meſſiah* is to come, and make his Appearance in the World; and in *one* Week, or ſeven Years after this, he is to *confirm a Covenant with many, and cauſe the Sacrifice and Oblation to ceaſe:* All which was literally fulfilled. For, in the Space of forty-nine Years, which anſwers to ſeven Weeks, the Reformation and Eſtabliſhment of the *Jewiſh* Church and State was carried on, and compleated; firſt by *Ezra*, in Virtue of a *Decree*, granted him in the ſeventh Year of *Artaxerxes*, and afterwards by *Nehemiah*, in Virtue of another, granted him by the ſame Prince, in the twentieth Year of his Reign. From that Time, in the Space of 434 Years, which anſwers to ſixty-two Weeks, our bleſſed Saviour appeared in the World as the *Meſſiah*, and for ſeven Years after that, firſt by his Forerunner *John the Baptiſt*, for the Space of three Years and a half; and then by himſelf in *Perſon*, for three Years and an half more, (which being put together make up the laſt *Week* in the Propheſy) he *confirmed the Covenant* of the Goſpel with as many of the *Jews*, as were converted, and embraced thoſe Laws of *everlaſting Righteouſneſs*, which he publiſhed: And, at length, by the Sacrifice of his moſt precious Blood, made all other Victims and Oblations, which were but *Types* and *Emblems* of his, for ever *ceaſe* and be aboliſhed.

AS to the other Part of the Propheſy, it relates ſo evidently to the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, that it needs no Explanation. Whoever has read *Joſephus* cannot but obſerve, that by the *Deſtruction of the City and Sanctuary by the People of the Prince, that was to come*, who, with their Armies, and *deſolating Abominations*, ſhould invade *Judea*, as *with a Flood*, and, by a terrible and conſuming War, bring utter Ruin and Deſolation upon it, and upon all the People of the *Jews*, that ſhould dwell therein, can be meant nothing, but *Titus*, at the Head of a *Roman* Army, executing the Wrath of God, for the Murther of his Son our Saviour, upon that devoted City and People, in ſuch a terrible and tragical Manner, as their Hiſtorian has related it. But to return.

Of the World, 3467, &c. Before Chriſt, 537, &c.

Cyrus's *Actions, and Decree for the Reſtoration of the* Jews.

AFTER the Death of *Darius the Mede*, *Cyrus*, who by the Death of his Father *Cambyſes*, was already become King of *Perſia*, returned to *Babylon*, and, taking upon him the Government of the [u] whole, was the firſt Founder of what was called the *Perſian* Empire. He was indeed a very extraordinary Perſon, in the Age wherein he lived, for Wiſdom, Virtue, and Valour. His aſſiſting his Uncle *Cyaxares*, and vanquiſhing

[t] Moſt learned Men agree, that the Death of Chriſt happened in the Year of the *Julian* Period 4746, and in the *Jewiſh* Month *Niſan*; and therefore, if we reckon 490 Years backward, this will lead us up to the Month *Niſan*, in the Year of the *Julian* Period 4256, which, according to *Ptolemy*'s Canon, was the ſeventh Year of *Artaxerxes*'s Reign, in which the Scripture tells us, [*Ezra* vii. 7.] that his Commiſſion was granted.

[u] *i. e.* Of all *Media*, *Perſia*, and *Aſſyria*.

vanquiſhing his Enemies, when the King of *Babylon* and other confederate Powers had conſpired his Ruin; his ſubduing *Cræſus*, King of *Lydia*, and afterward receiving him into his moſt *intimate* Counſels; and his taking the great City of *Babylon*, by draining the *Euphrates*, in a Manner almoſt incredible: Theſe, and many more of his *martial* Exploits, are recorded by the * Authors, that have enquired into his Life: But what makes him ſo famous in holy Writ is, his being appointed, by *Name*, to be the *Reſtorer* of the State of *Iſrael*, above an hundred and fifty Years before he was born. [x] The Propheſies relating to this Matter, *Joſephus* tells us, he had read, as, indeed, we find them recited [y] in the Decree for rebuilding the Temple. So good a Man as *Daniel*, who had the Reſtoration of his Brethren ſo much at Heart, and, in the Station he filled, ſo eaſy an Acceſs to this Prince, can hardly be ſuppoſed to be backward in employing the Credit and Intereſt, he had with him, to perſuade him to a Thing, ſo good in itſelf, and ſo highly conducive to his immortal Honour. But, whatever *ſecond Cauſes* might contribute hereunto, 'twas God's overruling Power, which turneth the Hearts of Princes which Way he pleaſes, that, in the firſt Year of his Monarchy over the *Eaſt*, put it in his Royal Breaſt to iſſue out a *Decree* for the rebuilding of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, and the Return of the *Jews* to their own Country. Whereupon he reſtored to them all the ſacred *Veſſels* and *Utenſils*, which had been brought to *Babylon* in the Reign of *Nebuchadnezzar*, and gave them all the farther Encouragement, that their Rulers could requeſt.

SECT. IV.

Occurrences after the Return of the Jews.

Of the World, 3468, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 536, &c.

WHEN the *Jews* were returned from their Captivity, under the Conduct of their chief Leaders, *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua*, they immediately ſet about the building of the Temple; [z] but the *Samaritans* coming, and offering their Aſſiſtance as well as to join with them in the ſame religious *Communion*, (which the *Jews*, for good Reaſons, thought fit to reject) they became their utter Enemies: And though they could not procure a *Revocation* of the Decree, which *Cyrus* had granted, yet, by Bribes and underhand Dealings with his Miniſters, they put ſuch *Obſtructions* to the Execution of it, that, for ſeveral Years, the Building went on but very ſlowly. Nay, the *Jews* themſelves, conſidering what a *poor* Figure the Temple, they were erecting, was like to make, in Compariſon of that *ſplendid* one, which *Solomon* had built, began to be dejected and deſpond; whereupon the Prophet † *Haggai* was ſent with this Meſſage of Encouragement: *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, I will ſhake all Nations, i. e.* I will ſtir up in all Nations, by Signs, by Propheſies, and by mighty Wonders, a general Expectation of the *Meſſiah*, and, *in the Fulneſs of Time*, will ſend him, who can anſwer all their Wants and Wiſhes; who will be a *Prophet* to *inſtruct* them, a *Prieſt* to make *Atonement*, and an *Advocate* to make *Interceſſion* for them; and may therefore deſervedly be ſtiled *the Deſire of all Nations: And I will fill this Houſe with Glory:* For, though the former Temple was very famous for many extraordinary Things, for the Ark of the Covenant, the *Urim* and *Thummim*, a vaſt Profuſion of Silver and Gold, and, above all, for the *angelical* Appearance on the Mercy-Seat; yet all theſe ſhall be nothing, in Compariſon of that Glory, which ſhall redound upon this preſent Temple, when this Divine Perſon ſhall vouchſafe to grace it with his Preſence, as he certainly ſhall do, during its ſtanding. In other Ornaments, ſaith the Lord, I could make the Splendor of this Temple, as well as

Haggai's *Prophecy expounded.*

* The two chief are *Herodotus* and *Xenophon*, whoſe Relations are very different. *Herodotus*'s Account of him contains Narratives, that are much more ſtrange and ſurprizing, and, conſequently, more diverting and acceptable to the Reader; and, for this Reaſon, more have choſen to follow him, than *Xenophon*. But, though *Xenophon* (as being a great *Commander*, as well as a great *Politician*) has certainly grafted many *Maxims* of War and Policy into his Hiſtory; yet, where nothing of this appears, I take him to be an Hiſtorian of much better Credit, in *Matters of Fact*, than *Herodotus*. *Herodotus*, having travelled through *Egypt*, *Syria*, and ſeveral other Countries, in order to the writing of his Hiſtory, did, as Travellers uſe to do, put down all Matters upon Truſt, and, in many, no Doubt, was impoſed on. But *Xenophon* was a Man of another Character: He wrote all Things with great Judgment, and due Conſideration; and, having lived in the Court of *Cyrus the Younger*, a Deſcendant of the *Cyrus* whom we now ſpeak of, had Opportunities of being better informed of what he wrote of this great Prince, than *Herodotus* was; and, confining himſelf to his Argument only, no Doubt he examined all Matters relating to it more thoroughly, and gave a more accurate and exact Account of them, than could be expected from the other, who wrote of all Things, at large, as they came in his Way. *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. ii.

[x] Iſa. xliv. 28. and xlv. 1. [y] Ezra i. 2. [z] Ibid. iv. † Chap. ii. *ver.* 6, &c.

Solomon's, conſiſt; for *Gold is mine, and Silver is mine*; but in this Particular I will have it diſtinguiſhed, that *in this Place I will give Peace*, that, during its ſtanding, *the Deſire of all Nations ſhall come*, upon whoſe Account, *the Glory of the latter Houſe ſhall be greater than that of the former*: Wherefore *be ſtrong, O* Zerubbabel, *ſaith the Lord, and be ſtrong, O* Joſhua, *Son of* Joſedech *the High-Prieſt, and be ſtrong all the People of the Land, ſaith the Lord, and work; for I am with you.*

Daniel's Death, Character, and Writings.

THIS was a very gracious Exhortation from God, but at this Time, perhaps, the more neceſſary, becauſe it is very probable, that, much about this Time, *Daniel* died, who, during his Life, was in great Favour with the ſeveral Princes he had the Honour to ſerve, and a powerful Advocate for his Countrymen the *Jews* [a]. He was (as we hinted before) a very extraordinary Perſon both in Wiſdom and Piety, and, for this Reaſon, was both favoured by God, and honoured by Men, beyond any that lived in his Time. His *Propheſies*, concerning the Coming of the *Meſſiah*, and other great Events, are ſo very clear and full, that [b] *Porphyry*, in his Objections againſt them, will have them to be written after the *Facts* were done; for, to him, they ſeemed to be rather a *Narration* of Matters already tranſacted, than a *Prediction* of Things to come. The *Jews*, indeed, think fit to place them only among their *Hagiographa*, becauſe, *ſay they*, he lived not in the *Prophetick* Manner of Life, but was converſant in Courts, and a *prime* Miniſter to the Kings of *Babylon*: And, though he might be vouchſafed ſome Divine Diſcoveries, yet they were but by *Dreams and Viſions of the Night*, which they account the moſt *imperfect*, and below the Prophetick Manner of Revelation. 'Tis to be obſerved, however, that [c] *Joſephus*, who was one of the ancienteſt Writers of that Nation, reckons him among the greateſt of the Prophets; telling us, that he had familiar Converſe with God, and not only foretold future Events, as other Prophets did, but determined the very *Time*, when they were to come to paſs. Our Saviour, we all know, gives him the Title of [d] a *Prophet*, though all Things, that go under his Name, muſt not be accounted *Canonical* Writings. The Book, wherein his Predictions are contained, is originally written in the *Chaldee* Language, *i. e.* from the fourth Verſe of the ſecond Chapter, to the End of the ſeventh, (for there he treats of *Babyloniſh* Affairs) but all the reſt is *Hebrew*. The *Song of the three Children*, and the Hiſtory of *Suſannah*, and of *Bel* and the *Dragon*, (tho' allowed by the Church of *Rome* to have the ſame Authority with the reſt of his Writings) are neither extant in the *Hebrew*, nor *Chaldee* Language; were never received into the Canon of Holy Writ by the *Jewiſh* Church; and are too manifeſtly the Work of ſome *Helleniſtical Jew*; becauſe, in the Hiſtory of *Suſannah*, *Daniel*, in his Replies to the Elders, [e] alludes to the *Greek* Names of the Trees, under which, they ſaid, the *Adultery*, wherewith they charged her, was committed, which Alluſions cannot hold good in any other Language.

The Death of Cyrus, *and Manner of it.*

NOT long after the Death of *Daniel*, the *Jews* had another great Loſs in the Death of *Cyrus*, their great Benefactor, after he had reigned, from his firſt taking on him the Command of the *Perſian* and *Median* Armies, thirty Years; from his taking of *Babylon*, nine Years; and from his being ſole Monarch of the *Eaſt*, ſeven Years: But, as to the Manner of his Death, there are different Accounts among Hiſtorians. Some tell us, that he loſt his Life in a Sea-fight with the People of *Samos*; others will have it, that, in a War with the *Scythians*, he was taken Priſoner, and had his Head cut off by their Queen *Thomyris*: But the moſt probable Opinion is, [f] that he died peaceably in his Bed, amidſt his Friends, and in his own Country. For, beſides, that it is by no Means likely, that ſo wiſe a Man, as *Cyrus* was, and in ſo advanced Years, as he then muſt be, ſhould engage in any *hazardous* Undertaking; we can hardly conceive, how his Son *Cambyſes* could have ſettled himſelf ſo eaſily in this new-erected Empire, held it in ſuch Quiet at home, and enlarged it with ſuch Conqueſts abroad, had not his Father left it to him in the utmoſt Tranquillity.

CAMBYSES's

[a] *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. iii. [b] *Hieronymus, in Præmio ad Comment. in Danielem.*
[c] Antiq. Lib. X. c. 12. [d] Matth. xxiv. 15. [e] Thus, in the Examination of the Elders, when one of them ſaid, that he ſaw the Adultery committed ὑπὸ σχῖνα, *i. e.* under a *Maſtich-Tree*. *Daniel* anſwers, in Alluſion to σχῖνον, *the Angels of God have received Sentence of God* σχίσαι σε μέσον, *i. e. to cut thee in two*; and, when the other Elder ſaid, that it was ὑπὸ πρῖνον, *i. e.* under an *Holm-Tree*, *Daniel* anſwers, in Alluſion to the Word πρῖνον, *the Angel of the Lord waiteth with the Sword* πρίσαι σε μέσον, *i. e. to cut thee in two*. *Prideaux*, ibid. [f] *Xenophon*'s *Cyropæd.* Lib. VIII. Beſides, all Authors agree, that *Cyrus* was buried at *Paſargada* in *Perſia*, where *Xenophon* ſaith he died, and where his Monument was ſtanding, in the Time of *Alexander*: But, had he been ſlain in *Scythia*, and his Body there mangled, by Way of Indignity, in ſuch a Manner, as *Herodotus* and *Juſtin* relate, how can we ſuppoſe it could ever have been brought thence out of the Hands of thoſe enraged Barbarians to be buried at *Paſargada*? *Prideaux*, ibid.

CAMBYSES's Reign however was not [g] long: And, when, after a ſhort [h] Uſurpation, *Darius Hyſtaſpes* came to be choſen King, and the *Jews*, who had been obſtructed before, began now to renew the Building of their Temple, the *Samaritans* betook themſelves again to their old malicious Practices; and, applying to *Tatnai*, whom *Darius* had made *Præfect*, or chief Governor of *Syria* and *Paleſtine*, they inſinuated, that the *Jews* proceeded herein without any Authority from the King. Of this *Tatnai* ſent Information to *Darius*, who, examining the *Imperial* Records, and finding, that, in the firſt Year of *Cyrus*, a Decree had been granted to the *Jews* to return and rebuild their Temple, (as he had lately married two of the Daughters of *Cyrus*, the better to fortify his Title to the Crown) thought it concerned him to do every Thing, that might tend to ſupport the Honour and Veneration due to the Memory of ſuch a Prince; and, accordingly, revoked the Decree which *Smerdis* the *Magian* (by *Ezra* called *Artaxerxes)* had made againſt building the Temple, and confirmed that, which *Cyrus* had granted ſome eighteen Years before: Whereupon the Building went on with Succeſs, and, in leſs than four Years more, was compleated. *The Temple finiſhed.*

THE reſt of the Acts of *Darius*, his War againſt the *Scythians*, wherein he had not ſo very good Succeſs; his Invaſion and Conqueſt of *Judea*, from whence he received a Tribute of [i] three hundred and ſixty Talents of Gold every Year; his long Engagement in War with the *Grecians*, which on both Sides was attended with various Succeſs; and, a little before his Death, his appointing his Son [k] *Xerxes* to be his Succeſſor; theſe, and many more Incidents of his Life, are ſo largely recorded by *Herodotus*, that to him we refer our Reader, and ſhall only take Notice of one remarkable Perſon, that, during his Reign, appeared in *Perſia*, *viz.* the famous Prophet of the *Magians*, whom the *Perſians* call *Zerduſht*, or *Zaratuſh*, and the *Greeks Zoroaſtres*. And, to this Purpoſe, we muſt obſerve, that all the Idolatry of the World was, at this Time, divided into two *Sects*; that of the *Sabians*, who firſt worſhipped the Planets, and then Images; and that of the *Magians*, who worſhipped Fire only. The *Magians* began firſt in *Perſia*, and made theſe the chief Articles of their Faith; —— "That there were two *Principles*, or Gods, the one, the Cauſe of "all *Good*, and the other the Cauſe of all *Evil*; that between theſe two there is a "continual Oppoſition, and ſo will be until the End of the World; but that then, "the *Good* God having overcome the *Evil*, they ſhould each of them have his "World to himſelf, the *Good* ruling over all the Good, and the *Evil* over all the "Wicked. They imagined, that *Darkneſs* was the trueſt Symbol of the Evil, as "*Light* was of the Good God, and therefore they always worſhipped him before Fire, "as being the Cauſe of Light; and eſpecially before the *Sun*, as being, in their "Opinion, the perfecteſt Fire, and cauſing the perfecteſt Light. But they always "hated Darkneſs, becauſe they thought it a Repreſentation of the Evil God, whom "they ever had in the utmoſt Deteſtation." This Sect was once in good Reputation; but, after the Uſurpation of *Smerdis*, they fell into great Contempt, and muſt have utterly been extinguiſhed, had not *Zoroaſtres* revived their Credit again. He was ſprung but from a very mean Parentage; by Birth and Education was very probably a *Jew*; *The Acts of* Darius. *The Principles of the* Magians. *An Account of* Zoroaſtres,

[g] He reigned but ſeven Years and five Months. [h] The Manner of which Uſurpation is thus related by moſt Hiſtorians. *Cambyſes* had an only Brother, whom *Herodotus* calls *Smerdis*, and *Juſtin*, *Mergis*, whom he, conceiving ſome Jealouſy of, cauſed to be murthered privately. He had, when he went upon the *Egyptian* Expedition, left the ſupreme Government of his Affairs in the Hands of *Patizithes*, one of the chief *Magians*, who likewiſe had a Brother, very much reſembling *Smerdis*, the Son of *Cyrus*, and, for that Reaſon perhaps, called by the ſame Name. *Patizithes*, hearing of the young Prince's Death, and ſuppoſing that the Extravagancies of *Cambyſes* had made him deteſted by his Subjects, placed this Brother of his on the Throne, pretending that he was the true *Smerdis*, the Son of *Cyrus*, and ſo ſent Heralds through the Empire to proclaim him King. It was the Cuſtom of the *Eaſtern* Kings, in thoſe Times, to live *retired* in their Palaces, and there tranſact all their Affairs by the Intercourſe of their *Eunuchs*, without admitting any elſe, unleſs thoſe of the higheſt Confidence, to have Acceſs to them. This Conduct the pretended *Smerdis* exactly obeyed: But *Otanes*, a noble *Perſian*, having a Daughter, who had been one of *Cambyſes*'s Wives, and was now kept by *Smerdis* in the ſame Quality, and being deſirous to know whether he was the real Son of *Cyrus* or no, ſent her Inſtructions, that, the firſt Night ſhe lay with him, ſhe ſhould feel, whether he had any Ears, (becauſe *Cambyſes*, for ſome Crime or other, had cut off this *Magian*'s Ears) and ſhe acquainting her Father, that he had none, immediately he took ſix others of the *Perſian* Nobility with him, and, entering the Palace, ſlew both the Uſurper and his Brother. *Prideaux*'s Connection, P. I. L. III.

[i] Which, according to the Number of the Days in the then *Perſian* Year, was a Talent every Day, and, according to the Standard of the *Euboic* Talent, amounted in the whole to one Million and ninety-five thouſand Pounds of our Money. *Prideaux*, ibid.

[k] *Darius* had three Sons by his firſt Wife, the Daughter of *Gobrias*, all born before his Advancement to the Throne; and four others by *Atoſſa*, the Daughter of *Cyrus*, who, having an abſolute Power over her Huſband's Inclinations, prevailed with him to ſettle the Succeſſion upon her Son. This however bred no ill Blood between two Brothers; for *Artabaſanes* (ſo was the Elder named) chearfully ſubmitted to his Brother's Government, and at laſt died in his Service, as he was fighting for him in the *Grecian* War; an Example very rarely to be met with, where ſo great a Prize as a Crown is at Stake. *Prideaux*, ibid.

a *Jew*; and, as ſome ſuppoſe, the Servant of the Prophet *Daniel*, becauſe he was certainly a Man of great Learning, and thoroughly acquainted with the Books of *Moſes*. As ſoon as he took upon him the *Prophetick* Office, he retired into a Cave, and there lived a long Time as a *Recluſe*, pretending to be abſtracted from all worldly Conſiderations, and to be given wholly to Prayer, and divine Meditations. In this Retirement he compoſed [l] the Book wherein all his pretended Revelations are contained. [m] The firſt Part of it conſiſts of a *Liturgy*, which the *Magians*, in all their *Oratories* and *Fire-Temples*, make uſe of to this Day. The reſt is an *hiſtorical Account* of the Life, Actions, and Propheſies of its Author, the ſeveral Branches and Articles of his Superſtition, together with Rules and Exhortations to Morality, wherein he is very preſſing and exact, except in allowing of *Inceſt*: And the whole, being interſperſed with ſeveral Things, taken out of the *Old Teſtament*, abundantly ſhews that his Original was from the *Jews*. Upon leaving his Retirement, he went into *India* among the *Brachmans*, where having learned all their Knowledge in *Mathematicks*, *Aſtronomy*, and *Natural Philoſophy*, he came back, and taught his Diſciples theſe Sciences, which gained them ſo great a Reputation, that, for many Years after, a *Learned* Man and a *Magician* became equivalent Terms. Nay, he pretended, that, once upon a Time, he was taken up into Heaven, to be inſtructed in thoſe Doctrines, which he was to deliver unto Men; that there he heard God ſpeak out of the Midſt of a great and bright Flame of Fire; and, for this Reaſon, he taught his Followers, that Fire was the trueſt *Repreſentation* of the Divine Preſence, and the *Sun* (as the moſt perfect Fire) the more immediate *Throne* of his Glory; that, of the Fire, from whence God ſpake, he, upon his Return, brought ſome with him, and placed it on the Altar of the firſt *Fire-Temple*, that he erected; from whence, as they ſay, it was propagated to all the reſt: And this is the Reaſon, they give, for keeping it ſo carefully, and treating it with ſo much Superſtition.

and his Tenets. HAVING thus qualified himſelf to be a Prophet, he made his firſt Appearance in *Media*, in the City of *Ziz*, ſay ſome, or in *Ecbatana*, now *Tauris*, according to others; where the principal Doctrines that he profeſſed (as a *Refinement* upon what the old *Magians* maintained) were theſe—— "That there was one ſupreme Being, "independent, and ſelf-exiſting from all Eternity; that, under him, there were "two Angels, one the Angel of *Light*, who is the Author and Director of all *Good*; "and the other the Angel of *Darkneſs*, who is the Author and Director of all *Evil*; "and that theſe two, out of the Mixture of Light and Darkneſs, made all Things; "that they are in perpetual Struggle with each other, and that, where the Angel of "Light prevails, there the moſt is good; where the Angel of Darkneſs, there the "moſt is evil; that this Struggle ſhall continue unto the End of the World, when "there ſhall be a general Reſurrection, a Day of Judgment, and a Retribution to "every one according to his Works; after which, the Angel of Darkneſs and his "Diſciples ſhall go into a World of their own, where they ſhall ſuffer, in everlaſting "Darkneſs, the Puniſhments of their evil Deeds; and the Angel of Light and his "Diſciples ſhall go alſo into a World of their own, where they ſhall receive, in "everlaſting Light, the Reward due unto their good Deeds; whereupon they ſhall "remain ſeparated for ever, and Light and Darkneſs be no more mixed together "to all Eternity:" And all this the Remainder of that Sect, which is now in *Perſia* and *India*, do, after ſo many Ages, ſtill hold, without any Variation, even to this Day.

His Actions, and violent Death. AFTER *Zoroaſtres* had acted the Part of a Prophet in *Media*, and there ſettled all Things according to his Intentions, he removed from thence into *Bactria*, the moſt *Eaſtern* Province of *Perſia*, and there ſettling in the City of *Balch*, which lies on the River *Oxus* in the Confines of *Perſia*, under the Protection of *Hyſtaſpes*, the Father of *Darius*, he ſoon ſpread his Impoſture through all that Province with great Succeſs. From *Bactria* he went next to the Royal Court at *Suſa*, where he managed his Pretenſions with ſo much Addreſs and Inſinuation, that he made *Darius* likewiſe a *Proſelyte*; and, from his Example, drew over the Courtiers, Nobility, and great Men of that City, into the ſame Profeſſion. But when, upon his Return into *Balch*, he attempted the like upon *Argaſp*, King of the *Oriental Scythians*, (who was a zealous *Sabian*) and pretended an Authority from *Darius* to that Purpoſe, the *Scythian* Prince reſented

[l] This Book is called *Zendaveſta*, and by Contraction *Zend*, which ſignifies a *Fire-kindler*, ſuch as a Tinder-box is with us; and this *fantaſtical* Name the Impoſtor gave it, becauſe, as he pretended, all, that would read this Book, and meditate thereon, might from thence kindle in their Hearts the Fire of all true Love for God, and his holy Religion. *Prideaux*'s Connection, P. I. L. III. [m] Ibid. L. IV.

reſented it with ſuch Indignation, that he invaded *Bactria* with an Army, and, having there defeated the Forces, that oppoſed him, ſlew *Zoroaſtres*, with all the Prieſts of his *Patriarchal* Church, which amounted to the Number of eighty Perſons, and demoliſhed all the *Fire-Temples* in the Province; but it was not long, before *Darius* fell upon him, and revenged the Injury.

Of the World, 3522, &c. *Before Chriſt,* 482, &c.

Darius's *Character.*

DARIUS was a Prince of great Wiſdom, Clemency, and Juſtice, and hath the Honour to have [n] his Name recorded in Holy Writ, for a Favourer of God's People, a Reſtorer of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, and a Promoter of his Worſhip therein, for all which God was pleaſed to make him his Inſtrument; and therefore I make no Doubt, but that, upon this Account, he bleſſed him with a numerous Iſſue, a long Reign, and great Proſperity. He was ſucceeded by his Son *Xerxes*, of whom the Prophet *Daniel* gives this Account: [o] *There ſhall ſtand up three Kings in Perſia, (viz. Cyrus, Cambyſes*, and *Darius Hyſtaſpes) and the Fourth ſhall be far richer than they; and by his Strength, through his Riches, he ſhall ſtir up all againſt the Realm of Grecia.* His prodigious Expedition into *Greece*, and almoſt innumerable Number of Forces; his Paſſage of the *Helleſpont* over a Bridge made of Boats, and, for ſome Time, carrying all before him like a Torrent; the Reſiſtance, that his Army met with at *Thermopylæ*, from an Handful of Men, commanded by the gallant *Leonidas*; the Defeat of his Fleet, at the Streights of *Salamis*, and the Overthrow of his Confederates, at the Iſle of *Sicily*; his Loſs of the great Battle at *Platæa*, and, [p] on the ſame Day, his Loſs of another at *Mycale*, ſo that his vaſt Army, which, but a Year before, marched ſo proudly over the *Helleſpont*, was now in a Manner totally deſtroyed; after theſe Defeats, his precipitate Flight into his own Country; his plundering the Temples of *Greece* and *Babylon*, to repair the Loſſes of this *expenſive* War; his *inceſtuous* Attempt upon his Brother's Wife, and, at length, moſt inhuman Murther of him and all his Family; his giving himſelf up to Eaſe and Pleaſures, Luſt and Luxury, whereby he became contemptible to his Subjects; and fell at laſt a Sacrifice by the Hand of the Captain of his Guards: Theſe, and many more Paſſages of the like Nature, are ſo fully related by *Herodotus*, *Diodorus Siculus*, and *Plutarch*, in the Lives of thoſe *Grecians* that were employed againſt him, that to them I muſt refer my Reader; and ſhall only obſerve, that, upon the Death of this Prince, *Artaxerxes Longimanus* (who in the Book of *Eſther* is called *Ahaſuerus*) having cut off his Father's Murtherers, and vanquiſhed his Brother *Hyſtaſpes*, and ſettled himſelf in the quiet Poſſeſſion of the whole *Perſian* Empire, [q] appointed a ſolemn Rejoicing, on that Account, to be continued for *an hundred and fourſcore Days*; at the End of which he made a great Feaſt for all his Princes and People, that were at *Suſa*, for ſeven Days. On the ſeventh Day *(his Heart being merry with Wine)* he ſent for his Queen, that he might ſhew to the Princes and People her Beauty; but, upon her refuſing to come, he for ever repudiated her; and, in a ſhort Time, made choice of [r] *Eſther*, the Niece of *Mordecai* the *Jew*, to be his Queen. And 'tis to her Sollicitation we muſt impute it, that his Favour and Kindneſs to the *Jews* was ſo extraordinary, as to grant Appointments out of his Treaſures for the Service of the Temple, and to ſend *Ezra*, a very learned and religious Man, with ſo full and ample a Commiſſion to *Jeruſalem*, in order to reſtore the State, and reform the Church of the *Jews*; to correct all Abuſes in both, and regulate and govern them according to their Laws.

Xerxes's *Actions.*

Of the World, 3531, &c. *Before Chriſt,* 473, &c.

Ezra's *Commiſſion from* Ahaſuerus.

[n] *Ezra* v. and in the Propheſies of *Haggai* and *Zachariah*.

[o] Dan. xi. 2, 3.

[p] The Battle of *Platæa* was fought in the Morning, and that of *Mycale* in the Afternoon of the ſame Day; yet it is commonly ſaid by the *Greek* Writers, that they had an Account of the Victory of *Platæa* at *Mycale*, before they began the Battle there, though the whole *Ægean* Sea (which was ſeveral Days ſailing) lay between. But *Diodorus Siculus* (Lib. XI.) clears this Matter: For he tells us, that *Leotycides*, finding the Forces, that followed him, in great Pain for the *Greeks* at *Platæa*, leſt they ſhould be over-powered and vanquiſhed by the numerous Army of *Mardonius*; the better to encourage and hearten his Men for the Battle, juſt before he made the firſt Onſet, he cauſed it to be given out, through all the Army, that the *Perſians* were defeated, though he knew nothing of the Matter. But what he then feigned, happened to be true, and done likewiſe on the ſame Day; this gave Occaſion for what is ſaid of that quick Intelligence, which was utterly impoſſible to have come, in ſo ſhort a Time, from ſo diſtant a Place by any human Means; and to ſuppoſe a Miracle in this Caſe, there is no Reaſon. *Prideaux*'s Connection, P. I. L. IV.

[q] Eſther i. 3, &c.

[r] This is her *Perſian* Name, the Senſe of which is not known: Her *Jewiſh* Name was *Hadaſſah*. *Prideaux*, ibid.

CHAP. VII.

The moſt memorable Tranſactions from the End of the Captivity, to the Coming of CHRIST.

Of the World, 3667, &c. Before Chriſt, 337, &c.

AFTER the Return of the *Jews* from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity there was one great Abuſe crept in among them, which *Ezra* at firſt, and after him *Nehemiah*, endeavoured to reform. [a] Their Law ſtrictly forbad them to make *Intermarriages* with any foreign Nations, either by giving their Daughters to them for Wives, or by taking their Daughters to themſelves: But, ſince their Return, People of all Conditions had paid ſo little Regard to this Command, that even the *Pontifical* Houſe, which, of all others ought to have ſet a better Example, was become *polluted* with ſuch impure Mixtures.

The Temple of Samaria, *and* Manaſſeh's *Schiſm.*

[b] *Joiada* was then High-Prieſt, and one of his Sons (whom *Joſephus* calls *Manaſſeh*) having married *Nicaſo*, the Daughter of *Sanballat*, and, by the Elders of *Jeruſalem* being ordered, either to diſmiſs his Wife, or depart the Country, fled to *Samaria*, with many others, that were in the like Circumſtances, and there ſettled under the Protection of his Father-in-law, who was Governor of the Place. Upon this Occaſion, *Sanballat* applied to [c] *Darius*, who had all thoſe Parts *then* under his Dominion, and ſo far inſinuated himſelf into his Favour, as to obtain a Grant for building a Temple on Mount *Gerizim* near *Samaria*, and for making *Manaſſeh*, his Son-in-law, High-Prieſt of it. The *Samaritans* originally were the *Cutheans*, and ſuch other of the *Eaſtern* Nations, as *Eſerhaddud*, upon the Deportation of the *Iſraelites*, planted there; but after this Temple was built, and *Samaria* became a common Refuge and *Aſylum* to all refractory *Jews*, this Mixture of Inhabitans, in a ſhort Time, produced a Change in Religion: For whereas theſe *Samaritans* had hitherto worſhipped the God of *Iſrael* in Conjunction with the Gods of the *Eaſt*, from whence they came, when once the *Jewiſh* Worſhip came to be ſettled, and the Book of the Law of *Moſes* to be read publickly, they conformed themſelves wholly to the Worſhip of the true God, and, in their Performance of it, were as exact, as the *Jews* themſelves. The *Jews* however, looking on them as *Apoſtates*, hated them to ſuch a Degree, as to avoid all Manner of Converſe and Communication with them.

The Hatred between the Jews *and* Samaritans.

[d] Their Hatred firſt began, from the Oppoſition, the *Samaritans* made againſt them, at their Return from the Captivity, both in their Rebuilding of the Temple, and their Reparation of the Walls of *Jeruſalem*. It was afterwards much increaſed by this *Apoſtacy* of *Manaſſeh*, and thoſe that joined with him in it, and by their erecting an Altar and Temple, in Oppoſition to that at *Jeruſalem*; and it was all along kept up, [e] on Account of their differing in ſome Points of Religion, with the utmoſt Rancour and Malice, even to the Time of our Saviour's Coming; for this is the Ground of the *Samaritan* Woman's aſking our Saviour, [f] *How is it, that thou, being a Jew, aſkeſt Drink of me, who am a Woman of Samaria? For the Jews* (as the ſacred Hiſtorian has obſerved) *have no Dealings with the Samaritans.*

THE

[a] *Prideaux*'s Connection, P. I. L. VI. [b] Some Authors will have it, that he was the Brother of *Jaddus* the High-Prieſt, and Colleague with him in that Office. [c] Not to *Alexander*, as ſome Hiſtorians will have it, for this Tranſaction was prior to *Alexander*'s coming into theſe Parts. *Prideaux*, ibid.

[d] *Prideaux*, ibid. [e] The Particulars, wherein the *Samaritans* differ from the *Jews*, are chiefly theſe, 1. That the *Samaritans* receive no other Scriptures, than the five Books of *Moſes*, rejecting all the other Books, that are in the *Jewiſh* Canon. 2. That they diſallow of all Traditions, and adhere only to the written Word. 3. That they aſſert and maintain, that Mount *Gerizim*, whereon their Temple was built, was the only proper Place for the Worſhip of God, becauſe there *Abraham*, (Gen. xii. 6, 7.) and there *Jacob* (Gen. xxxiii. 20.) built Altars unto God; and, by offering up Sacrifices on them, conſecrated that Place in a peculiar Manner: And to this the Woman of *Samaria*, in her Diſcourſe with our Saviour, alludes: *Our Fathers worſhipped in this Mountain, but ye* (meaning the *Jews*) *ſay, that in Jeruſalem is the Place, where Men ought to worſhip*, John iv. 20. The Temple of *Gerizim* is ſaid to have ſtood about two hundred Years, and though it was then deſtroyed by *Hircanus*, one of the *Maccabees*; yet the *Samaritans* ſtill continued their Worſhip and Sacrifices, on the Mountain where their Temple had been. [f] John iv. 9.

Of the World, 3672, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 332, &c.

THE *Jews*, for ſome time, after their Return from the Captivity, were governed by their own Laws, and practiſed their own Religion, under the Adminiſtration of the *High-Prieſt*, aſſiſted by the *Sanhedrim*; but remained ſtill ſubject to the Dominion of the *Perſians*, as long as that *Empire* laſted. When *Alexander the Great* had given *Darius* a Defeat, and was now ſet down before *Tyre*, he ſent out his Commiſſaries, requiring the Inhabitants of *Judea* to ſubmit to him, and to furniſh him with all Neceſſaries, for the Support of his Army. The *Jews* pleaded, for themſelves, their Oath to *Darius*, whereby they thought themſelves obliged to own no new Maſter; and therefore, as long as he lived, they could not obey his Commands. But *Alexander*, fluſh'd with his late Succeſs, could bear no ſuch Contradiction: And therefore, as ſoon as he had done with *Tyre*, he reſolved to march immediately againſt *Jeruſalem*, and to puniſh the *Jews* as ſeverely, as he had done the *Tyrians*, for not obeying his Injunctions. While he was on his Way, breathing out Revenge againſt the People of God, *Jaddua* the High-Prieſt, and all *Jeruſalem* with him, were in great Perplexity; but, having nothing to truſt to but God's Protection, they made their Addreſſes to him with Sacrifices, Oblations, and Prayers; whereupon, being moved with Compaſſion towards them, he directed *Jaddua*, in a Viſion of the Night, to go out, and meet the *Conqueror*, in his *Pontifical* Robes, with the Prieſts, in their proper Habits, attending him, and all the Inhabitants of the City, in white Garments. *Jaddua*, next Day, with the Prieſts and People, habited as the Viſion directed, went out of the City to a certain Eminence, called *Sapha*, which commanded the Proſpect of all the Country round, and there waited the Coming of *Alexander*. As ſoon as the High-Prieſt ſaw him coming, he moved forward in this ſolemn Pomp; which ſtruck the King with ſuch an Awe, that, as he drew near, he bowed down to him, and ſaluted him with a religious Veneration, to the great Surprize of all, that attended him. While every one ſtood amazed at this Behaviour, *Parmenio* took the Freedom to aſk him, How it came to paſs, that he, whom all Mankind adored, paid ſuch Adoration to the *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt? To which his Anſwer was, "That he did not "pay ſuch Adoration to him, but to the God, whoſe Prieſt he was; that, while he "was at *Dio* in *Macedonia*, and deliberating with himſelf, how to carry on the War "againſt *Perſia*, this very Perſon, and in this very Habit, appeared to him in a Dream, "encouraging him to paſs boldly over into *Aſia*, and not to doubt of Succeſs, for "that God would be his Guide in the Expedition, and give him the Empire of the "*Perſians*; and that therefore from hence he was aſſured, he made the preſent War "under the Conduct of that God, to whom, in the Perſon of the Prieſt, he paid his "Adoration:" And hereupon turning to *Jaddua* again, he kindly embraced him, and ſo, going into *Jeruſalem* with him, offered Sacrifices to God in the Temple; where the High-Prieſt ſhewed him [g] the Propheſies of *Daniel*, predicting the Overthrow of the *Perſian* Empire by a *Grecian* King. This pleaſed *Alexander* much, ſo that he returned highly ſatisfied, and full of Aſſurance of Succeſs; leaving behind him great *Immunities* to the People, the Freedom of their Country, Laws, and Religion, and an Exemption, every ſeventh Year, from paying any Tribute, becauſe, in that Year, according to their Law, they are not permitted to till the Ground.

Alexander the Great's *coming to* Jeruſalem,

treats the High-Prieſt and People very kindly.

Of the World, 3681, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 323, &c.

[h] UPON the Death of *Alexander*, the vaſt Empire which he had acquired was divided among his four Generals; whereof *Syria*, *Phœnicia*, and *Judea* fell to *Laomedon*'s Share. But *Ptolemy*, Son of *Lagus*, ſirnamed *Soter*, having got *Egypt*, and (for the Security and Defence thereof) coveting to make himſelf Maſter of *Laomedon*'s Countries, offered him, at firſt, vaſt Sums of Money for them; but, not prevailing that Way, he ſent *Nicanor*, one of his Captains, with an Army into *Syria*, while himſelf, with a Fleet, invaded *Phœnicia*; and ſo, having vanquiſhed *Laomedon* and taken him Priſoner, he made himſelf Maſter of theſe Provinces. The *Jews*, however, for ſome Time, ſtood out againſt him, and, upon Account of the Oath, they had taken to the former Governor, refuſed to ſubmit. Whereupon he marched into *Judea*, and, having got Poſſeſſion of moſt of the Country, laid Siege to *Jeruſalem*. The Place was ſtrong enough both by Nature and Art, to have made a conſiderable

Jeruſalem *made ſubject to* Egypt.

[g] *Viz.* What is written of the *Ram* and *He-goat*, (*Dan.* viii.) where the He-goat is interpreted to be the King of *Grecia*, who ſhould conquer the *Medes* and *Perſians*, (ver. 21.) and alſo, what is written by the ſame Prophet of the ſaid *Grecian* King; [Ch. xi. 3.] for both theſe Propheſies foretold the Deſtruction of the *Perſian* Empire by a *Grecian* King. *Prideaux*'s Connect. [h] Some Authors are of Opinion, that he died of Poiſon, but the true Account of the Matter is this——That, having ſet out one long Drinking-bout, he was immediately invited to another; at which, there being twenty in Company, he drank to every one of them in their Order, and pledged each of them again; and then calling for the *Herculean* Cup (which held ſix Quarts in our Meaſure) he drank it full to *Proteas*, a *Macedonian*, and not long after pledged him again in the ſame: Whereupon he dropped down upon the Place, and then fell into the violent Fever, of which he died. *Prideaux*, ibid.

ſiderable Defence againſt him; but that the *Jews* had then ſuch a ſuperſtitious Notion for the keeping of their *Sabbath*, that they thought it a Breach of their Law, even to defend themſelves on it; which when *Ptolemy* underſtood, he made choice of that Day to ſtorm the Place, and in the Aſſault took it, becauſe there were none, that would defend the Walls againſt him. At firſt he dealt very hardly with the Inhabitants, and carried above an hundred Thouſand of them Captives into *Egypt*; but, afterwards, conſidering how faithful they had been to their former Governors, he employed many of them in his Army and Garriſons, and granted them all large Immunities and Privileges: And thus the whole Nation of the *Jews* was made ſubject to the Power and Dominion of the Kings of *Egypt*.

Of the World, 3727, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 277, &c.

PTOLEMY Philadelphus, Son and Succeſſor to *Ptolemy Soter*, being very intent on making a great Library at *Alexandria*, and, deſirous of getting all Manner of Books into it, committed the Care of that Matter to *Demetrius Phalereus*, a noble *Athenian*, then living at his Court. [1] Purſuant to the King's Orders, *Demetrius* made ſearch every where; and being informed, that, among the *Jews*, there was a Book of great Note, called, *The Law of Moſes*, he acquainted the King with it; who, ſignifying his Pleaſure to have it ſent for from *Jeruſalem*, and *Interpreters*, from the ſame Place, to render it into *Greek*, was put in Mind, that it would be in vain to expect from the *Jews* either a true Copy of their Law, or a faithful *Tranſlation* of it, ſo long as he kept ſo many of their Countrymen in Slavery; and therefore it was propoſed to him, firſt to releaſe all the *Jews*, who, at different Invaſions, had been brought away by his Father, and then to ſend to *Jeruſalem* about this Matter. The King approved of the Propoſal; and accordingly publiſhed a Decree for the Releaſe of all the *Jewiſh* Captives in *Egypt*, and ordered a vaſt Sum of Money to be iſſued out of the Treaſury, for the Payment of thoſe, that had them in Servitude, as the Price of their *Redemption*. When this was done, a Letter was written, in the King's Name, to *Eleazar*, the High-Prieſt, requeſting him to ſend the Book, and with it ſix Elders out of every Tribe, (ſuch as he ſhould judge moſt competent for the Work) to tranſlate it into *Greek*. The Meſſengers, that were ſent upon this Errand, carried with them many rich Preſents for the Temple; and, coming to *Jeruſalem*, were, with great Honour and Reſpect, received both by the High-Prieſt, and all the People; and, having received a Copy of the Law of *Moſes*, all written in *golden* Letters, and ſix Elders, out of every Tribe, (*i. e.* ſeventy-two in all) to make a Verſion of it into the *Greek* Language, they returned with them to *Alexandria*. Upon their Arrival, the King, calling theſe Elders to his Court, propoſed to each of them a Queſtion; and finding, by their Anſwers, their Learning and Abilities, he ſent them into *Pharus*, (an Iſland joining to *Alexandria)* to an Houſe appointed for that Purpoſe, where they immediately betook themſelves to the Buſineſs of Tranſlation. As they agreed in the Verſion of each Period, *Demetrius* wrote it down: So that, in the Space of ſeventy-two Days, the whole Work was compleated, and afterwards repoſited in the King's Library; who, for the Reward of their Labour, gave each Interpreter three rich Garments, two Talents in Gold, a Cup of Gold of a Talent Weight, and ſo ſent them home to their own Country.

The Verſion of the Septuagint.

Of the World, 3828, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 176, &c.

AFTER the *Jews* had been, about an hundred Years, ſubject to *Egypt*, there happened a War between *Ptolemy Epiphanes*, King of *Egypt*, and *Antiochus the Great*, King of *Syria*; wherein the *Jews*, whoſe Country lay between the two Kingdoms, like a *Ship* toſs'd in a Storm, which is batter'd and daſh'd between two *Billows*, ſuffered very much; till at length, *Antiochus* getting the better, the *Jews* ſubmitted to him; and, receiving him, with his Army, into their City, aſſiſted him in the Recovery of the *Citadel*, which was then held by a Garriſon of *Ptolemy*'s Army. *Seleucus Philopater*, who ſucceeded his Father *Antiochus* in the Kingdom of *Syria*, at firſt favoured the *Jews*, and ſupplied them with all Things, for the Service of the Temple,

Judea *becomes ſubject to* Syria.

[1] This is the Account of the Affair, as we have it in a Book, ſtill extant under the Name of *Ariſteas*; but the learned Author, [Dr *Prideaux*] from whom we have extracted it, for very good Reaſons, that he gives, (Page ii. lib. 1.) ſeems to diſtruſt the *Genuineneſs* of that Book. He allows however, that there was a Tranſlation of the *Hebrew Pentateuch* into *Greek*, made in the Time, very probably, of *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, but ſeems to aſſert, that the true Cauſe of that Tranſlation was for the Uſe of the *Jews*, then inhabiting *Alexandria*, who, by mixing with other Nations, had forgot their own Language, and underſtood *Greek* only; that, at firſt, the Law was only tranſlated, but afterwards, when the Prophets came to be read in the Synagogues of *Judea*, in the Time of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, the *Jews* of *Alexandria*, following their Example, were induced to do the ſame; which occaſioned the Tranſlation of the Prophets likewiſe: That *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, as ſoon as the *Greek* Verſion was made at *Alexandria*, had, no doubt, a Copy of it put into his *Library*, which Copy continued there, but without any great Notice taken of it, until that noble Repoſitory of Learning, containing four hundred thouſand Volumes, was accidentally burnt by *Julius Cæſar*, in his Wars againſt the *Alexandrians*, 47 Years before Chriſt.

Temple, at his own Expence. [k] But being, ſome Time after, informed by one *Simon*, a *Benjamite*, that there were great Riches in the Temple, he ſent his Treaſurer [l] *Heliodorus* to make a Seizure of them, and bring them to *Antioch*: But *Heliodorus*, going into the Temple for that Purpoſe, and entering into the ſacred Treaſury, was ſtopped, in his Attempt, by an Apparition of Angels, armed, as it were, to defend the Place againſt his ſacrilegious Hands. For theſe are the Words, wherein the Hiſtory of the *Maccabees* relates the Matter: [m] *There appeared unto him an Horſe, with a terrible Rider upon him, and adorned with a very fair Covering, and he ran fiercely, and ſmote at him with his Fore-feet, and he, that ſat upon the Horſe, ſeemed to have compleat Harneſs of Gold. Moreover, two other Men appeared before him, notable in Strength, excellent in Beauty, and comely in Apparel, who ſtood by him on either Side, ſcourging him continually, and giving him many ſore Stripes*, inſomuch that he fell to the Ground; but being taken up by thoſe that attended him, and carried off in a *Litter*, he continued ſpeechleſs, and without all Hope of Life for ſome Time, till, at the Interceſſion of his Friends, the High-Prieſt prayed to God for him, and ſo he recovered.

Heliodorus *hindered, by an Apparition, from plundering the Temple.*

NOT long after this, *Heliodorus*, aſpiring at the Crown, murthered his Maſter *Seleucus*, in Hopes of ſucceeding him; but *Eumenes* and *Attalus*, Kings of *Pergamus*, obſtructed his Deſign, and placed *Antiochus Epiphanes*, Son to *Antiochus the Great*, upon the *Syrian* Throne, who proved a terrible Enemy and Perſecutor of the *Jews*. For when, upon a falſe Rumour of his Death, the People of *Jeruſalem* (as he was informed) had made great *Rejoicings*, he was ſo provoked at it, that immediately marching into *Judea*, and taking *Jeruſalem* by Force, he ſlew of the Inhabitants, in three Days Time, forty thouſand Perſons, and taking as many Captives, ſold them for Slaves to the neighbouring Nations. Nor did this ſatisfy his Rage, for he afterwards forced himſelf both into the *Holy-Place*, and alſo into the *Holy of Holies*; ſacrificed a great *Sow* upon the Altar of Burnt-Offerings; cauſed the *Broth*, which was made of ſome Part of the Fleſh, to be ſprinkled all over the Temple, to pollute it as much as poſſible; and, having done this, he took away the Altar of Incenſe, the Shew-bread Table, the Candleſtick of ſeven Branches, and ſeveral other Golden Veſſels, Utenſils, and Donatives of former Kings, to the Value of eighteen hundred Talents of Gold; and making the like Plunder in the City, he returned to *Antioch*, leaving behind him *Philip*, a *Phrygian*, a Man of a cruel and barbarous Temper, to be Governor of *Judea*, and *Andronicus*, another of the like Diſpoſition, to be Governor of *Samaria*.

Antiochus Epiphanes *perſecutes the* Jews.

BUT this was but the *Beginning of Sorrows*. About two Years after, he ſent *Apollonius*, one of his Generals, with an Army of two and twenty thouſand Men, and an expreſs Order to kill all the Men, that remained in *Jeruſalem*, and to ſell the Women and Children for Slaves. On his firſt Arrival, *Apollonius* carried himſelf peaceably, concealing his Intent, and forbearing all Hoſtilities, till the Return of the *Sabbath*, when he put his bloody Commiſſion in Execution; for, falling upon the City, while the People were at their Devotion, he maſſacred many of the Inhabitants, plundered the Place, led away the Women and Children Captives, and forced the few, that eſcaped, to flee to the Caves and Deſarts for Shelter. Nor was this all; for, in a ſhort Time after, he iſſued out a *Decree*, commanding all Nations to leave their former Rites and Uſages, and to conform to the Religion of the King; which, however expreſſed in general Terms, was chiefly deſigned againſt the *Jews*. The Officer, who was ſent to ſee this Decree put in Execution, was one *Athenæus*, a Man well verſed in all the Rites of the *Grecian* Idolatry, and therefore thought a proper Perſon to *initiate* the People into the Obſervance of them. On his Coming to *Jeruſalem*, all Sacrifices to the God of *Iſrael* were made to ceaſe, and all the Rites of the *Jewiſh* Religion ſuppreſſed. The Temple itſelf was polluted, being dedicated to *Jupiter Olympius*, (whoſe Image was ſet up on the Altar of *Holocauſt*) and all the People, upon Pain of Death, were obliged to ſacrifice to it. Thoſe, who met in Caves to keep the *Sabbath*, if they happened to be diſcovered, were burnt; the Book of the Law was caſt into the Fire; the *Circumciſing* of Infants was forbid, and Women, accuſed of having circumciſed their Children, were led publickly about the City, with their Infants hanging at their Breaſts, and then caſt headlong from the Walls. In ſhort, no Manner of Cruelty was omitted to compel the *Jews* to abandon their Religion; and 'tis to their Perſecution, at this Time, that the Author to the *Hebrews* chiefly alludes, when he tells us, that ſome [n] *were tortured, not accepting De-*

[k] 2 Maccab. iv. [l] He, who gave Information to *Seleucus*, is, by *Joſephus*, called *Apollonius*; but this is a Miſtake; for *Apollonius* was the Governor of *Cœlo-Syria* and *Paleſtine*. *Prideaux*'s Connection. [m] 2 Maccab. iii. 25, &c. [n] Heb. xi. 35.

liverance, that they might receive a better Reſurrection; that *others had Trial of cruel Mockings and Scourgings, yea, moreover, of Bonds and Impriſonment. They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder,* ° *were ſcorched to Death, were ſlain with the Sword. They wandered about in Sheep-ſkins and Goat-ſkins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented. They wandered in Deſerts, and in Mountains, and in Dens and Caves of the Earth.*

Some principal Martyrs.

IN this terrible Perſecution, ſome of thoſe wretched People yielded to *Violence*, but many choſe rather to die, than forſake the Law of their God. Among the latter Sort, thoſe of the moſt memorable Note were *Eleazar*, a prime Doctor of the Law, and that Heroine *Solomona*, and her ſeven Sons. *Eleazar* was a very aged Man; yet when his Perſecutors would have compelled him to eat Swine's Fleſh, (which they forced into his Mouth) he ſpit it out; and even when ſome, in Pity to his Age, would have given him Leave to *elude* the Sentence, by taking a Piece of any other Fleſh, and eating it as Swine's Fleſh, he ſcorned to purchaſe his Life at ſo *ſordid* a Rate, deſiring them to diſpatch him, rather than let him be guilty of *Diſſimulation*, and ſtain the Honour of his grey Hairs with ſo mean an Act. Nor were the ſeven Brothers, and their Mother, inferior to him in a religious Courage and Magnanimity: For, being put to the moſt exquiſite Tortures to oblige them to renounce their Religion, they, with a wonderful Conſtancy, endured all that the Rage of their Perſecutors could invent, and, *through a Sea of Blood and Torments*, (as ᵖ one expreſſes it) *waded to the happy Port of eternal Reſt.*

SECT. I.

The Jewiſh *State under the* Maccabees.

Mattathias *aſſerts his Country's Cauſe.*

IN this Calamity and Diſtreſs, God raiſed up *Mattathias*, * a Prieſt of the Courſe of *Jehoiarib*, and the Head of the Family of the *Aſmonæans*, to aſſiſt and protect his Brethren, the *Jews*. Fired with a religious Zeal, like that of *Phinehas*, he bravely killed an Apoſtate *Jew*, that was going to offer Sacrifice upon an *Heathen* Altar, erected for that Purpoſe: He fell likewiſe on the King's *Commiſſioner*, that came to compel Men to ſuch Idolatry, and, by the Aſſiſtance of his Sons, and others, that joined him, ſlew him and all his Retinue. After this, getting together his own Family, and inviting all, that were zealous for the Law, to follow him, he retired into the *Mountains*, in order to make the beſt Defence he could: But the *Jews* had one *Principle*, which, at the Beginning of their Reſiſtance, had like to have deſtroyed them quite; and that was their *ſcrupulous* Obſervation of the *Sabbath*, even to ſuch a Degree, as not to eſteem it lawful to defend themſelves on that Day; whereof their Enemies taking the Advantage, deſtroyed great Numbers of them, without making the leaſt Oppoſition: But, finding the Frailty of their Miſtake in this Particular, *Mattathias* and his Followers made a *Decree*, (which was confirmed by the unanimous Conſent of all the Prieſts and Elders among them) that, whenever they were aſſaulted on the *Sabbath-day*, it was lawful for them to fight for their Lives, and to defend themſelves in the beſt Manner they could, which afterwards became a general Rule in their Wars.

Of the World, 3838, &c. Before Chriſt, 166, &c.

MATTATHIAS, having acted the Part of a brave and prudent *General*, was forced, at laſt, to ſubmit to the Weight of an hundred and forty-ſix Years; when, taking Leave of his Friends and Countrymen, he exhorted them to defend their Nation and Religion, and declared his Son, † *Judas Maccabæus*, his Succeſſor, in the Command

° The Word, in our common Copies, is ἐπειράσθησαν, *they were tempted*; but that this is not the right *Reading*, is eaſy to be gathered from this one Conſideration, that, after two ſuch great Puniſhments, as *Stoning* and being *ſawn aſunder*, it is very proper to introduce their *being tempted*, which ſignifies no certain Puniſhment at all, and is included in the other Puniſhments, here mentioned. Some therefore read ἐπυράσθησαν, ſome ἐπυρώθησαν, and ſome ἐπρήσθησαν, all ſignifying, *they were burnt*, which agrees very well with the Story of the *Maccabees*, (Chap. vi. to Chap. xii.) where they bring *Eleazar*, and the young Men, ἐπὶ τὸ πῦρ καταφλέγουσι αὐτῆς. *to the Fire, and burnt them. Whitby*'s Annotations. ᵖ *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible. * The Courſe of *Jehoiarib* was the firſt of the twenty-four Courſes of the Prieſts, that ſerved in the Temple, 1 Chron. xxiv. 7.

† The *Motto*, which *Judas* had upon his Standard, was the *Hebrew* Sentence in *Exod.* xv. 11. MI CAMOKA BAELIM JEHOVAH, i. e. *Who is like unto thee among the Gods, O* Jehovah? Which, taking the initial Letters only (as on the *Roman* Enſign, *S. P. Q. R.* ſtood for *Senatus Populuſque Romanus*) made the artificial Word *Maccabi*; and from hence all that fought under that Standard, were called *Maccabees*, or *Maccabæans*, and he, in an eſpecial Manner, had that Name above the reſt, by Way of Eminence, as being their Captain. *Prideaux*'s Connection.

Command of the Forces. *Judas* had no sooner taken the Field, than having defeated the *Syrians* in several Engagements, and quite driven them out of *Judea*, he went about all the Cities, pulling down the *Altars*, and destroying, every where, all the Utensils and Instruments of *Idolatry*, and then came up to *Jerusalem*, to recover the Sanctuary out of the Hands of the *Heathen*, and to cleanse and dedicate it anew for the Service of God. [q] The Solemnity of this Dedication was continued for eight Days together: 'Twas celebrated by the *Jews*, with great Joy and Thanksgiving, for the Deliverance, that God had given them; and, for the more solemn Acknowledgment thereof, a *Decree* was made, that the like *Festival* (under the Name of [r] *the Feast of Dedication*, or (because their Houses were, at that Time, illuminated) called by some, *the Feast of Lights*, should, ever after, be *annually* kept in Commemoration of it. Judas *succeeds him.*

In the mean Time, *Antiochus*, hearing that the *Jews* had defeated his Forces, recovered the Temple of *Jerusalem*, pulled down the Images which he had erected there, and restored the Place to its former Worship, was so enraged thereat, that he commanded his *Charioteer* to double his Speed, threatening, as he went, that he would make *Jerusalem* a Sepulchre for the whole *Jewish* Nation. But while he was uttering these proud Words, the Judgment of God overtook him; for a great Pain (which no Remedy could abate) immediately seized his Bowels, and, not long after, falling from his Chariot, his Body was so *bruised*, and his Limbs so *mashed*, that he could proceed no farther; but putting in at a Town, called *Tabæ*, in the Confines of *Persia* and *Babylonia*, he there betook himself to his Bed; and, [s] having languished out a while, under horrid Torments both of Body and Mind, stung with Remorses for his wicked Deeds, and almost consumed with Rottenness and Ulcers, he concluded a Life, remarkable for its Cruelty, and God's Vengeance upon Tyrants. *God's Judgment upon* Antiochus.

After the Death of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, *Antiochus Eupator* continued the War, and, [t] by the Advice of *Lysias*, who had then the Direction of Affairs, gave all the Molestation he could to the valiant *Judas*. But the rest of the Acts of that *Jewish* General, and how he warred with the *Syrians*, and the neighbouring Nations, that assisted them; how he made the first Alliance with the *Romans*, and, through a *Scene* of different Successes, came at last to fall gallantly in the Defence of the Religion and Liberties of his Country; [u] The Succession of *Jonathan*, the Brother of *Judas*, to the Command of the Army, and the gallant Acts he did against *Bacchides*, who had slain his Brother, and against *Apollonius*, Governor of *Cælo-Syria*; * how he destroyed the Temple of the God *Dagon*; repaired the Walls of *Jerusalem*; built Castles and Fortresses in *Judea*; renewed the League with the *Romans* and *Lacedæmonians*; and, at last, with two of his Sons, was perfidiously put to death [x] by a *villainous Traitor*: [y] The Succession of *Simon* to his Brother *Jonathan*, and all the remarkable Occurrences of his short Reign; [z] how *he enlarged the Bounds of his Nation, and recovered all the strong Holds in the Country*; how he defeated the *Syrian* Armies, and delivered his Countrymen from the Yoke of all the *Gentiles* round about them; how, by a general Decree, he was made *Prince*, as well as *High-Priest* to the *Jews*; had that double Honour entailed upon his Posterity; but not long after, with two of his Sons, was barbarously murthered by a treacherous *Kinsman*; [a] though his Kingdom and Priesthood descended to his remaining Son *John*, who had likewise the Name of *Hircanus*, a bold and daring Prince, that enlarged his Dominions, and entirely threw off the Yoke of the *Syrians*: These, and many more worthy Deeds of the *Asmonæan* Race, are fully recorded in the [b] two Books of the *Maccabees*, to which we remit our Reader, without troubling him with *The Acts of the rest of the* Maccabees.

[q] 1 Maccab. iv. 59. *Joseph.* Antiq. Lib. XII. c. 11. [r] This *Festival* our Saviour honoured with his Presence at *Jerusalem*, which shewed his Approbation of it. [s] A filthy Ulcer broke out at his secret Parts, wherein were bred an innumerable Quantity of *Vermin*, and such a Stench proceeded from thence, as neither those who attended him, nor he himself, could well bear; and in this Condition he lay languishing and rotting till he died. *Prideaux*'s Connection. [t] 1 Maccab. v. [u] Ibid. ix. * Ibid. x, &c.

[x] This Man was at first called *Diodotus*, but afterwards *Tryphon*; who having a Design to make away with *Antiochus*, and seize the Crown of *Syria*, and foreseeing that *Jonathan* would never be brought to suffer so great a Villainy; under a Pretence of putting *Ptolemais* into his Hands, he decoyed him into the City, where he made him Prisoner; and then, under a farther Pretence of having two of his Sons as Hostages for their Father's Fidelity, as soon as he had got them into his Possession, he murthered them all together. *Prideaux*, ibid. [y] 1 Maccab. xiii. [z] Ibid. xiv. 6. [a] Ibid. xvi. [b] The former of these Books is an accurate and excellent Account of Things, coming nearest to the Stile and Manner of the sacred Historical Writings, of any Book extant, and is supposed to be composed by this *John Hircanus*, the Son of *Simon*, seeing he was Prince and High-Priest of the *Jews* near thirty Years, and began his Government, at the very Time, when this History ends. The other, for the most Part (except two Epistles in the Beginning of it) is an Abridgment of the History of *Jason*, an *Hellenist Jew* of *Cyrene*, who wrote, in *Greek*, the History of *Judas Maccabæus*, and his Brethren, together, with their Wars against *Antiochus Epiphanes*, and *Eupator* his Son, in five Books. *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part II. Lib. iii.

with vain Repetitions. What is more ſuitable to our preſent Purpoſe is, to make ſome few Obſervations upon the ſeveral *Sects* of *Religion*, that, in this Period of Time, began to make their Appearance, and, not long after, made a conſiderable Figure in the *Jewiſh* Church.

SECT. II.

The Original and Tenets of the Jewiſh *Sects.*

When Sects firſt began.

IN *thoſe happy Times*, ſays *Cunæus*, *wherein the Prophets lived, who, by their Converſe with God, learned his Will immediately from himſelf, there could no Diſputes ariſe about Religion; for their Authority was ſo well eſtabliſhed, that it would preſently have decided all difficult Queſtions, and put an End to every Controverſy. But when theſe Prophets diſappeared, and that ſovereign Authority ceaſed, then every one gave himſelf the Liberty of Reaſoning, Enquiring, and Diſputing, and by this Means they wandered in the Ways of vain Curioſity, and fell into Darkneſs.* Soon after the Return of the *Jews* from *Babylon*, and the full Settlement of their Church again, there aroſe two Parties of Men among them; the one, who adher'd to the written Word only, were of Opinion, that, in the Obſervance of *that*, they fulfilled all Righteouſneſs, and were intitled to the Name of *Zadikim*, i. e. *the Righteous*: The other, over and above the written Law, ſuperadded the *Traditional Conſtitutions* of the Elders, and other religious Obſervances, to which, by Way of *Supererogation*, they devoted themſelves, and from hence, being eſteemed more holy than others, had the Name of *Chaſidim*, i. e. *the Pious*. So that from the former of theſe, the *Sadduces*, and from the latter, the *Phariſees* and *Eſſenes* ſeem to have proceeded.

Sadducees, *their Original.*

THE moſt ancient Sect among the *Jews* was that of the *Sadducees*, which took its Name from *Sadock*, the Founder of it. This *Sadock*, as the *Talmudick* Story is, was the Diſciple of *Antigonus Socho*, who lived, according to the *Jewiſh* Calculation, about three hundred Years before Chriſt, and uſed often to inculcate into his Diſciples, that they ought to ſerve God *diſintereſtedly*, and without any *View* of *Compenſation*, not like Slaves, who only ſerve their Maſter for the Sake of a *Reward*: And from hence his Diſciples *Sadock* and *Baithus* made this *wrong* Inference, that there was no Reward to be expected in another World, and conſequently, that the Soul dies, and the Body will not riſe again. Whether this *Miſtake* of the Doctrine of *Antigonus*, or (as others ſuppoſe) the *Diſſoluteneſs* of Manners, which, at that Time, might prevail, gave Occaſion to the Opinions of the *Sadducees*, but ſo it was, that, in Proceſs of Time, they grew to be very impious and deteſtable.

Their Opinions.

THEY denied the Reſurrection of the Dead, the Being of Angels, and the Exiſtence of the Spirits, or Souls of Men departed. Their Notion was, that there was no *ſpiritual* Being, but God only; that, as to Man, this World was his *All*; that, at his Death, his Soul and Body die together, never to live any more; and that therefore there is no future Reward or Puniſhment. They acknowledged, indeed, that God made this World by his *Power*, and governs it by his *Providence*, and, for the carrying on of this Government, hath ordained Rewards and Puniſhments; but then they ſuppoſe, that theſe Rewards and Puniſhments are in this World only, and for this Reaſon alone it was, that they worſhipped him, and paid Obedience to his Laws. All unwritten *Traditions*, as well as all written Books, except the five Books of *Moſes*, they abſolutely rejected; and the probable Reaſon why they did ſo is, that they could not ſo well maintain theſe Opinions, which are not ſo flatly contradicted in the *Pentateuch*, as in other *ſacred* Books, if once they admitted theſe Books to be *Canonical*. All *ſupernatural* Helps to their Duty they utterly denied; for their Doctrine was, that God had made Man perfect Maſter of all his Actions, with a full Freedom to do either Good or Evil, as he thinks fit, without any *Aſſiſtance* to him for the one, or *Reſtraint* upon him, as to the other; and for this Reaſon, becauſe they looked upon all Men to have an inherent *Power* to make their Condition better or worſe, according as they took right or wrong Meaſures, whenever they ſat in Judgment upon *Criminals*, they were remarkable for paſſing the ſevereſt Sentences; as indeed their general Character was, that they were a very *ill-natured* Sort of Men, churliſh and *moroſe* in their Behaviour, even to each other, but cruel and *ſavage*

[c] Vid. *Prideaux*'s Connection. *Lamy* and *Beauſobre*'s Introductions.

savage to every one besides. Their Number was the fewest of all the Sects of the *Jews*, but they were Men of the best Quality, and greatest Estates; and, as all those, who were of the greatest Power and Riches, were cut off in the Destruction of *Jerusalem* by the *Romans*, 'tis generally supposed that this whole Sect then perished with them.

The Pharisees.

THE *Pharisees* were so called from the *Hebrew* Word *Pharas*, which signifies to *separate*; because the prevailing Passion, or rather Ambition of this Sect was, to distinguish and *separate* itself from the rest of the People, by a greater Degree of Holiness and Piety, but accompanied with very much *Affectation*, and Abundance of vain Observances. [d] At what Time this Sect began first to appear, is no easy Matter to determine. *Josephus* makes mention of them in the Reign of *Jonathan*, an hundred and forty Years before *Christ*, as a very powerful Body of Men at that Time: Nor is it improbable, that their *Origin* was somewhat earlier, and that, as soon as the *Sadducees* discovered their Principles to the World, these Men of different Sentiments might, not long after, rise up in Opposition to them: For 'tis evident from the Character, which the *Jewish* Historian gives of them, that, in the main Articles of their Belief, they were entirely repugnant to the *Sadducees*. [e] "The "*Pharisees* believe in a *Fate*, *says he*, and attribute all Things to it, but nevertheless they acknowledge the *Freedom* of Man." They teach, that God will one Day judge the World, and punish or reward Men according to their Deserts. They maintain, that Souls are *immortal*, and that, in the other World, some will be shut up in an eternal Prison, and others sent back again; but with this Difference, that those of good Men shall enter into the Bodies of Men, those of wicked *Men* into the Bodies of *Beasts*, which exactly agrees with the famous *Transmigration* of *Pythagoras*. Their Adherence to the Law was so exact, that, for Fear of violating the least Precept of it, they scrupulously observed every Thing, that had the least Relation to it, even though the Law had neither commanded, nor forbidden it. Their Zeal for the *Traditions* of the Elders was such, that they derived them from the same Fountain with the written Word itself, pretending that *Moses* received both of them from God on Mount *Sinai*, and therefore ascribing an equal Authority to both. They had a Notion that good Works were *meritorious*, and therefore they invented a great Number of *supererogatory* ones, upon which they valued themselves more, than upon a due Observance of the Law itself. Their frequent Washings and Ablutions, [f] their long Prayers in *publick* Places, their [g] nice Avoidance of reputed Sinners, their often Fasting and great Abstinence, [h] their minute Payment of *Tythes*, their [i] strict Observance of the *Sabbath*, and [k] ostentatious Enlargement of [l] *Phylacteries*, were all Works of this Kind; which, nevertheless, gained them such Esteem and Veneration, that while the common People loved, the greater ones dreaded them; so that their Power and Authority in the *State* was considerable, though generally attended with pernicious Consequences, because their Hearts were evil.

Their Opinions.

The Scribes, *who.*

IN Conjunction with the *Pharisees*, the *Scribes* are often mentioned in the Scriptures of the *New-Testament*. They were not however any particular *Sect*, but a Profession of Men, of diverse Kinds, following *Literature*: For generally all, that were any way learned among the *Jews*, were, in the Time of our Saviour and his Apostles, called *Scribes*; but especially those, who, by their Skill in the Law and Divinity of the *Jews*, were advanced to sit in *Moses*'s *Seat*, and were either *Judges* in the *Sanhedrim*, or *Teachers* in their Schools, or *Synagogues*. They were chiefly of the Sect of the *Pharisees*, because all the Learning of the *Jews*, in those Times, lay in their *Pharisaical* Traditions, and their Way of interpreting (or rather perverting) the Scriptures by them: And, because they were the Men, that dictated the

[d] Vid. *Lamy*'s Introduction and *Prideaux*'s Connection. [e] *Jos.* de Bello Jud. Lib. II. c. 12.
[f] Matth. vi. 5, *&c.* [g] Luke vii. 39. [h] Matth. xxiii. 23. [i] Ibid. xii. 2. [k] Ibid. xxiii. 5. [l] The Word *Phylactery*, in the *Greek*, signifies a Place to keep any Thing in; in the *Hebrew* it is called *Tephillim*, which signifies *Prayers*, because the *Jews* wear them chiefly, when they go to their Devotion. It is a common Opinion, that these *Phylacteries* were long Pieces of *Parchment*, whereupon were written certain Passages out of *Exodus* and *Deuteronomy*, which they tied to their Foreheads, and Left-Arm, in Memory of the Law; but a late Explainer of the *Jewish* Customs, assures us, that they were *Parchment-Cases*, formed, with great Nicety, into their proper Shapes; that the Case for the Head had four *Cavities*, into each of which, they put a Piece of Parchment roll'd up, wherein were written some Sections of the Law; but that which was for the *Arm*, had but one Cavity, and into it they put one Piece of Parchment, wherein four Passages of Scripture are written. *Lamy*'s Introduction, Lib. I. c. 16. The whole of this Custom is founded on *Exod.* xiii. 9. and *Deut.* vi. 8. but the Words are only *metaphorically* to be understood, as a Command to have God's Laws perpetually before our Eyes, and his Deliverances always in Remembrance: It cannot be denied however, that these *Phylacteries* were generally wore by the *Jews*, in our *Saviour*'s, and were not disused so late as St *Jerom*'s Time. *Lamy*, ibid.

Law both of Church and State, it hence came to paſs, that *Lawyers* and *Scribes* are convertible Terms in the Goſpel, and denote both of them the ſame Sort of Men.

The Eſſenes. IT is ſuppoſed (with a good deal of Probability) that the Sect of the *Eſſenes* began during the Perſecution of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, when great Numbers of *Jews* were driven into the Wilderneſs, where they inured themſelves to an hard and laborious Courſe of Living. *Philo*, who gives us a full Account of them, tells us, that they were called *Eſſenes* from the *Greek* Word Ὅσιος, which ſignifies *Holy*, and that there were two Sorts of them; ſome, who living in *Society*, and marrying, tho' with a great deal of Warineſs and Circumſpection, inhabited Villages, and applied themſelves to Huſbandry, and other innocent Trades and Occupations, and were therefore called *Practical*; and others, who living a Kind of *Monaſtick* Life, gave themſelves wholly up to Meditation, and were therefore called the *Contemplative Eſſenes:* But however they differed in their *Manner of* Life, they were both of the ſame Belief, and followed the ſame *Maxims*.

Their Opinions and Principles. THEY had not indeed the like *Traditions* with the *Phariſees*, but, as they were *Allegoriſts*, they had ſeveral *myſtical* Books, which ſerved them for a Rule in explaining the ſacred Writings, all which, contrary to the *Sadducees*, they acknowledged and received. They believed that God *governs* the World, but by ſuch an abſolute *Predeſtination* of every Thing, as allowed Mankind no Liberty of Choice in all their Actions. They acknowledged a *future State*, thinking, that the Souls of good Men went into the *fortunate Iſlands*, while thoſe of the Wicked were ſhut up in *ſubterraneous Places*; but as for the *Reſurrection* of the Body, and the Soul's returning to it again, after they were once parted, of this they had no Manner of Notion. All *practical* Religion they reduced to theſe three Heads: 1. The Love of God. 2. The Love of Virtue. And, 3. The Love of Mankind. 1. *Their Love of God* expreſſed itſelf in their accounting him the Author of all Good, and conſequently applying to him, every Morning and Night, for the Bleſſings they wanted; in their abſtaining from Swearing, from Lying, and all other Sins, that are abhorrent to his Nature; and in their ſtrict Obſervance of the *Sabbath*, and all other holy Rites, except Sacrificing: For, though they ſent their Gifts to the Altar, yet they themſelves went not thither, preſuming, that the *Sanctity* of their Lives was the pureſt and moſt acceptable Sacrifice to God, that they could offer. 2. *Their Love of Virtue* was ſhewn in the Government of their Paſſions, their Refraining from Pleaſures, their Contempt of Riches, their Abſtinence in Eating, their Continence, their Patience, the Simplicity of their Speech, and the Modeſty of their Carriage. And, 3. *Their Love of Mankind* appeared in their great Benevolence, and ſtrict Juſtice; their Charity to the Poor, and Hoſpitality to Strangers; and there needs no other Proof of their Love to one another, than the *Union* in which they lived; for they had the ſame Houſes, the ſame Proviſions, the ſame Habits, the ſame Tables; their Gains were put in the common Stock; they divided the Care of the Sick among them; and honoured the elder Men of their Society with the ſame Reverence, as if they had been their Fathers.

The Form of their Admiſſion. THIS Strictneſs and Regularity of theirs gave them a great Character, and made it a Matter of no ſmall Conſequence to be admitted into their Society. For when, after a due Courſe of Probation, any one preſented himſelf for that Purpoſe, they bound him under the moſt ſolemn Vows and Proteſtations, "to love and worſhip God, "and do Juſtice to all Men; to profeſs himſelf an Enemy to the Wicked, and a "Friend to the Lovers of Virtue; to keep his Hands from Theft, and all fraudulent "Dealings, and his Soul unpolluted with the Deſire of unjuſt Gain; not to uſurp "upon his Inferiors, nor diſtinguiſh himſelf from them by any Ornaments of Dreſs "or Apparel; not to conceal any of the *Myſteries* of Religion from his Brethren, "nor to diſcloſe any to the *Profane*, though it were to ſave his Life; but to preſerve "the *Doctrine*, he profeſs'd; the *Books*, that were written of it; and the *Names* of "thoſe, from whom he had it." This was the Form of Admiſſion into their Communion, which whoever violated in any groſs Inſtance, was immediately excluded, and never received again, without the deepeſt Humiliation and Repentance. And if ſuch was the Religion and Manner of Life of the *Eſſenes*, we have the leſs Reaſon to be ſurprized, at our finding ſome Authors ſo much extolling their Courage and Magnanimity upon ſeveral Occaſions; as Perſons, who under Diſtreſſes and Perſecution, ſuffered Death, and the moſt grievous Torments, even with Joy and Chearfulneſs, rather than ſay or do any Thing contrary to the Law of God.

THERE

THERE was another *Sect* among the *Jews*, [m] mentioned in the Gospel, which, though of later *Original*, may not improperly be considered in this Place; and that is the *Herodians*, who, [n] in their main *Principles*, were not very different from the *Sadducees*: They sprang up, no doubt, in the Time of *Herod the Great*, some twenty or thirty Years perhaps before Christ, and had their Denomination from him, but upon what Account it is not so well agreed. The common Opinion is, that they looked upon *Herod* as the promised *Messiah*; but it is a very improbable Thing, that any *Jews* should, in the Time of our Saviour's Ministry, above thirty Years after the Death of *Herod*, hold him to have been the *Messiah*, when they had found no one of these Particulars, which they expected from the *Messiah*, performed by him, but rather every Thing quite contrary. [o] Others therefore suppose, that they were called *Herodians*, because they constituted a *Sodality*, or Club, (as we call it) in Honour of *Herod*, at *Jerusalem*; as there were several in *Rome*, in Honour of their [p] Emperors. But since the earliest of these *Sodalities* in *Rome* were not instituted till after the Death of *Augustus*, who outlived *Herod* sixteen Years and upwards, this could be no *Pattern* or Foundation for the Institution of the like in Memory of *Herod*, who died so long before.

The Herodians, *who.*

Why so called.

HEROD, no doubt, came into the Government with great Opposition; and, as he was by Birth a *Foreigner*, and had made his Entrance with much Blood, his Title was not acknowledged by the greater Part of the *Jews*, especially as long as *Antigonus* was alive. Those therefore, that would own his Title, and espouse his Interest, might for this Reason, perhaps, go under the Name of *Herodians*; but this seems not to be the Whole of the Matter. Our blessed Saviour cautions his Disciples [q] *against the Leaven (i. e.* against the evil and erroneous Tenets) *of Herod*; which seems to imply, that *Herod* himself was the Author of some false *Notions*, which constituted a particular *Sect*, differing from the other Sects of the *Jews*; and that his *Followers*, imbibing these Principles from him, had the Denomination of *Herodians*. [r] For as much then [s] as *Herod*, the better to secure himself on the Throne, had put himself under the *Roman* Protection, [t] contrary to an express Precept of the Law; and, to ingratiate himself with the great Men at *Rome*, built Temples, and erected Images in them for *idolatrous* Worship, excusing himself to the *Jews*, that all this he did purely in Compliance to the Commands, which he was necessitated to obey; and might probably lay it down for a *Maxim* in Religion, that, in Case of *Compulsion*, it was lawful to submit to *unjust* Injunctions: There is no Wonder at all, that some bold Men should rise up to justify the King's Practice, and (by the *Royal* Permission) call themselves by his Name; whose distinguishing Tenet might probably be, "That, although they professed the *Jewish* Religion, and abominated Idolatry in "their Hearts; yet, to humour the *Romans*, and make themselves easy with their "Governors, it was not unlawful to comply sometimes with their Demands, and, "at least, *outwardly*, to become *Occasional Conformists*."

The true Occasion.

ANOTHER Sect, mentioned by [u] *Josephus*, as arising after this Time, was that *of Judas of Galilee*: For when *Archelaus*, Son of *Herod the Great*, was sent into Banishment, and *Judea* reduced to a Province of *Rome*, *Judas*, a Native of *Galamala*, took Occasion, from some new *Exactions*, to exhort his Countrymen to shake off the *Roman* Yoke, pretending, that, to pay Tribute to any foreign Power was *a shameful Badge of their Slavery*. An Aversion to the *Roman* Dominion, and an Hatred of the *Publicans* (who had the Care of receiving the Taxes and Tributes) was natural enough to all the *Jews*; but they, whose Zeal led them to join *Judas*, and form a particular Sect, valued themselves upon their Holiness and *Justice*, because they would not acknowledge any other *Sovereign*, but God, and, rather than submit to the Dominion of Man, or give him the Title of *Lord*, they chose to subject themselves, and their dearest Friends and Relations, to any Torments, or even to Death itself. These seem however either to have been at first, or afterwards to have grown into a *Sect*, so famous in the *Jewish* History, which calls them *Zealots*, as they were likewise commonly called THE JUST; and, accordingly, * some have thought, that they, who insidiously asked our Saviour the Question. [x] *Whether it was lawful*

The Sect of Judas.

[m] Matth. xxii. 16. Mark iii. 6. Ch. viii. 15. Ch. xii. 13.
[n] Accordingly St *Mark* (Ch. viii. 15.) calls *that the Leaven of Herod*, which Christ stiles *the Leaven of the Sadducees*, Matth. xvi. 6.
[o] Scaliger in Animadver. ad Eusebii Chron. & Casaubon Exercit. *&c.*
[p] Such were the *Augustales Adrianales, Antonini, &c.* constituted in Honour of *Augustus, Adrian*, and *Antoninus*, and the rest of the Emperors, after their Death. *Prideaux*'s Connection, P. II. L. V.
[q] Mark viii. 15.
[r] *Prideaux*, ibid.
[s] Joseph. Antiq. L. XV. c. 12.
[t] Deut. xvii. 15.
[u] Antiq. Lib. XVIII.
* Vid. *Lamy*'s Introduction, L. I. c. 9.
[x] Matth. xxii. 17.

lawful to pay Tribute to Cæſar, (ſuppoſing him to be no Well-wiſher to the *Roman* Government) pretended to be of this Sect; for inſtead of *who feigned themſelves to be good Men*, the Paſſage ought to be tranſlated, *who feigned themſelves to be* THE JUST.

The Karraites,

I MENTION but one *Sect* more, whereof we have no Notice in Scripture, becauſe it had no Beginning, till after the *Talmud* was finiſhed, and that is the *Karraites*: For when, about the Beginning of the VIth Century after Chriſt, that vaſt *voluminous* Book, containing the Traditions of the *Jewiſh* Church, came to be publiſhed, and a great Deference and Veneration was required to be paid to it; Men of Judgment and Learning looking into it, and finding it ſtuffed with trifling and incredible Stories, rejected its Authority, as not deſerving their Belief, and betook themſelves wholly to ſuch, as were of undoubted Credibility, *the Writings of the Law and the Prophets*: In Conſequence of which, there aroſe two Parties, one ſtanding up for the *Talmud* and its Traditions; and the other diſavowing both, as containing, in their Opinion, the *Inventions* of Men, and not the *Doctrines* and Commands of God. Thoſe, who ſtood up for the *Talmud* and its Traditions, were chiefly the *Rabbins*, and their Fol-

why ſo called.

lowers, from whence this Party had the Name of *Rabbiniſts*; and the other, who were for the Scripture only, which, in the *Babylonian* Tongue, is called *Kara*, had, for this Reaſon, the Name of [y] *Karraites*, as much as to ſay *Scripturaliſts*; under which two Names, the Controverſy was, from that Time, carried on between them, and ſo continues, even to this Day.

SECT. III.

The Jewiſh State *under the* Romans.

Of the World, 3926, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 78, &c.

Hircanus *and* Ariſtobulus *diſagree*,

AFTER the [z] *Maccabees* had continued in the Government of *Judea* above an hundred Years, and, for ſome Time of late, ruled in the Capacity of Sovereign Princes, there happened a great Change in the Affairs of that Nation, occaſioned by a Quarrel between *Hircanus* II, and *Ariſtobulus*, two Brothers, Sons of *Alexander Jannæus*, and Princes of the *Maccabæan* Race. When their Father *Alexander* was beſieging *Ragaba*, on the other Side of *Jordan*, and found his Life declining, he ordered his Wife *Alexandra* (whom he left *Regent* of the Kingdom) to conceal his Death from the Army, that it might not retard the Siege; and when ſhe had taken the Place, to return in Triumph to *Jeruſalem*; where the chief Thing he adviſed her to do was, to court the *Phariſees*, the Sect that had then the prevailing Power among the *Jews*, and who, by their Intereſt, could advance or depreſs whom they pleaſed.

As ſoon as the Siege was over, ſhe returned to *Jeruſalem*, and punctually obeyed her Huſband's Directions; which ſucceeded ſo well, that ſhe cauſed herſelf to be declared *Queen*, but committed the Government of all Things to the *Phariſees*; made *Hircanus* High-Prieſt; and left *Ariſtobulus*, a Prince of an *active* Spirit, to lead a private Life. He, towards the End of the Queen's Reign, taking the Advantage of her *Sickneſs*, and his Brother's *Indolence*, ſeized ſeveral Strong-Holds, with a Purpoſe to have himſelf declared King after her Death; and accordingly, as ſoon as his Mother was dead, he made War with his Brother *Hircanus*, and obliged him to yield up the Kingdom: But it was not long before freſh Conteſts aroſe between them.

and appeal to Pompey.

THE Power of the *Romans* was, at this Time, become very *formidable*, and the Fall of *Mithridates* had eaſed that Republick of every Enemy, that was able to contend with it. *Pompey*, their victorious *General*, came, not long after this, into *Cælo-Syria*; and, as the *Maccabæan* Family had, all along, courted the Alliance of *Rome*, theſe

[y] This Sect is ſtill in Being in *Poland* and *Ruſſia*: There are ſome, but not a great many, in the *Eaſtern* Countries, and wherever they are, they are reckoned Men of the beſt Learning, and greateſt Probity of all the *Jewiſh* Nation. *Prideaux*'s Connection.

[z] *Simon*, the laſt of the *Maccabæan* Brothers, when he, and his two eldeſt Sons were baſely murthered by *Ptolemy*, his Son-in-Law, was ſucceeded by his third Son, *John Hircanus*, who deſtroyed the Temple of the *Samaritans*, ſubdued the *Idumeans*, and opened *David*'s Tomb, from whence he took 3000 Talents. He was ſucceeded by his Son *Ariſtobulus*, who firſt took upon him the Title of *King*; and he, by his Brother *Alexander Jannæus*, a cruel Prince, the Father of this *Hircanus* and *Ariſtobulus*. *Du Pin*'s Hiſtory of the Old Teſtament.

theſe two contending Brothers ſent to him both their *Deputies*, praying his Protection, and Determination of the Controverſy between them. *Pompey*, having heard what was ſaid on both Sides, ordered the two Brothers to appear *in Perſon* before him, promiſing that he would then take a full Cognizance of the Cauſe, and determine it, as Juſtice ſhould direct. When therefore he was come to *Damaſcus*, *Hircanus* and *Ariſtobulus* waited upon him to receive his Deciſion; and, at the ſame Time, ſeveral chief Men of the *Jews* came to remonſtrate againſt them both. The *Jews* pleaded, "That it had been formerly the Uſage of their Nation to be governed "by the *High-Prieſt* of the God they worſhipped, who, without aſſuming any other "Title, adminiſtered Juſtice to them, according to the Laws, and Conſtitutions, "tranſmitted down to them from their Forefathers: They owned indeed, that the "two contending Brothers were of the *Sacerdotal* Race; but then they alledged, "that they had changed the *old*, and introduced a *new* Form of Government, in "order to *enſlave* the People; and therefore they prayed they might not be go-"verned by a King." *Hircanus*, on his Part, urged, "That, being the *elder* Bro-"ther, he was unjuſtly deprived of his Birthright by *Ariſtobulus*, who, leaving him "only a ſmall Portion of Land for his Subſiſtence, had uſurped all the reſt; and, "as a Man born for Miſchief, practiſed *Piracy* at Sea, and *Rapine* and Depredation "at Land, upon his Neighbours:" And for the Atteſtation of all this, there appeared above a Thouſand of the principal *Jews*. What *Ariſtobulus* had to ſay, in Anſwer to this, was, "That *Hircanus* was ſuperſeded in the Government by Rea-"ſon of his *Incapacity* to rule, and not through any Ambition of his; that his Sloth "and Inactivity had brought upon him the Contempt of the People; and that there-"fore he was forced to interpoſe, merely to preſerve the Government from falling "into other Hands." And for the witneſſing of this, he produced ſeveral young Gentlemen of the Country, who, by the *Gaudineſs* of their Dreſs, and *Levity* of their Carriage, did no great Credit to the Cauſe, they pretended to abet.

UPON this Hearing, *Pompey* referred the full Determination of the Matter, till his Coming to *Jeruſalem*: But *Ariſtobulus*, perceiving that his violent Proceedings were not approved of, haſted back to *Judea*, and ſhut himſelf up in the ſtrong Fortreſs of *Alexandrion*; which offended *Pompey* ſo highly, that, taking the Army, which he intended againſt the *Nabatheans*, and ſome auxiliary Troops of *Syria*, he marched directly againſt him. Upon his Approach to *Alexandrion*, *Ariſtobulus* ſurrendered *himſelf*, and had a *Guard* ſet over him; but his Party at *Jeruſalem*, having ſeized the Mount of the Temple, cut down the Bridges over the deep Ditches, that ſurrounded it; and, in the Cauſe of their *captive* King, made Preparation for a vigorous Defence. *Pompey* himſelf, with his whole Army, went up againſt them, and, after a Siege of [a] three Months, wherein twelve thouſand *Jews* were ſlain, took the Place. After this, going up into the Temple, with ſeveral chief Officers attending him, he cauſed the moſt ſacred Parts of it to be opened, and himſelf entered alſo into the *Holy of Holies*, where none by the Law were permitted to come, but only the High-Prieſt, once a Year, on *the great Day of Expiation*. In the Treaſuries he found two thouſand Talents of Money, beſides Veſſels, and other Things of a prodigious Value, all which he left untouched: But *Craſſus*, ſoon after coming that Way, not only extorted the two thouſand Talents, and a large *Bar* of Gold, by Way of Bribe to reſtrain him from farther Plunder; but, contrary to the Promiſe he had given upon Oath, ranſacked the Temple all over, and robbed it of every Thing, he thought worth taking away; ſo that the Whole of his *ſacrilegious* Plunder amounted to the Value of ten thouſand Talents, which is above two Millions of our Money. "Thus *Jeruſalem* became a Prey to every hungry General of *Rome*, and, "from the Diſſention between theſe two Brothers (ſays [b] the Hiſtorian) may be "dated the Ruin of the *Jewiſh* Nation, with the Loſs of their Liberty to the *Romans*, "the Impoſition of above ten thouſand Talents, and the *Tranſlation* of the *ſove-"reign* Power, which had, ever till then, deſcended in the Prieſthood, to the "Commonalty."

Pompey *takes* Jeruſalem.

[a] 'Tis ſuppoſed by the *Jewiſh* Hiſtorian, that the Mount of the Temple would have hardly been taken ſo ſoon by the *Romans*, had it not been for the Superſtition of the *Jews*, in their Obſervation of their Sabbath. For though they now thought it lawful to defend themſelves vigorouſly on that Day; yet they would not ſtir an Hand to annoy the Enemy, nor obſtruct them in any of their Works. This *Pompey* obſerving, ordered his Men to employ the Sabbath-day in nothing elſe, but in making their *Approaches*; in which the Beſieged giving them no Moleſtation, their Engines of *Battery* were brought forward, and, without Oppoſition, placed juſt as they pleaſed, and ſo being fitted, and played to Advantage, ſoon made a Breach in the Wall, large enough for an *Aſſault*. Joſeph. de Bell. Jud. L. I. c. 5. [b] Joſeph. Antiq. L. XIV. c. 8.

Herod *obtains the Kingdom of the* Romans.

IN this Condition remained the *Jewiſh* State, deprived of its *Regal* Power, and ſubjected to the Tribute and Government of its *Conquerors*; until *Herod*, commonly called *the Great*, by his Intereſt with *Antony*, and his cloſe Practices with other great Men at *Rome*, from being *Tetrarch* of *Judea*, obtained a Decree for the Royal Dignity thereof, by the unanimous Suffrage of the whole Senate. This *Herod* was the Son of *Antipas*, a noble [c] *Idumean*, and of *Cyprus*, a Woman deſcended from an illuſtrious Family among the *Arabians*. *Antipas* (who to bring his Name to a *Greek* Termination, called himſelf *Antipater*) was a Perſon of great Wiſdom and Sagacity, and had thereby acquired ſuch an Intereſt in *Judea*, *Arabia*, *Syria*, and all *Paleſtine*, that he made himſelf *neceſſary* to all the *Roman* Governors who came into thoſe Parts; and by this Means had frequent Opportunities of promoting the Fortunes of his Family. He had, by his Wife *Cyprus*, [d] four Sons, now grown up to Maturity of Age, whereof *Herod* was the ſecond. He is repreſented, by *Joſephus*, as a Man of Courage and Reſolution, extremely generous to ingratiate himſelf with the great ones at *Rome*, magnificent in his Buildings, liberal, and even extravagant in his publick Expences, and, in all Appearance, diſpoſed to do Good to every one; but ſtill, in all his Actions and Behaviour, attending only on the Procurement of his own Honour and Greatneſs, of which he was immoderately covetous: And for this Reaſon he became very burthenſome to his Subjects for the Supply of his Extravagancies, and inexorably cruel and oppreſſive, whenever he was oppoſed; a *Slave*, in ſhort, to his Paſſions, and ſticking at no Means, how unjuſtifiable ſoever, to attain his Deſires.

His Character.

Of the World, 3974, &c. *Before Chriſt*, 30, &c.

DURING the *Roman* Civil War, he had always followed *Antony*'s Party: But, after the fatal Battle at *Actium*, though he had Reaſon to fear that *Auguſtus* would deprive him of his Kingdom, for being ſo firm a Friend to his Enemy; yet he was reſolved to wait upon him, as ſoon as he could. But as he ſuſpected, that, in his Abſence, ſome *inteſtine* Diſturbances might ariſe, he confined his Wife *Mariamne*, and her Mother *Alexandra*, in the Caſtle of *Alexandrion*, with a ſtrong Guard, under the Command of *Joſeph*, and *Sohemus*, two of his moſt truſty Confidents, with this *poſitive Order*, that, in Caſe they found Things went amiſs with him at *Cæſar*'s Court, they ſhould deſtroy them both, (that none of the *Aſmonæan* Family might be left alive) and preſerve the Kingdom for his Sons, and his Brother *Pheroras*; and ſo he ſet forward on his Journey to meet *Auguſtus*. *Auguſtus* was then at *Rhodes*, where *Herod*, having obtained Audience, as he entered into his Preſence, laid aſide his Diadem, and, in his Speech of Addreſs, freely owned all he had done for *Antony*, and what he was farther ready to have done, had he required it of him. "This, he "ſaid, he thought himſelf obliged to by the Friendſhip, that was between them, "which, would he be pleaſed to think worthy his Acceptance (ſince *Antony* was loſt, "quite loſt) he would not fail to ſerve him with the ſame Zeal and Fidelity." This *Herod* delivered with ſuch an *Intrepidity*, that *Cæſar*, pleaſed with the Spirit of the Man, cauſed him to put on his Diadem again, accepted of his Friendſhip, and confirmed him in the Kingdom of *Judea*.

His Application to Auguſtus.

His Speech to him.

He puts Mariamne *his Wife to Death.*

HEROD, being highly pleaſed with this good Succeſs, returned home with much Joy: But, on his Arrival, found all his Felicity ſoured with the Troubles of his own Family. [e] *Mariamne*, the Wife that he loved moſt, having bribed the Secret out of *Sohemus*, conceived thereupon ſuch a ſtrong Hatred and Averſion to her Huſband, that ſhe not only refuſed his Embraces with Scorn, but (concealing the true Cauſe of her Reſentment) was perpetually upbraiding him with the Murther of her own Relations, and the Meanneſs of his Birth and Extraction; inſomuch that, one Time, he could hardly forbear laying violent Hands upon her. This Opportunity his Siſter *Solome*, her implacable Enemy, took, to ſend in his *Butler* (whom ſhe had before ſuborned for that Purpoſe) to accuſe the Queen of having tempted him to give the King Poiſon; whereupon he ordered her favourite *Eunuch* (without whoſe Privacy, he knew, ſhe did nothing) to be put upon the Rack; but all he confeſſed was, that ſomething, *Sohemus* had told *Mariamne*, was the Cauſe of her being out of Humour. Upon hearing this, *Herod* fell into a Rage of *Jealouſy*, and ſuppoſing that *Sohemus* would

[c] Theſe *Idumeans* were not *Jews* by Birth, but only Proſelytes to the *Jewiſh* Religion, from the Time that *John Hircanus*, Son to *Simon*, one of the Princes of the *Maccabees*, obliged them to embrace it, on the Peril of quitting the Country, they had poſſeſſed about 129 Years before Chriſt: So that King *Herod* was of the *Jewiſh* Religion, though not of the Family or Country of the *Jews*. Joſeph. Antiq. L. XIII. c. 17.

[d] The eldeſt was *Phaſaelus*, the third *Joſeph*, and the youngeſt *Pheroras*. He had alſo, by the ſame Wife, a Daughter, called *Solome*, who, by her Intrigues, was continually creating Diviſions in the Family, whereby ſhe very oft perplexed her Brother *Herod*'s Affairs, and yet maintained an Intereſt with him to the laſt. *Prideaux*'s Connection, P. II L. VII.

[e] Vid. *Du Pin*, and *Howell*'s Hiſtory.

would never have been induced to betray this Secret to her, but at the Price of an *adulterous* Converſation, he ordered him immediately to be put to Death; and then calling together a Council of his own Friends, and accuſing her of an Intention to take away his Life, had her condemned, but without a Deſign to haſten her Execution. *Solome*, however, knowing very well her Brother's Temper, and fearing, that ſo long as *Mariamne* lived, he might eaſily *relapſe* into his former Fondneſs, urged the Neceſſity of her *ſpeedy* Execution, and had that Influence over her Brother, that he commanded her immediately to be put to Death; but he ſoon repented of his Raſhneſs: For after his Rage was quenched with her Blood, his Love revived, and the Conſideration of what he had done filled his Mind with the *Agonies* of Remorſe (which almoſt ran him diſtracted) and Regret for her Loſs, as long as he lived.

His other cruel Acts.

A GREAT Part of the reſt of his Life was ſpent in Acts of Cruelty: for he put to death *Coſtobarus*, Huſband to his Siſter *Solome*, his two Sons, *Alexander* and *Ariſtobulus*, whom he had by *Mariamne*; and, not long before his own Death, another Son, named *Antipater*, whom he had by a different Wife. *Macrobius*, a Writer of the Vth Century, tells us, that, among the Infants whom he put to death at *Bethlehem*, he ſlew a young Son of his own, whereupon *Auguſtus* made the Reflection, *that it was better to be* Herod's *Hog, than his Son.* It is not however ſo likely, that *Herod*, at that Age, ſhould have a Son ſo young, as theſe *Innocents* were, as that the Death of *Antipater*, together with that of *Alexander* and *Ariſtobulus*, might give the Occaſion for this *Sarcaſm*.

His idolatrous Compliances.

BUT whatever Opinion *Auguſtus* might have of *Herod*, 'tis certain that *Herod* had no ſmall *Veneration* for him, or at leaſt carried his Compliment very far: For he not only built two [f] ſtately Cities, and called them both after his Name, but, in the very City of *Jeruſalem*, built a *Theatre*, and an *Amphitheatre*; and, in Honour of *Auguſtus*, celebrated *Games*, and exhibited *Shews*, which gave great Diſguſt to the *Jews*, as Things inconſiſtent with the *Legal* Conſtitutions, and Religion of their Country. Nay, to ſuch a Degree of Compliance proceeded he, as not only to ſet up the *Roman* Enſign, which was the Figure of an *Eagle*, over one of the Gates of the Temple; but even to raiſe a ſumptuous Temple all of white Marble, in Memory of the Favours, which *Auguſtus* had conferred on him; by which idolatrous *Flattery*, he alienated the Hearts of the *Jews*, and raiſed ſome Conſpirators againſt his Life: But to recover their good Opinion again, and make ſome Amends for theſe Breaches upon their Law, in the nineteenth Year of his Reign, he formed a Deſign of *Rebuilding* the Temple, which, by the Length of Time, (having now ſtood five hundred Years) as well as the Violence of Enemies, was in a very decayed and ruinous Condition. In two Years Time, he got together all proper *Materials*, and, in nine and an half more, had it ſo far finiſhed, as to make it fit for divine Service, though, to carry on the *Out-buildings*, Workmen were continued about it till the Time of our Saviour's Miniſtry and longer; in which Senſe we find the *Jews* telling him, [g] *Forty and ſix Years was this Temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three Days?* When the Temple was finiſhed, it was conſecrated with great Pomp and Solemnity, but ſtill retained the ſame Name, and was called the *ſecond* or *latter* Temple, becauſe this Rebuilding of *Herod*'s was only by Way of *Reparation*, not of *Reſtoration*, and new Erection after a long and total Demolition, as was the Caſe of the Temple which *Zerubbabel* raiſed.

The Time of the Birth of Chriſt.

WHILE theſe Things were doing in *Judea*, the Temple of *Janus* was ſhut at *Rome*. In Times of *War* the Cuſtom was to have its *Gates* laid open, but ſhut in the Time of *Peace*; and 'twas now the *fifth* Time, ſince the Building of the City, that the Gates of this Temple had been ſhut. The *firſt* Time was, in the Reign of *Numa*; the *ſecond*, after the End of the firſt *Punick* War; the *third*, after *Auguſtus*'s Victory over *Antony* and *Cleopatra*; the *fourth*, upon his Return from the *Cantabrian* War in *Spain*; and the *fifth*, in the twenty-ſixth Year of his Reign, and the thirty-third of *Herod*'s; when a general Peace, which laſted for twelve Years together, prevailed all over the World, and was a proper *Prelude* for uſhering in the Coming of the *Prince of Peace*, even Chriſt our Lord, who, according to the exacteſt Computation [h], was born in the four thouſandth Year from the Creation, falling in exactly with the Time, where [i] an old Tradition of the *Jews* places the Beginning of the Days of the *Meſſiah*.

CHAP.

[f] *Sebaſte* and *Cæſaria*. [g] John ii. 20. [h] That of Archbiſhop *Uſher*. [i] The Tradition ſays, that the World was to laſt ſix Thouſand Years; two Thouſand Years of which were before the Law, two Thouſand under the Law, and the laſt two Thouſand under the *Meſſiah*; which Tradition is of great Antiquity among the *Jews*, and ſtill retains much Veneration, as one of the moſt *authentical* of this Sort. *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part II. Lib. ix.

CHAP. VIII.

The State of Religion, and of the Idolatry, and Polytheiſm, of the Heathen World.

WE have hitherto conſidered the State of the *Jewiſh* Church, and gone through the ſeveral remarkable Occurrences, recorded in the Holy Scriptures, relating to the People of God. It remains now, that we take a ſhort View of the reſt of Mankind, and enquire a little, how thoſe Nations, that were *Aliens to the Covenant*, and deſtitute of *divine Revelation*, conducted themſelves in Matters of Religion.

The wiſeſt Heathens believed in one God only.

[a] THAT the wiſeſt, and moſt thinking Part of the *Heathens*, acknowledged but one Eternal, Independent, and Self-exiſtent Being, the Creator and Governor of the Univerſe, from whom all other inferior *Divinities* derived their Eſſence and Original, is manifeſt from the Teſtimony of both Heathen and Chriſtian Writers: And by what Steps they might arrive at this Knowledge, the Apoſtle to the *Gentiles* has, in ſome Meaſure, informed us; [b] *For the inviſible Things of God*, ſays he, *from the Creation of the World, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* They might argue, from the Light of Nature, that, as it is a Contradiction for any Thing to be the Author of its own Exiſtence, ſo all the *viſible* Parts of Nature were produced by ſome *Cauſe*; and, conſidering the *Spaciouſneſs* of their Extent, and *Curiouſneſs* of their Texture, by ſome *infinite* and almighty Cauſe; that, as leſs than an infinite and almighty Being was able neither to create, nor govern the innumerable Parts of the Univerſe, ſo more than one Being of that Kind, would both be *ſuperfluous* and *repugnant*; *ſuperfluous*, becauſe one would have all imaginable Perfections, and leave the other in a State of *Inferiority*; and *repugnant*, becauſe, ſuppoſing them of *equal* Perfections, they might nevertheleſs diſagree in their *Adminiſtrations* and Counſels: And therefore, [c] ſince the Heathens obſerved ſuch an exact *Harmony* in the Frame and Government of the World, all Things conſpiring to one End, and continuing in one uniform Courſe, it was not ſo great a Stretch of Reaſoning for them to conclude, that a *Plurality* of Gods was no more than a Fiction, ſince all Things were certainly made and governed by one great, and good, and wiſe Principle.

Οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη, εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω,

is a Verſe of *Homer*, [d] which *Socrates*, the wiſeſt Head of *Greece*, uſed frequently to have in his Mouth, againſt the vaſt Number of Gods, that were in uſe in his Country: And as it is well known, that as one Part of his *Impeachment* was his breaking the *Athenian* Laws, by denying thoſe to be Gods, whom the City of *Athens* acknowledged to be ſuch; ſo his dying in that Cauſe, and becoming a *Martyr* for the *Unity* of the Godhead, may be ſome reaſonable Preſumption, that his Followers, the *Academicks*, continued in the ſame Perſuaſion. *Plato*, the Founder of another Sect, was of this Opinion, [e] that there were not *two* Gods, governing the World by different Counſels, but *one* only, [f] the Author and Parent of all Things, who made the great *Animal* of the World, and directed all its Motions: And therefore he tells his Friend, [g] *When I am in earneſt, I begin my Letter with one God; but when I am otherwiſe, I begin it with the Name of many.* The Sect of the *Stoicks* (as [h] they are repreſented by the learned Commentator on *Virgil*) held, that the divine Nature or Power is one and the ſame, but had different Titles, according to the different Relations we ſtand in to God, and the Variety of our Duties, which have reſpect to him: To

[a] *King*'s Crit. Hiſt. of the Creed, c. 2. of the Idolatry of the *Gentile* World. [b] Rom. i. 20. [c] *Tilloſon*'s Serm. V. I. [d] *Edwards*, [e] *Plat.* Polit. Vol. II. [f] *Timæus Locrius. de Animâ Mundi.* [g] *Plat. Epiſt.* 43. *ad Dionyſ.* [h] Stoici dicunt non eſſe niſi unum Deum, & unam eandemque eſſe poteſtatem, &c. *Serv. in Æn.* iv.

To which Purpoſe [i] *Seneca*, and, not long before him, [k] *Ariſtotle*, rejecting a Multitude of Deities, reſolve the Difference of God's Names into this, that they ſignify to us the Variety of his *Operations*, and the different Exertments of his Power: For, though the Pagans worſhipped ſeveral Deities, (as [l] St *Auſtin* informs us) yet their Philoſophers declared, that theſe were only ſo many different Names of their great God *Jupiter*, who was called, in the Air, *Juno*; in the Sea, *Neptune*; in the Earth, *Pluto*; in Hell, *Proſerpina*; in War, *Mars*; in Vineyards, *Bacchus*; and in the Woods, *Diana*. Yea, all thoſe other inferior Gods and Goddeſſes, *ſays he*, ſuch as *Apis*, *Lucina*, *Cunina*, *Fortuna*, and the reſt of that numberleſs Company, were but one and the ſame *Jupiter*, [m] who, according to the various Benefits, that he beſtowed upon Mankind, was worſhipped under different Names and Appellations. "'Tis "of no great Conſequence therefore, *concludes* [n] *Seneca*, by what Name you call the "Firſt Nature, and the Divine Reaſon, which preſides over the Univerſe, and fills "all the Parts of it; he is ſtill the ſame God. He is called *Jupiter Stator*, not, as "Hiſtorians ſay, becauſe he ſtopped the *Roman* Armies, as they were flying, but "becauſe he is the *conſtant Support of all Beings*. Some may call him *Fate*, be"cauſe he is the *Firſt Cauſe*, on which all others depend: We *Stoicks* call him "ſometimes *Father Bacchus*, becauſe he is the univerſal Life, that animates Na"ture; *Hercules*, becauſe his Power is invincible; *Mercury*, becauſe he is the Rea"ſon, the Order, and the eternal Wiſdom. You may give him as many Names "as you pleaſe, provided you allow him but one *ſole Omnipreſent Principle*, filling "all Things that he hath made."

The more Ignorant believed a Plurality.

BUT, though ſome of the wiſeſt Heathens are ſuppoſed to acknowledge one Supreme God only, and him to worſhip, according to his ſeveral Powers and Perfections, under different Titles and Denominations; yet it will be very irrational and groundleſs to infer from hence, that there never was any ſuch Thing as *Polytheiſm* in the World. The Philoſophers, indeed, who were forced to comply with the Follies of the People, might, in Excuſe of ſuch their Compliance, pretend, that ſuch a Multitude of Deities, as the Vulgar owned, was either the Parts of the *Univerſe*, which, among the *Egyptians*, was looked upon as a God, or the ſeveral Powers and Properties of the one Supreme God, under a Variety of Appellations: But certainly the common People had no ſuch refined Thoughts; they ſeldom looked farther than the Objects of Senſe; and *therefore we need leſs wonder*, (as [o] one of the moſt plauſible Apologiſts for the *Gentile* Religion owns) *if Men of groſs Ignorance eſteemed Wood and Stones divine Images, ſince they, who are unlearned, look on Monuments, that have Inſcriptions on them, as ordinary Stones; eſteem valuable Tables, as Pieces of common Wood; and Books of the beſt Learning, they regard no otherwiſe, than ſo many Bundles of Paper.*

Proved from Scripture,

THAT the Generality of the heathen World was guilty of *Idolatry* and *Polytheiſm*, in the common and moſt obvious Acceptation of the Words, is evident from the moſt *authentick* Records. [p] In the *Old* Teſtament, how poſitively, how expreſſly is the worſhipping a Diverſity of Gods related? How frequently are the Gods and Idols, belonging to ſeveral Nations, mentioned? How exactly are the Rites, and diſtinct Circumſtances of their Adoration deſcribed, and the Folly and Infatuation of their Worſhippers ſet off, [q] with all the Keenneſs of *Deriſion* and *Sarcaſm*? In the *New* Teſtament, among many more, we have one Paſſage, that fully determines the Matter, where the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of the *Pagan* Idolaters, tells us expreſsly, [r] *that they changed the Glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four-footed Beaſts, and creeping Things——and worſhipped and ſerved the Creature, more than the Creator, who is bleſſed for ever:* Inſtead of true, they entertained falſe Conceptions of God, and worſhipped corruptible Creatures in the Place of the incorruptible Creator. All Sorts of created Beings, even thoſe that were moſt *contemptible*, had the ſame Veneration, that was due to the glorious Majeſty of Heaven; yea, they were worſhipped by them, *more than* God himſelf: Or

[i] Tot Appellationes ejus poſſunt eſſe, quot munera —— Omnia ejuſdem Dei nomina ſunt, variè utentis ſuâ poteſtate. *De Benef. Lib. iv. c.* 7. [k] Εἰς δὲ ὢν πολυώνυμός ἐστι, &c. *De Mundo.* [l] And yet, ſome other Fathers look upon both the *Grecian* and *Roman Jupiter*, as no other, than an *Arch-Devil*, and a *Topical* God; and accordingly deride his Worſhip, as the Adoration of a Man, that was born and buried at *Crete*. *Tenniſon* of Idolatry, c. 5. [m] Quid? Uſque adeo Majores noſtros inſipientes & cæcos fuiſſe credendum eſt, ut Bacchum, & Cererem Deos putârint? Imo unum Deum credebant, cujus illa munera, illæ functiones eſſent. *Aug. de Civit. Dei, Lib. iv.* [n] *De Benef. Lib. iv.* [o] *Porphyr. apud Euſeb. de Præpar. Evang. Lib. iii. c.* 7. [p] *Edwards*, of the Idolatry of the *Gentile* World. [q] *Vid.* Iſa. lxi. 7, &c. Ch. lxiv. 9, &c. Hab. ii. 20, &c. [r] Rom. i. 23, 25.

if παρὰ may be rendered *beſides*, as well as *more than*, then it is evident, that the Pagans worſhipped the *true God*, and *falſe Gods* too; *i. e.* tho' ſome of them were perſuaded of the *Exiſtence* of one Supreme Being; whom, in ſome Sort, they reverenced and adored; yet, beſides him, they worſhipped other Beings, and ſet up a vaſt Number of other Gods, who were no more than Creatures: And therefore the ſame Apoſtle, who well underſtood the Nature of *Gentile* Idolatry, tells the *Lycaonians*, when he found them going to offer Sacrifice to him and *Barnabas*, that the Intent of his preaching the Goſpel to them, was, * *to turn them from theſe Vanities*, i. e. the Worſhip of the many Idols, to which they were addicted, to that *of the living God, who made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all Things that are therein.*

And other Authorities.

SUBSEQUENT to the Apoſtle's Time, we find *Juſtin* the *Philoſopher*, (once a *Pagan*, and then writing to the Pagans) reminding them of their Images and Idols of all Sorts, and telling them plainly; † *that they not only called theſe Gods, but ſerved them, and worſhipped them as ſuch*; *and that they hated the Chriſtians, becauſe they were of another Opinion*; and *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, another Convert from *Paganiſm*, recounting the Reaſons of the firſt Invention of Heathen Deities, in theſe Words: "Some, contemplating the Stars, ‡ *ſays he*, and admiring their Courſes, made them "Gods; ſo the *Indians* worſhipped the Sun, and the *Phrygians* the Moon: And "others, collecting with Delight the Fruits of the Earth, deified *Corn*, which they "called *Ceres*, and the *Vine*, which they called *Bacchus*. Some being afraid of Puniſhments, Diſtreſſes, and Calamities, found out particular Deities, whom they "either took to be *Means* of ſending them upon Mankind, or of diverting them. "The *Philoſophers*, following the Fancy of the *Poets*, made Gods of the Paſſions, "as Love, Hope, Joy; others put the Virtues into the Number of the Gods, re"preſenting them by outward Shapes; and the common People, laſtly, did gene"rally deify thoſe, from whom they received any conſiderable Benefit or Advan"tage." So that, according to theſe Men's Account, not only the common People, but even their Philoſophers, and Men of the beſt Underſtanding made no Scruple of ſetting up a Multiplicity of Gods: *We need leſs wonder then*, ſays *Lactantius*, (who was a good Judge in the Caſe, as having himſelf been bred up in *Heatheniſm*) *if barbarous Nations, and the ignorant People erred, in adoring the Stars*; *ſeeing the very Philoſophers of the* Stoick *Sect* (who were the prime *Moraliſts*, as well as *Naturaliſts*) *were of the ſame Opinion, and thought that all the heavenly Bodies, which are in Motion, were to be reckoned among the Number of the Gods.*

The firſt Inſtitution of Idols, &c.

AND, indeed, if we look a little into the firſt Inſtitution of *Idolatry* and *Polytheiſm*, it will appear more than probable, that it was not the ignorant *Rabble*, but ſome wiſer, or, at leaſt, ſome pretendedly-wiſer Head, that firſt formed the Deſign of introducing more Gods than one into the World. The Apoſtle has given us good Grounds for this Conjecture: For, having obſerved in what Manner divine Homage was paid to the moſt contemptible Creatures, he immediately denotes the Men, that were the Occaſion of it; *they were ſuch*, ſays he, *as profeſſed themſelves to be wiſe*; which plainly relates to the *Philoſophers*, (as moſt Commentators allow) who made great Pretences to Reaſon, and were *Profeſſors* of *Wiſdom*; and are therefore very appoſitely upbraided with their Folly, in making *Brutes* their Gods, and, by their Practice and Perſuaſion, encouraging the more ignorant Sort to do the ſame.

In what Age of the World.

IN what Age of the World, the Number of Gods began to multiply upon the Face of the Earth, is not ſo eaſy to determine: ᵘ "The Silence of the ſacred Hiſtorian, however, is a good Preſumption, that, in the Times before the Flood, there was no Worſhip of ſtrange Gods, ſince it can hardly be ſuppoſed, but that ſo foul a Sin (had it been in Practice in thoſe early Days) would have met with the ſame Animadverſion from *Moſes*, as ‡ the *Violence* and *Injuſtice*, which then filled the Earth, or ˣ the unclean Mixtures of the *Sons of God* with the *Daughters of Men*. The old World was doubtleſs ʸ wicked enough to deſerve the Deſtruction, which God brought upon it: But, from the freſh Memory of the Creation, from the frequent Apparitions of God and Angels, who might remind Men of their Duty; from the long Lives of the *Antediluvian* Patriarchs, who would not fail to inculcate to their Families

* Acts xiv. 15.
† Exhort. ad Gent. Rom. i. 22.
‡ Gen. vi. 11.
ʸ Ibid. *ver.* 12.
ᵗ Ταῦτα θεὺς καλεῖτε, τούτοις δουλεύετε, τούτοις προσκυνεῖτε, &c. ad Doognet. Epiſt.
ᵘ Quid mirum, ſi aut Barbari, aut imperiti homines in adorandis Aſtris errârint, cùm etiam Philoſophi Stoicæ Diſciplinæ in eâdem fuerint Opinione, ut omnia cæleſtia, quæ moventur, in Deorum numero habenda eſſe cenſuerint? *Inſtit. Lib.* II.
‡ *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry, ch. iv.

milies what themſelves were abundantly aſſured of, *the Almighty Power and Unity of the Godhead*; from theſe, and perhaps ſeveral other Cauſes to us unknown, it might come to paſs, that the Worſhip of Idols was, either not in Being, or, at leaſt, not in frequent Uſe, in this Infancy of the World. Some indeed, from a Paſſage in *Moſes*, [z] *then began Men to profane* (as they would render it) inſtead of tranſlating it (as our Church has done) *to call upon the Name of the Lord*, have been inclined to refer the *Origin* of Idolatry to the Days of *Enos*: But, [a] ſince the Name of God may be *profaned* by ſundry other *Means*, as well as by Idolatry, (as it was certainly profaned before, and with great Irreverence abuſed, in the wicked Families of *Cain* and *Lamech*) though the *Hebrew* Word may ſometimes ſignify to *profane*, yet [b] in this Place there is no Reaſon to enforce ſuch an Expoſition; eſpecially ſince the *Chaldee* Interpreter ſeems to come nearer the Scope of the Paſſage, and has given us a Senſe that ſeems unexceptionable: *In thoſe Days Men began to make Supplications in the Name of the Lord*, i. e. the Number of Families increaſing in the Days of *Enos*, they appointed more *publick* Places for God's Service, in which, at Set-times, they met together, and, in a more ſolemn Congregation, worſhipped their great Creator.

FROM *Cham* therefore, rather than from *Enos*, the Learned have derived the Beginning of Idolatry; and they ſuppoſe, that this Man's Heart, being deeply depraved before the *Deluge*, was but more hardened by his wonderful Eſcape from it; ſo that it might be juſt with God, to give him up to the farther Seducement of his Senſuality, and to the viſible Power of the *old Serpent*, who, for a Time might be chained down by the *Curſe* in *Paradiſe*, but was now let looſe again, for the Puniſhment of thoſe, whom God's ſevere and miraculous Diſcipline did not *cleanſe* of their Wickedneſs and Folly. This Date however [c] ſome have accounted a little too ſoon, and therefore placed the Beginning of Idolatry at the Confuſion of Languages, and under *Belus*, rather than *Cham*; reaſonably preſuming, that the Difference of Mens *Dialects*, and the Diſtinction of their *Opinions* concerning God, might not improbably commence together.

BUT be the preciſe Time of the Commencement of Idolatry what it will, it was the *wiſe Men* of the World, (as we ſaid before) the reaſoning *Philoſopher*, or cunning *Prieſt*, who found his Advantage in it, that having formed the Deſign, addreſſed to the Multitude with a grave Appearance, [d] and prevailed, as we may imagine, by ſome ſuch Way of arguing, as this: "We are all aware, *ye Sons of* Noah, that "Religion is our chief Concern, and therefore it well becomes us to improve and "advance it as much as poſſible. We have, indeed, received Appointments from "God for the Worſhip which he requires; but if theſe Appointments may be al-"tered for his greater Glory, who doubts but that it will be a commendable Piety ſo "to alter them? Now our Father *Noah* has inſtituted us in a Religion, which, in "Truth, is too *ſimple*, and too *unaffecting*. It directs us to worſhip God *abſtractedly* "from all Senſe, and under a confuſed Notion; under the Formality of Attributes, "as Power, Goodneſs, Juſtice, Wiſdom, Eternity, and the like; an Idea, foreign "to our *Affections*, as well as our *Comprehenſion*: Whereas, in all Reaſon, we ought "to worſhip God more *pompouſly*, and more extenſively, and not only to adore his "*perſonal* and *eſſential* Attributes, but likewiſe all the *Emanations* of them, and all "thoſe Creatures, by which they are eminently repreſented. We ought therefore "(if we will be wiſe) to worſhip the *Hoſt of Heaven*, becauſe they are eminent Re-"preſentations of his Glory, and Eternity. We ought to worſhip *the Elements*, be-"cauſe they repreſent his Benignity and Omnipreſence. We ought to worſhip "*Princes*, becauſe they ſuſtain a divine Character, and are the *Repreſentatives* of his "Power upon Earth. We ought to worſhip *Men famous in their Generation*, even "when they are dead, becauſe their Virtues were the diſtinguiſhing Gifts and Com-"munications of God. Nay, we ought to worſhip the *Ox*, and the *Sheep*, and "whatever Creatures are moſt beneficial, becauſe they are *Symbols* of his Love and "Goodneſs; and, with no leſs Reaſon, the *Serpent*, the *Crocodile*, and other Animals "that are *noxious*, becauſe they are the Symbols of his awful Anger." This ſeems to be a fair Opening of the Project, and, by ſome ſuch cunning Harangue as this, we may ſuppoſe, that the firſt Contrivers of Idolatry, drew in the ignorant and admiring Multitude. And indeed, conſidering the natural Stupidity of vulgar Minds, and the ſtrong Inclinations they have, in Matters of *abſtruſe* Conſideration, to help

By whom.

them-

[z] Gen. iv. 26. [a] *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry. [b] The Word [*Chala*] in the Conjugation wherein it is here uſed is never taken for *Profaning*, but *Beginning*.
[c] Cyril. Alex. contra Julian. Lib. I. [d] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

themſelves by *ſenſible* Objects, it ſeems not ſo difficult a Taſk to have drawn them in.

For what Reaſons.

'THOSE, who worſhipped *Univerſal Nature*, or the Syſtem of the *Material* World, perceived firſt, that there were *Excellencies* in the ſeveral Parts of it; and then to make up the *Grandeur* and Perfection of the Idea, they joined them all together in one Divine Being. Thoſe, who laboured under a *Weakneſs* and Narrowneſs of Imagination, diſtributed Nature into its ſeveral Parts, and worſhipped that Portion of it, which was accounted of moſt general Uſe and Benefit. *Uſefulneſs* was the common *Motive*; but it was not the only Motive, that inclined the World to Idolatry: For, upon farther Enquiry, we ſhall find, that whatever raviſhed with its tranſcendent *Beauty*, whatever affrighted with its malignant *Power*, whatever aſtoniſhed with its uncommon *Greatneſs*, whatever, in ſhort, was beautiful, hurtful, or majeſtick, became a Deity, as well as what was profitable for its Uſe.

'THE *Sun*, they perceived, had all thoſe Powers and Properties united in it. Its *Beauty* is glorious to behold; its *Motion* wonderful to conſider; its *Heat* occaſions different Effects, Barrenneſs in ſome Places, and in others Fruitfulneſs; and the immenſe Globe of its *Light* appears highly exalted, and riding in Triumph, as it were, round the World: The *Moon*, they ſaw, ſupplied the Abſence of the Sun, by Night gave a friendly Light to the Earth, and, beſides the great Variety of its *Phaſes*, had a wonderful Influence over the *Sea*, and other humid Bodies: The *Stars* they admired for their *Height* and *Magnitude*, the Order of their *Poſitions*, and Celerity of their *Motions*, and thence were perſuaded, either that ſome *Celeſtial* Vigour or other reſided in them, or that the Souls of their Heroes and great Men were tranſlated into them, when they died; and upon theſe, and ſuch like Preſumptions, they accounted all heavenly Bodies to be *Deities*, though the Sun, in all Places, was the moſt *univerſal* and popular Idol. [g] 'The Force of *Fire*, the Subtilty of *Air*, the Uſefulneſs of *Water*, as well as the Terror and Dreadfulneſs of *Thunder* and *Lightning*, gave Riſe to the Conſecration of theſe *Elements*. The *Sea* itſelf, ſwelling with its proud Surface, and roaring with its mighty Billows, is ſuch an *awful* Sight, and the *Earth* bedecked with all its Plants, Flowers, and Fruits, ſuch a *lovely* one; as might well affect a Pagan's Veneration: When from the like Motive, their beneficial, hurtful, delightful, or aſtoniſhing Properties, Beaſts, Birds, Fiſhes, and Inſects came at firſt to be adored. The Pride and Pomp of the *Great*, and the low and ſlaviſh Diſpoſitions of the *Mean* occaſioned, firſt the *Flattery*, and then the *Worſhip* of Kings and Princes, as Gods upon Earth. Men famous for their great Adventures and Exploits, the *Founders* of Nations or Cities, or the Inventors of uſeful Arts and Sciences were *reverenced*, while they lived, and upon their Death *canonized*. The prevailing Notion of the Soul's Immortality made them imagine, either that immediately they *aſcended* up to Heaven, and there ſettled their Abode in ſome *Orb* or other; or that they *hovered* in the Air, whence, by ſolemn Invocations, and by making ſome *Statue* or Image reſemblant of them, they might be prevailed with to come down, and inhabit it.

The Riſe of Images.

THE Author of the Book of *Wiſdom* [h] has given us a full Account of the firſt Inſtitution of Statues and Images, and upon what Occaſions they were probably ſet up. *A Father*, ſays he, *afflicted with untimely Mourning, when he hath made an Image of his Child, ſoon taken away, now honoured him as a God, which was then a dead Man; and delivered to thoſe that were under him Ceremonies and Sacrifices. Thus, in Proceſs of Time, an ungodly Cuſtom, grown ſtrong, was kept as a Law, and graven Images were worſhipped by the Commandment of Kings. Whom Men could not honour in Preſence, becauſe they dwelt far off, they took the Counterfeit of his Viſage from far, and made an expreſs Image of a King, whom they honoured, to the End, that, by this their Forwardneſs, they might flatter him, that was abſent, as if he were preſent. Alſo the ſingular Diligence of the Artificer did help to ſet forward the Ignorant to more Superſtition; for he, peradventure, willing to pleaſe one in Authority, forced all his Skill to make the Reſemblance of the beſt Faſhion; and ſo the Multitude, allured by the Grace of the Work, took him now for a God, who, a little before, was but honoured as a Man.* [i] 'Thus the *Splendor* and Artifice of the Statues themſelves, together with the *Juggles* and Impoſtures of the Heathen Prieſts, telling ſtrange Stories of their *Original*, or their Diſcovery, inclined the World to an Opinion, that what

[e] *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry. [f] Ibid. [g] *Herbert*'s ancient Religion of the *Gentiles*. [h] Chap. xiv. 15. [i] *Tenniſon*, ibid.

what was *primarily* a Memorial of a departed *Child*, or *Hero*, a Remembrancer of a diſtant *Friend*, or *Governor*, or a Monument of ſome remarkable Accident in the World, was the Receptacle of ſome ſtrange Divinity.

When firſt worſhipped.

WHEN Statues came firſt to be *idolized*, is not ſo eaſy a Matter to determine; but that they were of very early Inſtitution is manifeſt from that Paſſage in Scripture, where we are told, that [k] *Rachel ſtole away her Father Laban's Images. Laban* lived in *Chaldea*, or in *Meſopotamia*, which belongeth to it; and, as this is the firſt Inſtance of Idolatry, that we have upon Record, 'tis preſumed by ſome learned Men, that theſe Images, or [l] *Teraphim*, which *Rachel* ſtole, were Images in *Miniature*, made in Imitation of the Statues of ſome great *Aſſyrian* Kings, who very probably were the firſt Heathen Gods: And from hence they farther conjecture, that the firſt Images of this Kind were thoſe, which (as *Lactantius* tells us) *Ninus* erected in Remembrance of his Father *Belus*, (whom the Scriptures call *Nimrod*) and that theſe were the earlieſt Objects of profane Worſhip. *Chaldea*, no doubt, was the Mother of Idolatry: There *Abraham* dwelt; and from thence he was ordered to depart, that he and his Poſterity might be reſcued from the general Impiety, and taught to worſhip the true God only: But then, whether the Images of great Men were the firſt Objects of the *Chaldean* Adoration, is a Matter much to be queſtion'd. [m] The *Chaldeans*, 'tis certain, by Reaſon of the plain and eaſy *Situation* of their Country, which gave *them* a larger Proſpect of the *heavenly* Bodies, than thoſe, who inhabited mountainous Places, had a great Conveniency for *Aſtronomical* Obſervations; and, accordingly, were the firſt People, that took any great Pains to improve them. And as they were the firſt *Aſtrologers*, ſo learned Men have obſerved, that [n] *they had no other Gods, but the Stars, to whom they made Statues and Images: Thoſe, which they made to the Sun, were of Gold; to the Moon, of Silver; and ſo to the reſt of the Planets, of the Metals dedicated to them.* They ſuppoſe therefore, that theſe *Aſtrologers*, lying on the Ground, or elſe on flat Roofs, all Night, to make their Obſervations, fell in Love with the *Lights of Heaven*, which, in the clear Firmament of thoſe Countries, appeared ſo often, and with ſo much Luſtre; and perceiving the conſtant and regular Order of their Motions and Revolutions, they thence began to imagine, that they were animated by ſome ſuperior *Souls*, and therefore deſerved their Adoration. And as the Sun, excelling all the reſt, ſeemed to command the greateſt Obſervance; ſo the Generality of learned Men have, with good Reaſon, imagined, that this bright *Luminary* was the *firſt Idol* in the World.

The Sun the firſt Idol.

For what Reaſon.

JOB very probably (as [o] we have had Occaſion to take Notice before) lived in *Jacob*'s Time, yet it is plain, (by his aſſerting his Innocence in this Reſpect) that this Kind of Idolatry was *cuſtomary* in his Days; [p] *If I beheld the Sun, when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in Brightneſs, and mine Heart hath been ſecretly enticed, or my Mouth hath kiſſed mine Hand, i. e.* if, with Devotion of Soul, or Profeſſion of outward Ceremony, I have worſhipped thoſe heavenly Bodies, which, by their Height, Motion, and Luſtre attract the Eye, and raviſh the Senſes; *this alſo were an Iniquity, to be puniſhed by the Judges; for I ſhould have denied the God, that is above,* *Moſes*, conducting the Children of *Iſrael* into *Canaan*, gives them Intimation, what Kind of Idolatry was current in the Land, and a ſtrict Caution, [q] *that, when they lifted up their Eyes to the Heavens*, they ſhould arm their Minds, againſt that *Enchantment*, to which they were ſubject by the ſenſible Glory *of the Sun, Moon, and Stars:* And therefore, the Account, which [r] the Hiſtorian gives us of the firſt Commencement of Idolatry, ſeems not improbable, *viz. That the moſt ancient Inhabitants of the Earth*, (meaning thoſe, that lived ſoon after the Flood, and particularly the *Egyptians*) *contemplating on the World above them, and being aſtoniſhed, with high Admiration, at the Nature of the Univerſe, believed that there were eternal Gods, and that the two Principal of them were the Sun and the Moon, the firſt of which they called* Oſiris, *and the ſecond* Iſis; [s] ſince, of late Years, when the Mariner's Compaſs directed Men to

[k] Gen. xxxi. 19. [l] Theſe *Teraphim* (according to *Kircher*'s *Oedip. Egypt.*) were the ſame Idol with the *Egyptian Serapis, i. e.* an Image, like a little Child wrapped up, without Hands or Feet. The *Jewiſh* Rabbins agree with him thus far, that they were Images of human Shape; but they add farther, that they were *Taliſmanical* Images, made by Aſtrologers, and capable of Celeſtial Influence: And therefore *Rachel* ſtole them from her Father, ſay they, leſt, by their Inſpection, he ſhould diſcover which Way *Jacob* took his Flight. *Selden de Diis Syris Syntag.* 1. [m] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [n] Maimon. More Nev. P. III. c. 29. [o] Vid. pag. 356. [p] Job xxxi. 26, &c. [q] Deut. iv. 19. [r] Diod. Sicul. Bibl. Hiſtor. L. III. c. 11. [s] *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry.

to a *new* World in *America*, (peopled no doubt from ſeveral Parts of the *old*) many different Idols were found in particular Places; but as for the Sun, it was the *general* Deity both in *Mexico* and *Peru*.

The great Multitude of Idols.

BUT, whatever the *firſt* Idol might be, it ſoon multiplied to ſuch a prodigious Number, as to fill both Heaven and Earth with its *Progeny*; inſomuch, that there were few Parts of the Creation, but what, in one Nation or other, had their Worſhippers. [t] They worſhipped univerſal Nature, the Soul of the World, Angels, Devils, and the Souls of Men departed, either by themſelves, or in Union with ſome Star, or other Body. They worſhipped the *Heavens*, and, in them, both particular *Luminaries*, and *Conſtellations*; the *Atmoſphere*, and, in it, the *Meteors*, and Fowls of the Air; the *Earth*, and, in it, Beaſts, Birds, Inſects, Plants, Groves, and Hills, together with divers Foſſils, and terreſtrial Fire. They worſhipped the *Water*, and, in it, the Sea and Rivers; and, in them, Fiſhes, Serpents, and Inſects, together with ſuch Creatures as are *doubtful* Inhabitants of either *Element*. They worſhipped *Men*, both living and dead, and, in them, the Faculties and Endowments of the Soul, as well as the ſeveral Accidents and Conditions of human Life. Nay, they worſhipped the *Images* of Men, the Images of Animals, *even the moſt hateful*, ſuch as Serpents, Dragons, Crocodiles, *&c.* Images of ſeveral Parts of very different Creatures, and reckoned all ſuch *Figures* and Repreſentations, though never ſo ſtrange and monſtrous, *ſacred* and venerable. Thus they ranſacked Heaven and Earth, and in every Place found out ſomething to tranſmute into a God.

Some Nations had particular ones.

BUT, amidſt this ſtrange *Variety*, [u] there were few Nations, but what had one God *peculiar* to themſelves, to which they paid a more than ordinary Veneration. And * though this God might poſſibly be the *ſame*, with what other Nations worſhipped; yet, by the Difference of the *Name* and Title, which they gave it, and the Diverſity of *Rites* and Ceremonies, wherewith they addreſſed it, they made it, at leaſt, ſeem to be a *diſtinct* Deity. Thus the Holy Scriptures acquaint us, that not only [x] *every Nation made Gods of their own*; that [y] Aſtoreth *was the Goddeſs of the* Zidonians, Chemoſh *the God of the* Moabites, *and* Milcom *the God of the Children of* Ammon, *&c.* but that every City and large Town had a particular Deity, to which, in a peculiar Manner, they were devoted. This the Exprobration of the Prophet, [z] *according to the Number of thy Cities, ſo are thy Gods*; and this the vaunting Speech of *Rabſhakeh* implies, [a] *Where are the Gods of* Hamath, *and of* Arpad? *Where are the Gods of* Sephervaim, Henah, *and* Ivah? As much as to ſay, that the Gods, who *preſided* over theſe ſeveral Cities, and were worſhipped and invoked by the Inhabitants thereof, could not deliver them out of the Hands of his Maſter the King of *Aſſyria*.

NAY, ſome Nations were ſo far infatuated this Way, as not to be content with the particular Deities of their own Countries, but were eager to *import* from other Climates, and to worſhip *all* the Gods, they could any where hear of. [b] The *Romans*, for their Superſtition in this Reſpect, were very remarkable: For, as they conquered all Nations, they adopted their Religions: And, having built a *Pantheon*, or Temple for all the Gods of the whole World, they made their Worſhip as univerſal, as their Empire. Nor were the *Athenians*, in the leaſt, inferior to them; They had their θεοὶ ξενικοὶ, *ſtrange Gods*, or Gods of other Countries, in every Corner of the City; and, that they might be ſure to take in the whole *Complex* of them, they erected Altars (as not only [c] the *Apoſtle*, but [d] *Pagan* Authors have likewiſe told us) to *unknown Gods*, inſomuch, that *Athens* was but one great *Temple*, or (in the Language of [e] a very conſiderable Writer) *all Altar*, *all Sacrifice*, *all Conſecration to the Gods*.

The Abſurdities they ran into.

AMONG ſuch a Number of Deities, their Importers, or firſt Inſtituters, ran themſelves into frequent *Abſurdities*. [f] They confounded the *Species* of Things, and mixed ſometimes the moſt monſtrous and inconſiſtent together, in Order to conſtitute

[t] *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry. [u] Unicuique enim Provinciæ, & Civitati, ſuus Deus eſt, ut Syriæ Aſtarte, ut Arabiæ Diſares, *&c.* *Tertul. Apol. c.* 24. Inde adeo per univerſa Imperia, provincias, Oppida videmus ſingula, ſacrorum Ritus Gentiles habere, & Deos colere Municipes, ut Eleuſinios Cererem, Phrygas magnam Matrem, Epidauros Æſculapium, &c. *Min. Felix.* * Thus the *Oſiris* of the *Egyptians*, the *Baal* of the *Phœnicians*, the *Moloch* of the *Amorites*, the *Belus* of the *Syrians*, the *Mithras* of the *Perſians*, and the *Apollo* of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, are ſuppoſed by ſome learned Men to be one and the ſame Deity, and to ſignify the Sun. *Herbert*'s Religion of the *Gentiles*. [x] 2 Kings xvii. 29. [y] 1 Kings xi. 33. [z] Jer. ii. 28. [a] 2 Kings xviii. 34. [b] *Edwards*, of the Idolatry of the *Gentile* World. [c] Acts xvii. 23. [d] Pauſan. in Attic. Lucian. in Philopat. & Laërt. in Epimenide. [e] Zenoph. de Repub. Athen. [f] *Edwards*, ibid.

conſtitute a God of an *uncommon* Make. [g] They confounded the *Sexes*, and made one and the ſame Deity ſometimes *Male*, ſometimes *Female*, and frequently both. They confounded the *Offices* of their Gods, and made them many Times preſide in very different and incompatible Provinces. *Apollo*, for Inſtance, was their God of *Muſick*, and yet, at the ſame Time, they made him the God of *Phyſick*, the God of *Poetry*, and the God of *Wiſdom*, and all this, to be reconciled with his being the *Sun*. *Diana* was the Goddeſs of the *Woods* and *Foreſts*, yet, under the Name of *Trivia*, ſhe ſome way related to the *Streets*; ſhe is made to be the *Moon*, or Queen of Heaven; ſometimes an *Huntreſs*; ſometimes a *Midwife*, under the Name of *Lucina*; and again, under the Title of *Hecate*, no better than a *Witch*. What can be more abſurd and ridiculous, than the Repreſentation they gave of their God *Dagon*, who, in his upper Parts, was a Man, or a Woman, (for they made him of either Sex) and, below, a Fiſh; of the *Lybian Jupiter*, [h] with his Ram's Head, and a pair of crooked Horns; or of the *Egyptian Anubis*, who was worſhipped in the Shape of a Man's Body, [i] with the Head of a Dog? This ſhews the fatal Progreſs of Error, and into what wild Conceits Men naturally *deviate*, when once they forſake the Worſhip of the true God, and, by the Deception of the Devil, [k] *become vain* (as the Apoſtle expreſſes it) *in their Imaginations, and have their fooliſh Hearts darkened.*

The Order ſettled among them.

THIS prodigious Number of Deities, giving ſuch a Latitude to Men's wild Conceits, occaſioned great Perplexity among their Worſhippers, and raiſed Diſputes about their *Preference* and *Priority*: * So that, to end theſe Diſputes, it was concluded by the *Romans*, and others, that ſome ſhould be eſtabliſhed as *Dii majorum Gentium*, much ſuperior in Power and Dignity to the *Dii minorum Gentium*, who were but called *Heroes* and *Half-gods*: Not but that the former were only Men *canonized* after their Death, as well as the latter; but the *Diſtance* of Time, wherein they lived, which increaſed the Stories of their *Atchievements*, as well as the *long Courſe* of Devotion, which, in ſucceeding Ages, had been paid them, raiſed them above the reſt, and, in the general Eſteem, gave them a Pre-eminence. What the Number of this Order was, is not ſo well agreed on, ſome making them but twelve, (ſix *Males*, and as many *Females*;) and others [l] twenty; and what their ſeveral Actions and Adventures were, would be an endleſs Work to recount: Our preſent Purpoſe leads us rather to conſider, by what Ways the *heathen Mythology* concerning them might poſſibly ariſe.

The heathen Mythology, whence it aroſe.

Now, tho' the chief Cauſe of this may be imputed [m] to the fanciful Humour of the firſt Writers, that appeared in the World, the *Poets*, who took Delight to diſguiſe all ancient Stories under *Fables*, wherein they were ſo loſt, as never to be recovered afterwards; yet it ſeems apparent to any diligent Enquirer, that, [n] either by taking the *Idiom* of the *Oriental* Languages in a *literal* and proper Senſe, or, by altering the *Names* of the ancient Tradition, and ſubſtituting others, in their own Language, of the like Importance; either, by attributing what was done by the Anceſtors of Mankind to ſome *Perſons* of their own *Nation*, or, by aſcribing the Actions of ſeveral Perſons to *one*, who was either the firſt, or the Chief of them; theſe ancient Authors, did, by Degrees, corrupt the *original* Account of Men and Things, and changed it into the *heathen Mythology*.

Probably from Scripture-Hiſtory.

THAT they had ſome Knowledge of the Writings of *Moſes* is manifeſt from the plain Footſteps of Scripture-Hiſtory, which are diſcoverable in their *Fictions*. [o] Thus *Saturn*, the oldeſt of their Gods, who was the Son of *of Heaven and Earth*, once in great Power, but afterwards depoſed, and forced to abſcond, agrees exactly with the Account we have of *Adam*'s Creation, his Dominion in the *golden Age* of his Innocence, his Loſs of it by his Folly, and hiding himſelf from the Preſence of the Lord, for Fear and Shame. That *Tubal-Cain* gave firſt Occaſion to the Name and Worſhip of *Vulcan*, has been probably conceived, both from the great Affinity of the Names, and from *Tubal-Cain*'s being called [p] *an Inſtructor of every Artificer in Braſs*

[g] Among the *Aſſyrians*, *Syrians*, and *Greeks*, the *Pagan* Gods were of both Sexes: *Bacchus*, in *Ariſtides*'s Oration, is made Male and Female, and ſo is *Jupiter*, in one of *Orpheus*'s Hymns: Among the *Romans*, *Fortune* was accounted not only a Goddeſs, but a God; and among the *Pagan Saxons*, *Friga*, which was their *Venus*, (to whom the ſixth Day of the Week, called *Friday*, was dedicated) was an Idol repreſenting both Sexes. *Edwards*, of the Idolatry of the *Gentile* World. [h] Stat tortis Cornibus Ammon. *Luc. Lib.* IX. [i] Omnigenûmque Deûm monſtra, & Latrator Anubis. *Virgil*, *Æn.* viii. [k] Rom. i. 21. * *Herbert*'s Religion of the *Gentiles*.
[l] Their Names are *Janus*, *Jupiter*, *Saturn*, *Genius*, *Mercury*, *Apollo*, *Mars*, *Vulcan*, *Neptune*, *Sol*, *Orcus*, *Bacchus*, *Terra*, *Ceres*, *Juno*, *Luna*, *Diana*, *Minerva*, *Venus*, and *Veſta*; twelve Males, and eight Females. *Herbert*, ibid.
[m] *Stilling fleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [n] This, and the following Means of occaſioning their Mythology, the learned *Stilling fleet* has illuſtrated by ſeveral Inſtances. *Orig. Sacræ*, p. 365, &c. [o] *Stilling fleet*, ibid.
[p] Gen. iv. 22.

Braſs and Iron. The Story of *Prometheus*, and his *forming Mankind*, relates to the Memory of *Noah*, from whom the World was re-peopled; *Bacchus*'s being twice *born* ſeems to denote his *Preſervation* after the Flood; and the *double Face* of *Janus*, wherewith he looks both *forward* and backward, is not ſo fit an *Emblem* of any Thing, as of *Noah*'s ſeeing *two Ages*, one before, and the other after the Flood. 'Tis no vain Conjecture, that the Memory of *Jacob*'s long *Peregrination*, and Service with his Uncle *Laban*, was preſerved under the Story of *Apollo*'s Baniſhment, and being a *Shepherd* under *Admetus*; and that the Memory of *Joſeph* in *Egypt* was preſerved under the *Egyptian Apis*, has been ſhewn with a great deal of Probability, [q] by ſeveral learned Men: So that from theſe, and many more Inſtances, that might be produced, we cannot but conclude, with [r] a very judicious Enquirer, *That this wonderful Agreement, of heathen Mythology with the Scriptures, is a convincing Argument, that the one is a Corruption of the other, and that many of their Stories came from thence, though by the Change of Names, and other proper Inverſions, the firſt Compilers of them gave them a different Dreſs, to ſuit them to their own Meridian.*

THUS we have enquired into the firſt Inſtitution of the heathen *Idolatry*, and from what probable Occaſions it might ariſe; into the great Number of their Gods, and the very confuſed Accounts they give of them; and have nothing more to ſay upon this Argument, except it be what relates to the *Rites* and *Ceremonies* wherewith they uſed to worſhip. That theſe fictitious Deities had Temples, and Altars erected to them, in great Variety, and according to their reſpective Natures, is too manifeſt, to need any Proof; [s] only the *Perſians*, *Scythians*, and *Tartars*, who worſhipped the *Fire* and *Earth*, had no *Structures*, at leaſt none made in any formal or ſolemn Manner. What they offered to the *Terreſtrial* Gods, was laid upon the bare *Ground*; what to the *Infernal*, was offered in *Ditches*, or Pits made in the Ground; and what to the *Celeſtial*, in Places raiſed above the Earth, *i. e. Altars*, and theſe ſometimes ſet upon Hills and Mountains. Their Manner of worſhipping was moſt commonly with their Heads *covered*, but, on ſome Occaſions, *bare*; often lying proſtrate, and ſometimes ſtanding barefooted; running ſometimes about in frantick Fits, with hideous and confuſed Outcries; and at others, exerciſing great Cruelty, and cutting and ſlaſhing themſelves, (as [t] we read *Baal*'s Worſhippers did) *with Knives and Lancets, till the Blood guſhed out upon them.* The *Firſt-fruits* were a common Oblation to their Deities; but the chief Part of their Worſhip conſiſted in *ſacrificing* Animals: And this they did out of a real Perſuaſion, that their Gods were pleaſed with their Blood, and were nouriſhed with the *Smoke* and Nidor of them; and therefore the more coſtly, they thought them the more acceptable, for which Reaſon, they ſtuck not ſometimes to regale them with *human* Sacrifices. Some Things indeed were offered in common to them all; but, for the Generality, they had their diſtinct Sacrifices. To *Apollo* was offered a Bull; a Goat and a Tyger to *Bacchus*; a Boar and a Wolf to *Mars*; a She-goat, and ſometimes a young Heifer, to *Minerva*; a Dove to *Venus*; a Peacock to *Juno*; and a barren Cow to *Proſerpine*, &c. Each of theſe Gods had Rites and Myſteries of a peculiar Nature; and, to gain an Admiſſion to the moſt *ſecret* of them, their Votaries, after a long Courſe of Penance, (for the *Perſians* were to undergo a dozen Sorts of Torments, ſome greater, ſome leſs, before they fitted themſelves for the *Myſteries* of their God *Mithras*) had certain [u] *Symbols*, and Forms of Words given them, as a *Badge* and Token of their Profeſſion, which none, but their own *Fraternity*, were acquainted with. The *Feaſts* and other Solemnities, in Honour of their Gods, were mixed with a great deal of Lewdneſs and Intemperance; nor were they thought to be duly performed, unleſs they were attended with *Riot* and Debauchery, and ſometimes with *Cruelty* and Bloodſhed. The *Bacchanalia*, and the Rites of *Cybele*, the Mother of the Gods, were always celebrated with Gluttony and Drunkenneſs: On this Occaſion, * one of their great *Moraliſts* allows of Intemperance, and thinks it a very fit and becoming Thing, to

The Manner of worſhipping theſe Gods.

Their Feaſts.

[q] Voſſius de Idol. Lib. I. c. 29. Kirch. Oed. Egypt. Syn. 3. c. 5. and *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry, who proves it in this Method, 1. That *Moſes* was the ancient *Egyptian*, or *Arabian Bacchus*. 2. That *Bacchus* was the *Egyptian Oſiris*. And, 3. That the ancient *Egyptian Bacchus*, or *Oſiris*, was no other than *Apis*, p. 126. [r] Ex mirabili illo conſenſu, vel cæcis apparebit, priſcos Fabularum Architectos à Scriptoribus ſacris multa mutuatos. *Bochart. Canaan.* [s] *Edwards*, of the Idolatry of the *Gentile* World. [t] 1 Kings xviii. 28. [u] With Alluſion to theſe *Symbola* among the *Pagans*, the learned Author of *the Hiſtory of the Apoſtles Creed* ſuppoſes, that *that* Syſtem of Faith was called by the Name of *Symbolum*; and, upon this Occaſion, has given us a brief Account, what ſome of theſe Symbols were, both *mute* and *vocal*, p. 11. as thoſe of *Ceres* more eſpecially, are mentioned by *Arnobius*, *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and *Julius Firmicus*.

* Πίνειν δὲ εἰς μέθην ὅτε ἄριστόν ἐστι πρᾶγμα, πολὺν ἐν τῷ τοῦ οἴνου δύνασθαι Θεῶν ἰσχύν. *Plato de Leg. Lib.* VI.

to drink to Excesſ, at the Feaſts of that God, who is the Giver of Wine. The *Saturnalia* were riotous Times among the *Romans*, wherein (as [x] *Seneca* complains) a *Licenſe* was given to all publick Luxury and Uncleanneſs. The *Lupercalia* (which were the Feaſts of the God *Pan*) were ſolemnized by naked Men; thoſe of *Flora*, by the other Sex, in the ſame Condition; and (to name no more) in the Myſteries and Ceremonies of *Ceres*, as well as the Rites and Sacrifices of *Bacchus*, ſuch inhuman Actions and Barbarities were committed, [y] that the Obſervation of them was prohibited at *Rome* by a poſitive *Decree* of the *Senate*: For where theſe, and ſuch other Solemnities were allowed of, the Pſalmiſt, ſpeaking of the *Iſraelites*, has acquainted us in what Manner they were performed; [z] *they were mingled among the Heathen*, ſays he, *and learned their Works, inſomuch, that they worſhipped their Idols, which turned to their own Decay: Yea, they offered their Sons and Daughters unto Devils, and ſhed innocent Blood, even the Blood of their Sons and Daughters, whom they offered unto the Idols of* Canaan, *and the Land was defiled with Blood*: For ſuch as their Gods were, ſuch were the Ceremonies of their Worſhip, lewd and riotous, bloody and brutal. Let us now proceed a little farther, and ſee, whether the Caſe is at all amended with Relation to the *preſent State of Idolatry* in the heathen World.

SECT. I.

Of the preſent State of the Heathen Idolatry.

A Summary of the ancient Idolatry.

THE *Gentiles* of old (as we ſhew'd before) did, moſt of them, acknowledge one *Supreme* God, the firſt and univerſal Cauſe of all Things, and to him they made their Supplications and Vows: But then they imagined likewiſe, that he did not rule by his immediate *Providence*, but by ſeveral *Orders* of inferior Beings, as his *Subſtitutes* and *Lieutenants*. [a] They ſaw, that the Pride or Policy of their Princes (in order to create a greater Awe and Reverence) made them withdraw from the Management of Affairs, appear but ſeldom in Actions themſelves, and commit the Reins of Government to their Miniſters; and thereupon they ſuppoſed, that it comported beſt with the State and Dignity of God, not to concern himſelf with the Government of the World, but to leave it entirely to his *Subſtitutes*. Upon this Preſumption, [b] they were eaſily induced (next to the Supreme God) to give divine Worſhip, firſt to *intellectual* Subſtances *of an heavenly Nature*, whom they called Gods, whether they were Subſtances ſeparate from Bodies, or the Souls of *Orbs* and *Stars*; next, they addreſſed to intellectual Subſtances *united to aërial Bodies*, which they called *Dæmons*, and thought worthy of divine Worſhip, as being the *Mediators* between their Gods and them; in Proceſs of Time, they came to worſhip the Souls of ſuch, as had diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their *Uſefulneſs* to Mankind, and theſe they called *Heroes*, as being raiſed to an Elevation above this preſent Life; and, in the Concluſion, thought it not amiſs to pay the like Honour, even to the ſeveral *Images* of theſe Beings, or of other Parts of the Creation, as ſuppoſing them to participate of a ſuperior Nature, either from the *Influence* of heavenly Bodies, or the *Inhabitation* of ſome Spirit. This, in ſhort, ſeems to be the State and Progreſs of *ancient* Idolatry, which we come now to compare with the *preſent*; beginning (where it is chiefly predominant) in the *Eaſt*.

In the Eaſt-Indies. *The preſent Idolatry of the* Chineſe.

THE *Chineſe*, [c] in general, worſhip the *Supreme* God, the King of Heaven and Earth, or rather the *Eternal Mind*, which (as they imagine) animates the whole Creation; but him they ſuppoſe [d] to govern the Univerſe by a *Vicegerent*, whom they call *Laocon-Tzanty*; by the *Sun*, which they account an eternal Spirit; and by another Divinity, named *Chanſay*, whom they ſuppoſe to have Dominion over all *ſublunary* Things. To theſe Spirits, [e] and the three principal Miniſters employed under them, together with the Heavens, and all the heavenly Hoſt, the Souls of their Anceſtors, and of ſuch as have been the Authors of any notable Invention, they preſent Oblations, and religious Worſhip; only with this Diſtinction, [f] that the *King*

[x] Jus Luxuriæ Publicæ datum eſt. *Ep. xviii.* [y] Liv. Hiſt. Lib. lix. c. 9. & Val. Max. Lib. vi. [z] Pſal. cvi. 35, &c. [a] *Tenniſon*, of Idolatry. [b] Th. Aquinas cont. Gent. Lib. iii. [c] *Salmon*'s Modern Hiſtory. [d] *Mandelſlo*'s Travels into the *Indies*, Lib. ii. [e] The three Miniſters, or Coadjutors in the Government of the World, are, *Tanquam*, *Teiquam*, and *Tzniquam*; whereof the *firſt* preſides over the *Air*, and makes it rain; the *ſecond* over the Generation of Men, and the Production of Fruits and Animals; and the *third* has the Government of the *Sea*. *Mandelſlo*, ibid. [f] *Semedo*'s Hiſtory of *China*.

alone ſacrifices to *celeſtial* Bodies, the Sun and Stars, *&c.* the *Lords* and *Grandees* to *terreſtrial*, to the Mountains and Lakes, *&c.* the *Gentlemen* and *Officers*, to the four Seaſons of the Year, *&c.* and the *Commonalty* to their Houſhold-Gods, and tutelar Angels. In their Temples, [g] they have three remarkable Idols ſet up for the publick Uſe: *The Image of Immortality*, which they worſhip in the Form of a monſtrous fat Man, ſitting croſs-legg'd, with his Breaſt open, and an huge prominent Belly: *The Image of Pleaſure*, about twenty Feet high; and between theſe, another large Image, of thirty Feet, gilded all over, and adorned with a Crown, and rich Apparel, to which they pay a particular Adoration, and call it the great King *Kang*. Leſſer Images are *innumerable*, not only in the Temples, but in the Streets, and other publick Places. Every one has his *Jos*, or Houſhold-God, but they ſometimes uſe them very coarſely; for if they have prayed to them any conſiderable Time, and find no Effect of their Prayers, they not only upbraid them with Neglect, but very often drag them through all the Kennels of the Streets: However, if in the mean Time, they happen to obtain what they aſked, they ſet the Idol in its Place again, fall down before and adore it, excuſing their *ignominious* Uſage of it, and (to make it more *propitious* for the future) they waſh, and paint, and gild it over afreſh. They conſecrate Temples to *Dæmons*, who (as they fanſy) are confined within Statues; [h] and have, particularly, a *little Iſland* dedicated to the Devil, where they ſacrifice ſolemnly to him, under the Name of *Camaſſono*, and where the *Veſſels*, which paſs by, make an Offering to him of whatever they have on board, and throw it into the Sea, to prevent his Anger.

Of the Banians.

[i] THE *Banians* believe, that there is but one *Supreme* God, whom they call [k] *Parabrama*, which, in their Language, ſignifies *abſolutely perfect*, exiſting from himſelf, and free from all Corruption: But then they ſay, that he has committed to *Brama* the Care of all Things concerning *Religion*; to *Wiſtnow*, another of his Sons, the Care of Men's *Rights* and *Neceſſities*; and to a third, the Power over the *Elements* and *human* Bodies. [l] Theſe three they repreſent by an Image [m] with three Heads, riſing out of one *Trunk*, and make their Addreſſes to them, as the chief Diſpenſers of divine Favours. But becauſe they imagine, that God created the *Devil*, on Purpoſe to puniſh, and to do Miſchief to Mankind, they therefore worſhip him likewiſe, and have their Temples filled with the Repreſentations of him, in Statues of all Kinds of Metals and Materials. The *Figure*, under which they uſually repreſent him, is dreadful to behold. Out of its *Head* (which is adorned with a triple Crown, in the Faſhion of a *Tiara*) grow four Horns; out of its *Mouth* come two large *Teeth*, like the Tuſk of a wild Boar; and its *Chin* is ſet out with a great ugly *Beard*. Under its Navel, between its two Thighs, comes out another Head, more ghaſtly than the former, having two Horns upon it, and from its Mouth thruſting out a filthy Tongue; and (as an Addition to all this Ghaſtlineſs) inſtead of Feet, it has *Paws*, and behind it a long Cow's Tail. This Figure they ſet upon a Table of Stone, which ſerves inſtead of an *Altar*; on the Right-hand of which, ſtands a *Trough*, full of Water, wherein thoſe, that intend to do their Devotion, waſh and purify themſelves; and, on the Left, a *Box* or *Cheſt*, for the Reception of ſuch Offerings, as they are minded to make to the [n] *Braman*, or Prieſt of the Place, that is in waiting.

Of the Japaneſe.

THE *Japaneſe*, though they acknowledge a Supreme Being, which dwells in the higheſt *Heaven*; [o] yet admit of ſeveral other inferior Gods, whom they place among the *Stars*; though, it muſt be owned, they do not much worſhip and adore them. What they chiefly worſhip and invoke are the Gods, whom they ſuppoſe to have the ſovereign Command of their Country, and the chief Direction of its Produce, its Elements, its Animals, *&c.* and who, by Virtue of their Power, can more immediately affect their preſent Condition, to make them either miſerable or happy, in this Life, and, by their Aſſiſtance and Interceſſion, obtain Rewards for them, proportionable to their Deeds, in that which is to come. Of theſe Gods of their own Country, they make mention of two Succeſſions; the firſt, they ſay, was that of the *ſeven great Celeſtial Spirits*, who lived in the moſt ancient Times of the *Sun*, long before the

[g] Atlas Geogr. Modern. and *Salmon*'s Modern Hiſtory. [h] Atlas Geogr. Modern. [i] Bartoli de Vitâ & Geſt. Xaverii, Lib. i. [k] *Mandelſlo*'s Travels into the *Indies*, Lib. ii. [l] *Mandelſlo* ſays, that they ſometimes call him *Wiſtul*, and ſometimes *Etwara*. Ibid. Lib. i. [m] Some are of Opinion, that this Idol, with three Heads, repreſents their three great Philoſophers, *Confuſius*, *Xequiam*, and *Tanzu*. *Reſs*'s View of all Religions. [n] The *Bramans*, who are the Prieſts among the *Banians*, make it their Boaſt, that they came out of the Head of their God *Brama*. Many other Creatures, they ſay, were produced out of his Arms, Thighs, Feet, and other ignoble Parts; But their peculiar *Privilege* was to be born of the Brain of their God. *Mandelſlo*, ibid. [o] *Engelbertus Kæmpfer*'s Hiſtory of *Japan*.

the Existence of Men and Heaven, and inhabited the *Japanese* World (the only Country, in their Opinion, then existing) many Millions of Years. The seventh and last of these *Celestial* Spirits, whose Name (as they fable) was *Isanagi*, begot of his divine Consort, *Isamani*, a second Succession of Divinities, called *the Succession of the five Terrestrial Deities*, who lived, and governed the Country of *Japan* a long while, and of whose Adventures and *Knight-Errantries*, their Defeats of Giants, Dragons, and other Monsters, they tell many ridiculous Stories. But besides these invisible Deities, which they call by the Names of *Sin* and *Cami*, signifying *Souls* or *Spirits*, they have an infinite Number of *Pagods*; [p] and, among these, [q] one of a prodigious Size, in a stately Temple at *Meaco*, and another at *Tencheda*, [r] no less famous for other extraordinary Qualities, have the principal Esteem and Adoration. Their Temples, which are curiously carved and gilt, and dedicated some to the *Devil*, and others to Apes, Rivers, and Fishes, have many frightful Figures in them, and in that dedicated to *Chamis*, one of the Heads of their *Sects*, they have as many Idols, as there are Days in the Year.

Of the Siamese.

THE *Siamese* believe, that there is One God, who created the Universe; [s] but, at the same Time, they are persuaded, that he has under him several other Gods, by whom he governs the World. The God, whom they worship with the highest Devotion, they call *Sommona Codom*, and of him they tell this *Romantick* Story;—[t] that he, being the King of *Ceylon*, bestowed all his Estate in Charity, and even killed his Wife and Children, and gave them to the *Talapoins*, *i. e.* the Priests of the Place, to feed upon; that, before he entered into Bliss, he had acquired a prodigious Strength, and was able to work Miracles; could enlarge his Body to what Size he pleased, and then reduce it to so small a Point, as almost to be invisible; that he had two principal Disciples, *Pra Molga*, and *Pra Scarabout*; that *Pra Molga*, at the Request of the evil *Genii*, overturned the Earth, and took Hell-fire in the Hollow of his Hand, with a Design to extinguish it; but, finding himself not able to do it, he begged the Assistance of *Sommona Codom*, who, apprehending that Men would abound in Wickedness, if the Dread of the Punishment were once removed, refused to grant it him. This, and Abundance more of the like Nature, the deluded People believe, and accordingly place the Image of this their *Favourite* Deity, with his two Disciples, on the same Altar, and behind him several other Statues, representing the Officers of his Court, to whom they address their Vows and Supplications. They are of Opinion, that the Dead have Power to assist or torment the Living; [u] and are therefore very careful and magnificent about their Burials. The Priests are hired to sing in a Room, on Pretence of teaching the Souls of the Deceased (which they suppose to stand about the Chamber) the Road to Heaven; and, as they believe themselves commonly tormented by their Apparitions, they carry Provisions to their Tombs, in order to appease them, and give Alms to the Priests, as esteeming Charity the best Ransom for the Sins of the Deceased.

and other People of the East.

THE People of *Peru* hold an eternal *Succession* of Worlds without Creation, and a *Multiplicity* of Gods to govern them: To these they offer up their Petitions sometimes; but, in all their Calamities, their first Addresses are to the *Devil*, to whom they make their Vows, and punctually perform them; and to whom, at their Meals, before they eat any themselves, they throw over their Shoulders Part of what they have, by Way of *Oblation*. Those of *Bengal* worship the River *Ganges*, and are so besotted as to think, that whoever, at the Point of Death, drinks of its Water, shall immediately be translated into *Paradise*. Those of *Goa*, besides several Idols of *horrible* Aspects, pray to the first Thing they meet in a Morning, all that Day, especially if it be a *Hog*; and, every *New Moon*, salute its Appearance with Supplications on their bended Knees: And, to finish the Account of this Part of the World with the People of *Narsinga* and *Bisnagar*, here is an Idol, whereunto Pilgrims in great Numbers resort, with Ropes about their Necks, or Knives sticking in their Legs and Arms, which, if they happen to fester, are accounted *holy*. This Idol is, every Year, carried about

[p] *Salmon*'s Modern History. [q] This Idol, which is of Copper, reaches up to the Roof of the Temple: Its Chair, according to Sir *Thomas Herbert*, is seventy Feet high, and eighty broad: Its Head big enough to hold fifteen Men, and its Thumb full forty Inches round; by which we may make a Judgment of the Whole. *Salmon*, ibid. [r] The *Bonzes*, *i. e.* the Priests of that Place, pretend, that every New-Moon, their God appears, in human Shape, to a Virgin, whom, at that Time, they bring into the Temple, all illuminated with golden Lamps, and place before the great Image; when, on a sudden, the Lights are miraculously put out, and something, in human Shape, immediately embraces, and sometimes impregnates the young Damsel. But whether this be done by one of the Priests, or by the Phantom, they adore, is left to the Reader to conjecture. The Girl, however, after this Adventure, is highly honoured by Priests and People, and (as if she were inspired) takes upon her to resolve the most difficult Questions, that are propounded to her. *Salmon*, ibid. [s] *Mandelslo*'s Travels. [t] *Salmon*, ibid. [u] Atlas Geogr. Modern.

about in Proceſſion, with Virgins and Muſick going before it; under its Chariot-Wheels the *Pilgrims* ſtrive to be cruſhed to Death, and whoever are ſo, have their Aſhes kept as *ſacred Reliques*. Its *Votaries* cut off their Fleſh, and let out their Blood, by Way of Offering; and thoſe of the *Female Sex* make no Scruple of *proſtituting* themſelves, in order to procure Money for its Maintenance.

Of the Tartars. FROM the Idolatry of the *Eaſtern* Nations, we proceed to that of the *Tartars*, (a People now ſubject to the Empire of *China*) * who are ſaid to acknowledge One God, the Maker of all Things, and the Author of all worldly Bleſſings and Puniſhments; but yet, inſtead of addreſſing him, [x] they have a Kind of *inferior* Deity, called *Itoga*, whom they believe to be the God of the Earth, and him they worſhip with the greateſt Solemnity, though their Adoration generally terminates in ſecular Advantages. They worſhip likewiſe the Sun and Moon, as the Authors of all the noble Productions of the Earth; and, though they do not believe that there is an *Hell*, yet they are perſuaded there are *Devils* and evil Spirits, which afflict and torment People in this Life; [y] and therefore endeavour to *appeaſe* them with rich Preſents and coſtly Sacrifices. One Sort of Idolatry, peculiar to this Nation, eſpecially to thoſe, who live in the *Eaſtern* Parts of it, is, their worſhipping a *living Man*, whom they call *Lama*, and to whom they pay ſuch a ſuperſtitious Veneration, that the greateſt Lords eſteem themſelves happy, if they can, by rich Preſents, obtain ſome of his *Excrements* dried, which they put into a golden Box, and wear about their Neck, as a certain Preſervative againſt Calamities of all Sorts. In a ſecret Part of his Palace, bedecked with Gold, Silver, and precious Stones, and illuminated with coſtly Lamps, the Man is ſhewn, ſitting upon a ſtately Throne, and dreſſed in Robes exceſſively rich, to receive the Adorations of thoſe, who come from all Parts to proſtrate themſelves before him, and humbly kiſs his Feet. They call him the *Eternal Father*; and, that he may be thought *immortal*, and in ſome Meaſure anſwer his Name, his Prieſts take Care to have one in Readineſs, as like him as poſſible, to ſet up in his Stead, as ſoon as he dies; and, burying the Corps privately, carry on the *Impoſture* to a Miracle, and make his Votaries believe, that he really lives for ever.

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were ſo *profuſe*, that they thought it diſhonourable to ſacrifice leſs than forty or fifty at a Time to one ſingle Idol; and had ſuch an Aſcendant over their Princes, that they made them believe, their Gods were angry, and would not be appeaſed, without four or five thouſand Men ſometimes ſacrificed in a Day.

In the North. THE ſpreading of the *Chriſtian* Faith in the *North* has happily aboliſhed *Polytheiſm* and *Idolatry* in moſt Places, but [h] there are ſtill ſuch conſiderable Remains of

Lapland. it among the *Laplanders*, as incline many Authors to believe, that they never heartily embraced Chriſtianity; for they worſhip Chriſt and their Idols promiſcuouſly, and with the ſame Form of Worſhip. They own indeed one Supreme God, whom they arm with Thunder, and have the ſame Conceptions of him, that the *Pagans* of old had of their *Jupiter*: But they have another ſubordinate God, to whom they acknowledge, they owe all the Bleſſings of Life; and, together with him, they worſhip the *Sun*, whom they call *Baiva*; becauſe of his Influence over the Bodies of Men and Beaſts. To each of their Gods they have Temples conſecrated, and Images made of Stone, or rudely carved out of the Trunk of Trees, which, when they worſhip, they anoint with the Blood of the Sacrifice they offer, and [i] then, lying flat on their Bellies, they mutter their Prayers into the Ground, under which they conceive that the Devil has his Abode.

The Witchcrafts there. NO Nation has been ſo remarkable for *Sorcery* and *Enchantments* as this. [k] Here Parents teach their Children theſe *Diabolical* Arts, and, as Part of their Inheritance, bequeath ſuch Spirits to them, as they think have been aſſiſtant to themſelves. Each Family has its *Dæmons*, and, with ſome, theſe Dæmons are ſo familiar, that they meet them in *Woods*, and in private *Walks*, and teach them a *Song*, which, when they ſing, they always appear to attend their Commands. They ſend abroad Flies of a blueiſh Colour, which they pretend to be their *Familiars*, to hurt their Enemies, their Cattle, or their Children; and between ſome Families there frequently happens a Trial and Conteſt, whoſe *Familiar* ſhall be moſt powerful. They tie *Knots*, by which they pretend to make the Winds favourable or croſs to ſea-faring Men: But the uſual Inſtrument of Magick and Divination is their *Drum*; which he that beats, mutters ſome *Charms* all the while, till falling into a Trance, (during which, all that are preſent ſet up a ſinging) he pretends, when he comes to himſelf, that whatever it was, he employed this Enchantment for, was fully revealed to him. The People, in ſhort, are under *ſtrong Deceptions* of the Devil; they believe nothing of the *Reſurrection*; and have ſuch groſs Notions of a *future State*, that, when any of them die, they put into the Coffin a *Flint* and *Steel*, that they may not want Light in the other World; an *Hatchet*, that they may cut out their Way to Heaven through Woods; together with a *Bow*, *Arrows*, and *Victuals*, that they may be able to encounter all Oppoſition, and fight their Way thither without fainting.

In the South. Guinea. THOUGH the *Mahometan* Religion has over-run a great Part of *Africa*, [l] yet in *Guinea* (a Country, where we have ſome Dealings, and ſhall therefore make it a Specimen of the reſt) the People retain their ancient *Gentiliſm*. They believe indeed in one true God, to whom they attribute the Creation of the World, and all Things in it; but this Opinion they rather owe to their daily Converſation with the *Europeans*, than to any Tradition of their Anceſtors: For, inſtead of calling upon God, or making their Oblations to him at any Time; in all their Difficulties they apply to their *Fetiche*, or falſe God, and, in all their Undertakings, pray to him for Succeſs. Their Notions about the Creation of Man are ſomewhat ſingular: They ſay, that God, at the Beginning, created a *black*, as well as a *white* Man, and made them an Offer of two Sorts of Gifts, *Gold*, and *Learning*; that he gave the firſt Option to the *black* Man; but he, deſpiſing the Knowledge of Letters, made choice of Gold, which ſo incenſed God, that he reſolved the *Whites* ſhould for ever be their Maſters, and they be obliged to wait on them as Slaves. What particular Notions they have of their Gods, 'tis hard to determine. This only is obſervable of them, that they have a great Number; that each Man, at leaſt each Houſe-keeper, has one to himſelf, of whom he is perſuaded that he narrowly inſpects his Actions, rewards the Good, and puniſhes the Bad; but then, he makes the Reward to conſiſt in a Multiplicity of Slaves and Wives; the Puniſhment, in the Want of them; for of future Rewards and

[h] Atlas Geogr. [i] The People of *Greenland* are ſaid to obſerve the ſame Way of Worſhip; and of them it is likewiſe reported, that in ſome Diſeaſes, they tie a Stick to a great Stone; and, after they have prayed to it, if they can lift it up eaſily, they think their Prayers are heard. *Atlas*, ibid. [k] Ibid. [l] *Boſman*'s new Deſcription of *Guinea*.

and Puniſhments, they have a ſlender or no Conception, except it be ſome of them, who take it for granted, that, when they die, they are immediately conveyed to a famous River, called *Boſmanque*, ſituate in the Inland-Country, where their God enquires, what Sort of Life they have led, whether they have kept their Oaths, obſerved Holidays, and abſtained from all forbidden Meats; which if they have done, they are gently wafted over the River, to a Land abounding with all Kind of Happineſs; but if they have offended againſt theſe Precepts, their God plunges them into this River, where they are drowned, and buried in eternal Oblivion. Though they have a Multitude of Gods, (as we ſaid before) yet, in ſeveral Places of the Country, eſpecially all along the *Gold-Coaſt*, they are not acquainted with Idol-Worſhip; and, though they believe that there are Devils, which do them much Miſchief, yet it does not appear, that *intentionally* they either pray, or make Offerings to them: On the contrary, they ſeem to deteſt the Devil, and at a certain [l] *Feſtival*, have an *annual* Cuſtom of driving him out of their Cities with a great deal of Ceremony. What they call Gods however are, in effect, no other than Devils, of which there is one of a very *gigantick* Size, with one Side of his Body ſound, and the other rotten, (which if any Perſon do but touch [m] he dies immediately) whom the deluded People of *Ante* endeavour to appeaſe with Eatables of all Kinds; and for this Reaſon, Thouſands of Pots and Troughs full of Victuals, are continually found ſtanding throughout the whole *Anteſe* Country.

THUS we have enquired into the Grounds of the ancient Idolatry, and made a Survey of ſome principal Parts of the World, wherein that Sin and Impiety ſtill prevails: A diſmal Proſpect, and full of Horror! But, to do Juſtice to our Subject, we muſt carry our Obſervations a little farther, and purſue our Enquiry into the *ſound*, as well as the *corrupt* Part of the Religion of the Heathens, and what Sentiments of this Kind the *Learned*, as well as the *Ignorant*, the *Philoſopher*, as well as the *Vulgar* have, in all Ages, entertained.

SECT. II.

Of the Sounder Parts of the Heathen Religion.

THOSE, that have conſidered the Nature of the *Pagan* Religion, [n] (in order to ſeparate it from its Droſs) have generally reduced the ſubſtantial Parts of it to theſe five Propoſitions: *The Sound Part of the* Ancients.

1. THAT there is one Supreme God.
2. THAT this God ought to be worſhipped.
3. THAT Virtue, and Piety ought to be acquired.
4. THAT Repentance and Sorrow for Sin ought to be exerciſed. And,
5. THAT Rewards and Puniſhments are diſpenſed by God, both in this Life, and that which is to come.

A DILIGENT Enquirer into theſe Matters [o] lays it down for a certain *Poſition*, that there never was, in any Age, any People ſo rude and barbarous, which did not acknowledge and worſhip one Supreme Deity, the firſt Principle and Governor of all Things: "But that the wiſer Sort, *ſays he*, might teach the more ignorant, that "the Supreme Being, whom they called God, was preſent in all Places, they there-"fore made Abundance of Gods, in all Places, and over all Things." But from whatever Cauſe the Multitude of their Gods might ariſe, 'tis certain, that they always had one whom they looked upon as *Supreme*, to whom their *publick*, as well as *private* Worſhip, their Prayers and Vows, and other Acts of religious Homage were, in *God to be worſhipped.*

[l] After ſeven Days ſpent in Mirth and Jollity, Singing, and Dancing, &c. our Author tells us, that on the Eighth in the Morning, they hunt out the Devil with a diſmal Cry, all running one after another, throwing Sticks, Stones, Excrements, or any Thing they can come at, as thick as hail, after him, and purſuing him a conſiderable Way out of the Town; which, when they have done, they come back rejoicing; and the Women, to prevent his Return, take care to waſh and ſcour all their wooden and earthen Veſſels very clean. *Boſman*'s new Deſcription of *Guinea*. [m] This our Author, who lived long in the Country, tells us, he verily believes without the leaſt Scruple. *Boſman*, ibid. [n] *Herbert*'s ancient Religion of the *Gentiles*. [o] *Kircher*'s Oed. Egypt. Syn. 3.

in a peculiar Manner, addreſſed. [p] Among the *Romans*, *Jupiter* (whom the Poets call the *Father of Gods and Men*, and graver Writers diſtinguiſh by the Stile and Title of *Optimus Maximus)* was accounted this firſt and greateſt God, the ſupreme Governor of the World, and King over all rational Beings; and to ſignify what great Eſteem they had of all *moral* Virtues and Perfections, they deified, and built Temples to Honour and Chaſtity, to Fidelity and Fortitude, *&c.* *Cicero*, in his ſecond Book *de Legibus*, has given us an *Abſtract* of the Religion of the Ancients, and plainly tells us, that Men have no other Means of carrying them to Heaven, but a pure Mind, an holy Faith, a ſincere Piety, and a Combination of all Manner of Virtues; and, in his *Proem to his natural Queſtions*, *Seneca* maintains, *that Virtue enlarges the Soul, prepares it for the Knowledge of Celeſtial Things, and renders it fit and worthy to be admitted into the Society of God.*

Virtue to be valued.

Repentance for Sins.

[q] TOGETHER with theſe Injunctions, and Commendations of Virtue, as *perfective* of Man's Nature, and *conducive* to his Happineſs, they preſcribed the wiſeſt Rules, both for the Prevention, and Expiation of Sin. The ſuppoſed, that all Sin and Wickedneſs proceeded, either from the Society of bad Men, from Imprudence, or Ignorance of what was evil, or from Anger, or Concupiſcence, the Paſſions or depraved Appetites of the Man's own Mind; and from hence they concluded, that the beſt *Remedies* would be to avoid all wicked *Company* and Converſations; to reſtrain the *Impetuoſity* of evil Affections; to correct and cure ſuch unruly *Propenſions*, as ariſe from human Frailty; to waſh away thoſe *Stains* of Sin, which had defiled their Conſcience; and to make frequent and fervent Supplications to their Gods, that they might become kind and propitious to them. They imagined, that Man, conſidered ſimply, and in his own Nature, was neither good nor evil, but inclinable either Way, according to his *Education*; and that Vice and Sin were not ſo radicated in him, but that, with good Management, they might be totally weeded out and deſtroyed: So that, unleſs the Soul was obſtinately bent upon Wickedneſs, they ſaw no Reaſon why it might not be reduced to a good State (even after the Pollution of Sin) by an internal *Purification*. Conſcious they were of the *Deformity* of Vice, and what an high Provocation it was to God; but then they conſidered, that Goodneſs was eſſential to a divine Being, and that where Goodneſs reſided, Wrath and Reſentment could not laſt long: Whereupon they encouraged themſelves with Hopes of a Pacification, upon expreſſing their Sorrow and Regret for what they had done amiſs: And that they were ſincere in ſuch Expreſſions, the many Vows they made, the many Prayers they put up, the Temples they built and dedicated, and their Expiations, Luſtrations, and other *piacular* Rites and Ceremonies to pacify their Gods, (whereof the Writers of their Antiquities give us ſo long a *Detail)* are a ſufficient Indication.

Future Rewards and Puniſhments.

[r] SOME of the wiſeſt of their Philoſophers owned, that the Supreme God was to be worſhipped *for himſelf*, the moſt excellent Nature deſerving the utmoſt Veneration; but, notwithſtanding this, from his Bounty and Goodneſs they promiſed themſelves a Recompence of Reward, if not in this, at leaſt in the other World, for all their Sufferings and Services. *In this World* they perceived an unequal Diſtribution of Things, the Good oftentimes oppreſſed with Calamities, and the Wicked rejoicing in Pleaſure and Plenty; and thereupon, from the Juſtice, as well as the Goodneſs of God, they inferred, that the Righteous were to receive ample Rewards, and the Wicked ſuffer condign Puniſhments after this Life; for it ſcarce ever entered into their Thoughts, that this was the only Life they were to experience, or that ſo noble a Creature as [s] Man, who is *big* with immortal Deſigns, and full of Projects for future Ages, who was made to *contemplate* the Wonders of Nature and Providence, to *admire* and adore his Maker, and can look backward and forward, and view an Eternity without Beginning, and without End, was made but for a *Moment*, as it were, and finally periſhes when he dies: And from this Reflection they inferred that the Soul was *immortal*, and that Death only tranſlated it to another State, joyous to the Virtuous, but full of Torments to the Wicked. Thus far were their Notions juſt and regular: [t] But when they came to aſcertain the Places, where thoſe, that had deſerved well, received their Reward, and the Guilty their Puniſhment; as the *Elyſian* Fields, the Iſles of the Bleſſed, the Stars, and Heaven,

[p] *Stilling fleet.* [q] *Herbert's* ancient Religion of the *Gentiles.* [r] Ibid. [s] *Sherlock* upon Death. [t] *Herbert*, ibid.

Heaven, for the Virtuous; *Tartarus*, *Erebus*, and *Orcus*, and the four infernal Rivers, for the Vicious; they fell into very groſs and abſurd Errors, without any Manner of Neceſſity. For they might more eaſily have convinced the People, that divine Juſtice had allotted Puniſhments, after this Life, in ſome Place or other, according to what every one had deſerved, though they could not *define* the preciſe Place, Manner, and Duration of them; than raſhly determine it to be in ſome obſcure, *ſubterraneous* Caverns, near the *Center* of the Earth, or in Apartments in the *middle Region* of the Air, with many other Circumſtances equally ridiculous and uncertain: Though it muſt be confeſſed, that their making Heaven and the Stars the Seat of the Bleſſed was not at all incongruous; ſince the univerſal Opinion, even at this Time, is, that an eternal and happy State is only to be found in God and Heaven.

Of the Modern *heathen Religion in* China.

THESE are ſome of the Truths of the *ancient* heathen *Theology*, and (to compare them now a little with what are more *modern*) in *China* we find a *Sect*, called the *Literati*, that adhere to the Doctrines of the much celebrated [u] *Confucius*, [x] whoſe Philoſophy, like that of *Socrates* in *Greece*, is thought to have been brought down from Heaven. [y] He ſpeaks of God, as the moſt pure and perfect Principle, the Fountain and Eſſence of all Things; he prohibits the Worſhip of Images; acknowledges the *Immortality*, though he allows the *Tranſmigration*, of the Soul; believes a future State; and, [z] in a Book, which is called *Siudo*, i. e. *the Philoſophical Way of Life*, has left a Collection of ſuch wiſe *Sentences*, and moral *Maxims*, as are not inferior to any of that Kind; wherein he recommends to his Followers the Practice of Virtue, a free Conſcience, and a good and honeſt Life; [a] and teaches them to contemn Riches and Pleaſure, to ſubdue their Paſſions, and improve their Reaſon.

In Japan.

IN *Japan*, there is a *Sect*, following the Inſtitutions of [b] *Siaka*, their Founder, [c] who believe that the Souls of Men, and Animals both, are immortal; and thoſe of Men, after their Departure from their Bodies, have their Portion, in a Place of Happineſs or Miſery, according to their Behaviour in this Life. In the Place of Happineſs, they ſuppoſe that there are different Degrees of Pleaſure, in order to reward every one according to his Deſerts; but the whole Place is ſo thoroughly filled with Bliſs, that each happy Inhabitant thinks his Lot the beſt, and, far from envying the greater Felicity of others, wiſhes only for ever to enjoy his own. *Amida*, the general Patron, and Protector of human Souls, is the ſovereign Commander of theſe happy Regions; and the leading a virtuous Life, and doing nothing that is contrary to the Commandments of the Law of *Siaka*, (which are chiefly *theſe*, not to kill any Thing, not to ſteal, not to whore, not to lye, not to drink ſtrong Liquors, but to faſt and pray, to adore God, his Word, and thoſe, that imitate his Virtues) is the only Way to become agreeable to him, and worthy of eternal Happineſs. In the Place of Miſery, (which they call *Dſigokf*) Degrees of Torments are, in like Manner, proportion'd to Men's Offences. Juſtice, they imagine, requires, that every one ſhould be puniſhed ac-

[u] This *Confucius*, whom the *Chineſe* call *Kooſi*, was born in the Province of *Kok*, about 483 Years before Chriſt. He was called *a Child of Sorrow*, becauſe his Birth was *poſthumous*, which, nevertheleſs, was accompanied with ſome remarkable Signs and Prognoſtications of his being a *Seſin*, or Philoſopher: For *Muſick*, they ſay, was heard in Heaven, while his Mother was in Labour, and two *Dragons* were obſerved to attend, while the Child was waſhed. His Stature, when grown up, was very noble and majeſtick; his Deportment grave, and his Piety, even in his earlieſt Years, very exemplary. He honoured his Relations; endeavoured to imitate his Grandfather, who was much admired for his Sanctity; and never eat any Thing, before he offered it to the ſupreme Lord of Heaven by Proteſtation. After the Death of his Grandfather, he made a conſiderable Proficiency in the Knowledge of Antiquity, and compiled the abovementioned *Collection* of *Moral* and *Political* Maxims, which ever ſince (now upwards of two thouſand Years) has been looked upon as a Performance incomparable in its Kind, and an excellent Pattern of a good and virtuous Life. A profound Reſpect is ſhewn to his Memory, both in *China* and *Japan*, by *publick* as well as *private* Perſons. His Picture is allowed the moſt honourable Place in the Houſes of Philoſophers; and 'tis not long ago, ſince the Emperor of *Japan* cauſed two Temples to be built to him in his capital City *Jedo*, whither he went in Perſon, as ſoon as they were finiſhed, and, on this Occaſion, ſet forth, in an handſome Speech to his Courtiers, the Merits of this great Man, and the peculiar Excellency of the Maxims of Government, which he had laid down. *Kæmpfer*'s Hiſtory of *Japan*, and Atlas Geogr. Ancient and Modern. [x] Ibid. [y] *Salmon*'s Modern Hiſtory. [z] *Kæmpfer*, ibid. [a] Atlas Geogr. Modern. [b] This *Siaka*, whom the learned Men among them uſually call *Sommona Codom*, was (according to the *Japaneſe* Hiſtorians) a Native of *Magattakokf*, which is ſuppoſed to be the Iſland of *Ceylon*, and born above 1029 Years before Chriſt, Son to the King thereof. When he came to the nineteenth Year of his Age, he quitted his Parents, leaving his Wife, and an only Son behind him, and became a Diſciple of *Arara-Sennin*, then an Hermit of great Repute, who lived on the Top of a Mountain, called *Dandokf*; and, under his Inſpection, betook himſelf to an auſtere Life, and continual Meditation on heavenly and divine Things, whereby he penetrated into the moſt ſecret and important Points of Religion, *viz.* the Exiſtence and State of Heaven and Hell, the State of Souls in the Life to come, and the Manner of their Tranſmigrations, the Way to eternal Happineſs, the Power of the Gods in governing the World, and many more Things beyond the Reach of human Underſtanding, which he afterwards freely communicated to his Diſciples, who, for the Sake of his Doctrine and Inſtructions, followed him in Crowds, and embraced the ſame auſtere Courſe of Life. He lived in this Manner ſeventy-nine Years, and died (according to the common Computation) 950 Years before Chriſt. *Kæmpfer*'s Hiſtory of *Japan*. [c] Ibid.

cording to the Nature and Number of his Crimes, the Number of the Years he lived in the World, the Station he lived in, and the Opportunities he had to be virtuous and good. *Jemma*, or with a more majeſtick Character, *Gemma O* (as they call him) is the ſevere Judge, and ſovereign Commander of this Place of Darkneſs and Miſery; to whom all the vicious Actions of Mankind appear in their proper Horror and Heinouſneſs, by Means of a large Looking-Glaſs, placed before him, which is called *the Looking-Glaſs of Knowledge*. The Miſeries of the Souls, confined to theſe diſmal Abodes, are however not ſo inceſſant and laſting, but that ſome Relief may be expected from the virtuous Life and good Actions of their Friends and Relations, whom they left behind, but more eſpecially from the Prayers and Offerings of their Prieſts to the great and good *Armida*, who, by his powerful Interceſſion, can ſo far prevail upon the Judge of this infernal Place, as to oblige him to abate of the Severity of his Sentence; where it is conſiſtent with Juſtice, and the Puniſhment due to their Crimes; to treat theſe unhappy Souls with Kindneſs; and, at laſt, to ſend them abroad again, [d] in order to enter upon a freſh *Probation*.

A Reflection hereupon.

THESE Doctrines, though diſguiſed with Abundance of Fiction, are, in the main Intendment of them, true; and, abating the Notion of the Pre-exiſtence and Tranſmigration of the Soul, and its temporal Confinement only to the Place they aſſign for its Puniſhment, there are few Points in them, but what, not only an honeſt *Heathen*, but even a ſober *Chriſtian* may embrace; while the Integrity of their Lives, their remarkable Juſtice, and Temperance, and Sobriety, the Strictneſs of Penance impoſed upon themſelves, and great Severity in puniſhing moſt enormous Crimes, are enough to upbraid us Chriſtians, and make us aſhamed of the Compariſon.

Of Peru,

IT can hardly be expected, that, in Countries over-run with Ignorance, and devoid of all Kind of Learning, Reaſon ſhould have Power enough to preſerve any of the *fundamental* Articles of Religion; and yet we are told of the People of *Peru*, [e] that they have a clear Notion of God, and eſteem his *Name* ſo very *ſacred*, that, without an abſolute Neceſſity, they never pronounce it, and then with all imaginable Signs of Devotion; that they are ſo cautious of *profaning* it, that, in the moſt important Cauſes, Witneſſes never take an Oath, but only promiſe the Judge to ſpeak Truth, which they do with great Strictneſs, and make any Falſification here n *Capital:* And that the Natives of *Canada* have a full Perſuaſion of the Immortality of the Soul, as well as future Rewards and Puniſhments, [f] upon this Motive——that they ſee moſt Men, eſpecially the beſt, are ſubject to Hardſhips here, which they ſay, are ordained, that they may be happy in the other World, and therefore they account none of their Calamities to be real Misfortunes. A true Principle in Religion! and a good Preparative, one would think, to their Converſion; but to this (as [g] our Author obſerves) the bad Manners of the Prieſts, teaching *Chriſtianity*, and the wicked Lives of the *French*, that have made their Settlement there, are the greateſt Impediment and Obſtruction.

and Canada.

Whether this Religion of the Heathens will ſave them.

IN general (for it would be endleſs to produce Particulars) we may obſerve, that in moſt of the Countries, hitherto diſcovered, the Belief of a God, and Obligation to worſhip him; the Belief of a future State, and Neceſſity of Virtue to prepare Men for it; Sorrow for Sin, and the Invention of many Rites to expiate it, have been the known Principles of the *Heathen* Religion: But whether theſe Principles, loaded as they are with all the Superſtitions abovementioned, the Worſhip of Idols, the Sacrifice of human Blood, the Adoration of Devils, and other ſuch Impieties, as the Divine Nature cannot but deteſt, will be available to their Salvation, is a Queſtion neither ſo eaſy, nor ſo ſafe to be reſolved. This only we may ſay, (without intruding into the *Counſels*, which God has hid in his own Breaſt) that, as Ignorance of Duty, the Prevalence of Cuſtom, and the Power of Prepoſſeſſion, plead ſtrongly in Mitigation of any Fault, ſo has the Heathen World, not only theſe Apologies to produce, but ſome Declarations likewiſe in Holy Writ, which ſeem to have their

[d] For this is their Opinion, that when theſe Souls have been confined long enough to expiate their Crimes, they are ſent back again into the World, not indeed to animate the Bodies of Men, but of ſuch Creatures, whoſe Nature reſembles their former ſinful Inclinations; where, after ſeveral *Tranſmigrations*, they are ſuffered at laſt to enter human Bodies again, and, by that Means, are put in a Capacity, either by a good and virtuous Life, to make themſelves unalterably happy; or, by a new Courſe of Vices, to expoſe themſelves to a freſh Confinement, and another Round of Tranſmigrations. *Kæmpfer*'s Hiſtory of *Japan*. [e] Atlas Geogr. [f] Ibid. [g] *La Hontan*, in his Account of the Savages of *Canada*, &c.

their particular Caſe under Conſideration. For if, [h] as St *Paul* tells the *Athenians*, a People *wholly given to Idolatry*, *God winked at their former Times of Ignorance*; if, [i] as our Saviour tells the *Phariſees*, ſuch *as are blind*, *i. e.* without a competent Knowledge of their Duty, *have no Sin*, at leaſt, not in ſo great a Meaſure; [k] and if, as he tells his Diſciples, *Moſes*, the Lawgiver of God, ſuffered the *Iſraelites* to do Things, which were not directly right, *for the Hardneſs of their Hearts*, [l] *i. e.* becauſe the Imperfection of his Revelation wanted proper Efficacy to work their Hearts to a greater *Softneſs*; then have we ſufficient Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that the ſame Connivance and kind Conſtruction of Faults will be granted to the *preſent*, that was to the Generations of *old*: Though, when we conſider farther, that there is [m] *no Communion between Light and Darkneſs*, *no Concord between Chriſt and Belial*, *no Agreement between the Temple of God and Idols*, in what Method this Grace will be extended, and the divine Attributes remain unblemiſhed, is a Myſtery paſt our Comprehenſion. This only we know farther, that as the Merits of Chriſt, whereby alone we obtain Salvation, are imputable to the *Gentile*, as well as the *Chriſtian* World, (which we have in ſome Meaſure ſhewed already) [n] *in his interceding with God, and offering Sacrifice for Sin, he can* (as the Apoſtle aſſures us) *have Compaſſion on the Ignorant, and ſuch as are out of the Way*, ſince their Error is involuntary, and their Ignorance no Part of their Crime; for, *how can they call on him*, (as [o] he argues in another Place) *in whom they have not believed? How can they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without a Preacher?*

The Opinion of the Millennaries.

To ſatisfy, in ſome Meaſure, theſe Enquiries, thoſe who favour the Doctrine of a *Millennium*, have deviſed a *Scheme*, whereby to account for the future Condition of the *Heathen* World. [p] They lay it down for an undoubted Truth, that the great Deſign of Chriſt's Coming into the World was to procure the Salvation of all Mankind, and that the Merits of what he did and ſuffered, were available to that Purpoſe; that Salvation is to be had by no other Name, but only that of the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; and yet thoſe, who ſhall be ſaved by him, muſt *believe in him*, *i. e.* muſt receive him for their *Saviour*, and embrace the Conditions of that *Covenant*, which he hath eſtabliſhed in order to their Salvation. Since therefore Men *cannot believe in him, of whom they never heard*; and yet there are many Men, yea, many Nations of Men, that never heard of the Name of *Chriſt*; from hence they conclude, that, at ſome Time or other, he ſhall be made known to all Men; and, ſince ſo great a Part of Mankind had no Knowledge of him before their Death, that they certainly ſhall have it, after their *Reſurrection*; and, to ſupport this Concluſion, they ſuppoſe, that, after this Life, there will be a *threefold* Reſurrection. [q] The *firſt* will be of *the Faithful in Chriſt*, ſuch as have been *Martyrs for Jeſus*, and lived in this Life obſervant of his Laws. Theſe, for a thouſand Years, ſhall reign with *Chriſt* upon *Earth*, and then, together with him, aſcending into Heaven, ſhall there continue for ever. The *ſecond* will be of thoſe, who, during this Life, never heard of the *Sound of the Goſpel*, or had the Offer of a Saviour made them. Theſe, upon their Reſurrection, ſhall be admitted to the Knowledge of him and his Doctrines, and put upon the ſame Probation, that we now are, who live under the Goſpel-Covenant. If they *believe* and *obey*, they ſhall be inſtated in the ſame Happineſs, that good Chriſtians are to enjoy, and, without taſting Death any more, be tranſlated into Heaven: But in Caſe they prove Impious or Infidels, ſhall be reſerved to the *third* Reſurrection, which will be of ſuch, as rejected the Saviour of the World in this Life, and, together with them, ſhall *be caſt into the Lake of Fire*.

What beſt becomes us.

BUT though this *Hypotheſis*, as it is chiefly built upon *abſtruſe* Paſſages in a [r] very difficult and *myſterious* Book, has not obtained a general Reception; yet this we may lay down for an infallible Truth, that, as *the Judge of the World cannot but do Right*, Mankind will never be condemned for the Want of what they were in no Condition to attain; and therefore, [s] inſtead of ſtretching the *Severity* of God's Juſtice, in relation to this Argument, we may rather venture to extend the Bounds of his Mercy; [t] ſince this is the Attribute, which, of all others, is the moſt magnificently ſpoken of in the Scriptures. But, indeed, the moſt proper Way is, to leave the Secrets of God, as *Myſteries* too far above us to examine, and rather ſtudy to *work*

[h] Acts xvii. 30. [i] John ix. 41. [k] Matth. xix. 8. [l] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [m] 2 Cor. vi. 14, &c. [n] Heb. v. 2. [o] Rom. x. 14. [p] Vid. *Staynoe*'s Short Enquiry, and *Burnet*'s Theory. [q] Rev. xx. 4. [r] Ibid. *chap.* xx. [s] *Burnet*, on the Articles. [t] Ibid.

work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling, than let our Minds run into uncertain *Speculations* concerning the Meaſures and Conditions of *that* of others. We are allowed, very juſtly indeed, to commiſerate the State of thoſe, who *ſit in Darkneſs, and in the Shadow of Death*; [n] but, as Darkneſs itſelf is ſometimes called upon, in Scripture, *to praiſe the Lord*; ſo even *intellectual* Darkneſs, *i. e.* Ignorance, has, *occaſionally*, great Reaſon to join in the Praiſe: For ſuppoſing Men to be ſinful, 'tis happy for them if they are ignorant; the Supreme Judge of the World having laid down this for one Rule, by which he will proceed at the laſt Day; *viz.* [x] *That the Servant, who knew his Maſter's Will, and prepared not himſelf, neither did according to his Will, ſhall be beaten with many Stripes; but he, that knew not, and committed Things worthy of Stripes, ſhall be beaten with few.*

[n] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [x] Luke xii. 47, 48.

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OF

Speculative and *Practical* DIVINITY.

PART IV.

Of the Myſteries of our moſt Holy Faith.

CHAP. I.

Of the Nature of the Second Covenant, commonly called The COVENANT of GRACE.

WE left the firſt Parents of Mankind [a] under the Breach of the *firſt* Covenant, and, in them, all their Poſterity loſt and undone; ſentenced to Labour, to Sorrow, to Sufferings, to Sickneſs, to Death, and expoſed to the Vengeance of Almighty God: And, in this Situation, there are but three Things that can occur to our Thoughts; 1. that God ſhould deſtroy them inſtantly; or, 2. reſerve them for Puniſhment; or, 3. extend Mercy and Forgiveneſs to them. *What to be done with Man, under the Breach of the* firſt Covenant.

IF indeed we conſider the pure and ſpotleſs Nature of God, and how abominable and loathſome all Sin and Wickedneſs is to him, we muſt be inclined to think, that, upon the Commiſſion of it, he ſhould immediately withdraw his divine Influence, and ſuffer his rebellious Creatures to ſink into nothing: [b] But then, if we conſult farther the Idea we have of an *Infinitely perfect Being*; *One*, who foreſees the neceſſary Connections of Cauſes and Effects, and all the Reſults and Conſequences, that attend them; *One*, whoſe Property it is to be conſtant and immutable in all his Counſels and Actions, and what he *wills* for once, to *will* for ever; we ſhall find, that it was not ſo conſiſtent with the Attributes of God, ever to have created Mankind at all, if there could be any *ſubſequent* Reaſon of ſufficient Force to induce him to deſtroy them. To project and contrive to no Purpoſe, to build and deſtroy again, is common to Men, whoſe *Views* are ſhort, and *Humours* fickle; but God cannot be miſtaken in his Meaſures, nor defeated in his Purpoſes: And yet (upon the Suppoſition of an *Annihilation*) *Not to be deſtroyed.*

[a] Vid. *p.* 281, *& ſeq.*

[b] *Taylor*, on the two Covenants,

work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling, than let our Minds run into uncertain *Speculations* concerning the Meaſures and Conditions of *that* of others. We are allowed, very juſtly indeed, to commiſerate the State of thoſe, who *ſit in Darkneſs, and in the Shadow of Death*; [u] but, as Darkneſs itſelf is ſometimes called upon, in Scripture, *to praiſe the Lord*; ſo even *intellectual* Darkneſs, *i. e.* Ignorance, has, *occaſionally*, great Reaſon to join in the Praiſe: For ſuppoſing Men to be ſinful, 'tis happy for them if they are ignorant; the Supreme Judge of the World having laid down this for one Rule, by which he will proceed at the laſt Day; *viz.* [x] *That the Servant, who knew his Maſter's Will, and prepared not himſelf, neither did according to his Will, ſhall be beaten with many Stripes; but he, that knew not, and committed Things worthy of Stripes, ſhall be beaten with few.*

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[b] *Taylor*, on the two Covenants,

hilation) 'tis on him only that the Diſappointment falls, if ſo be, that, after the vaſt Expence and Pains (if we may ſo ſpeak) of building this *majeſtick Temple* of the World, he ſhould be obliged to ſet it on fire *with his own Hands*, and thereby give his great Adverſary the Devil, and Sin and Rebellion, his deteſted Off-ſpring, a ſufficient Matter of Triumph, in having effected ſo *glorious* a *Miſchief*, as to force the *Almighty* to the diſhonourable Work of razing his own Foundations, and yet neceſſitate him to leave the Stain of Wickedneſs ſtill behind, as an everlaſting Blemiſh on his Power and Glory.

But reſerved for Puniſhment.

SINCE therefore the Deſtruction of the World, for the Tranſgreſſion of Mankind, would have been a Work, wherein God alone had been the Sufferer, (the Sinner being only to be reduced to the Condition he was in before) our Thoughts, in the next Place, ſuggeſt, that this guilty Creature muſt be *preſerved*, to atone for offending againſt *infinite Majeſty*, by the *Infinity*, i. e. the eternal Duration of his Sufferings: And in this Thought we are the rather confirmed, not only by the Notions we have of the Juſtice and Holineſs of God, but by his particular Proceedings againſt a nobler Rank of Creatures, the Angels of Heaven; [c] *who, not keeping their firſt Eſtate*, but diſobeying their Maker, were thrown headlong thence into the bottomleſs Regions of Deſpair, and *are reſerved in everlaſting Chains, unto the Judgment of the Great Day.*

For he could not atone *for himſelf.*

THAT this muſt have been the wretched Condition of *apoſtate* Man, if no *Satisfaction* could be made to the injured Deity, if no *Ranſom* could be paid to offended Juſtice, ſeems to be a plain *Dictate* of Reaſon. And now, if we caſt about, and conſider where ſuch a Satisfaction is to be found, as may pacify the Wrath and Indignation of an angry God; where ſuch a Ranſom is to be met with, as will be a ſufficient Price for the Sins of all Mankind; *the Earth ſaith, it is not in me, the Sea ſaith, it is not in me. It cannot be gotten with Gold, it cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir, with the precious Onyx and the Sapphire*; and therefore, vain are all Attempts of Man to *emancipate* himſelf; [d] *it coſt more to redeem his Soul, therefore he muſt let that alone for ever.*

WE may ſuppoſe indeed, that *Adam*, having now experienced the Folly of his Choice, might think of *returning*, with firmer Reſolves to obey his Maker; that the Shame and Guilt of Sin, having wounded his Conſcience with a deep Remorſe, might put him upon an unfeigned Repentance, which would happily reſtore him to the Favour of God, and blot out the Remembrance of his Tranſgreſſion: But [e] alas! he is not capable of Repentance; or, if he were, his Repentance would not be available for his Pardon. Repentance, *which leads to Salvation*, is the Gift of God, and a conſiderable Branch it is of the Divine Mercy: But that *Attribute*, as yet, lies hid and undiſplayed in the infinite Goodneſs of God, and cannot exert itſelf, till Almighty Juſtice be ſatisfied. [f] So that guilty Man can find no Expedient for his Deliverance; he cannot conceive how Mercy can ſave him without the Violation of *Juſtice*, nor can he be brought to make an humble Confeſſion of his Fault, when he expects nothing but an irrevocable Doom. And accordingly we may obſerve, that the Hiſtory of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion makes no Mention of an Overture on God's Part, or any ſort of Advance on Man's, towards a Recovery this Way. The Man and Woman indeed are *aſhamed* but 'tis of their *Nakedneſs*; and afraid of God, but 'tis with a ſlaviſh Fear of Puniſhment for their Offence. There appear no Tokens of a ſincere *Contrition*; no deploring their Unhappineſs, no deprecating offended Juſtice, no Promiſe of Amendment, no Fears, no Sorrow for what was paſt, nor any Indications of Perſons poſſeſſed with the Heinouſneſs of their Guilt, and importunate for Pardon: On the contrary, they both make Excuſes for their Sin, and, in Effect, throw all the Blame of their Miſconduct upon God; the Woman pretending, that he had made the Serpent too wiſe, [g] *the Serpent beguiled me*; and the Man, that he had made the Woman too full of Charms and Temptations to be reſiſted, *the Woman that thou gaveſt to be with me, ſhe gave me, and I did eat.*

Nor any other for him.

HITHERTO no Hopes appear for the Recovery of loſt Man upon his own Performances, nor can he any more depend upon the Aſſiſtance of any other Creature, to pay his Ranſom, and ſet the Captive free. [h] Which of all the heavenly *Powers* and

[c] Jude *ver.* 6. [d] Pſal. xlix. 8. [e] *Taylor*, on the two Covenants. [f] *Bates*'s Harmony.
[g] Gen. iii. 12, 13. [h] *Milton*, in his excellent Poem, brings in God aſking the bleſſed Angels, ſurrounding his Throne, which of them would undertake to atone for Man's Sin?

" Say,

and *Principalities* will be willing, or able, to bear the Vengeance of an *Omnipotent* God, demanding Satisfaction for the Violation of his Laws, and the Contempt of his Authority? Or what Creature, that ſhould be ſo zealouſly charitable, as *to wiſh himſelf accurſed for his Brethren's Sake*, would be able to undergo ſo vaſt a Burthen, as the propitiating, by his Sufferings, for ſo many Millions of Offenders, that lie dormant in the Loins of a ſinful Progenitor? Where is that one Creature, or what is his Name, who, by his Righteouſneſs, can obtain a general Indemnity, cancel our Obligations to Puniſhment and Merit, [i] *a free Gift of God upon all Men unto Juſtification of Life*, in the ſame Latitude, as, *by the Offence of one, the Sentence of eternal Death was paſſed, and Judgment came upon all Men, unto Condemnation?* We may ſafely pronounce, that there was no Creature of itſelf ſufficient to be [k] *this Days-man between God and us, and to lay his Hand equally on us both; for God is not a Man, that we ſhould anſwer him*, (either by ourſelves, or any created *Subſtitute) and come together in Judgment.*

REASON then could never have found out a *Mediator*, nor obnoxious Sinners expected a *Propitiation*, had not God made the Overture of his Mercy (even before he pronounced the Sentence of his Juſtice) in the gracious Promiſe of a Redeemer, appointed *before the Foundation of the World, in the Seed of the Woman*, i. e. his own beloved Son aſſuming human Nature, and, by the Sacrifice of himſelf, vanquiſhing the Enemy, and atoning for the Guilt of Mankind.

Therefore God compaſſionates him.

TO form ſome Conception then of the Ground and Foundation of the *Covenant* between God *the Father* and God *the Son*, wherein the Redemption of Mankind was concerted; we may imagine to ourſelves, that God, in his eternal Counſel purpoſing to create Mankind, in order to ſupply the *vacant* Places of thoſe *Angelick* Powers, which he foreſaw would revolt, foreſaw likewiſe that Man would abuſe the Liberty of Choice implanted in his Nature, and, deluded with Satan's Temptations, violate the great Command, which was to be the *Teſt* of his Obedience, and thereby plunge himſelf into a State of Perdition; and that, moved with Compaſſion at his unhappy Circumſtances, and conſidering withal, that, tho' his Iniquity was *voluntary*, in ſome meaſure, it was occaſioned by the Malice and Suggeſtions of another, who would pride himſelf in the *Succeſs*, and triumph in the poor Creature's Ruin, reſolved not to proceed againſt him according to the *Demerits* of his Tranſgreſſion, but to find out an *Expedient* for his Recovery. [l] The *Angelick* Nature was not quite loſt: Myriads of thoſe bleſſed Spirits did ſtill continue in the State of their Innocence; and this ſome aſſign for a Reaſon, why God did not contrive a Means for their Reſtoration: But in *Adam* all Mankind ſinned at once, and *fell ſhort of the Glory of God*, and therefore, leſt they ſhould *all* periſh, and a whole *Species* of rational Creatures, capable of beholding and enjoying him, for ever be cut off from his Preſence, and the *Beatifick* Viſion, he thought of their Redemption; but here were the Difficulties that obſtructed the Deſign. Man had ſinned, and therefore Man was to ſuſtain the Puniſhment of his Sin: The *original* Law, founded in the Nature of God, and in the Nature of Man, as he was *created after God's own Image*, could not be *repealed*, without ſome one to fulfil its Obligation of perfect and unſinning Obedience; but where was the Man, or indeed any other *created* Being, ſufficient for ſo great a Taſk?

Why.

THE Unity of the Divine Nature is ſuch, that no Perſon in the Godhead can be ſuppoſed to have any Thoughts or Purpoſes, but what the other are equally admitted to. But (to help our Conceptions in this Matter) we may *imagine*, that, [m] God the *Father*, having communicated to his *Son* the kind Intention he had of recovering loſt Man, and admitting him to a farther Probation, might urge the *Difficulties*, that attended it; whereupon his Son, moved by the ſame Divine Compaſſion, might offer himſelf to accompliſh the great and arduous Work, which the Father accepting, the *Covenant*

The Tenor of the ſecond Covenant.

" Say, heavenly Powers, where ſhall we find ſuch Love?
" Which of you will be mortal, to redeem
" Man's mortal Crime, and juſt, th' unjuſt to ſave?
" Dwells in all Heaven Charity ſo dear?"
He aſk'd, but all the Heavenly Quire ſtood mute,
And Silence was in Heaven: On Man's Behalf
Patron or Interceſſor none appear'd;
Much leſs, that durſt upon his own Head draw
The deadly Forfeiture, and Ranſom ſet. *Paradiſe Loſt*, Book iii.

[i] Rom. v. 18. Divine Attributes.
[k] Job ix. 32, 33.
[l] *Hopkins*, of the two Covenants, and *Bates's* Harmony of the
[m] *Allen*, on the two Covenants.

Covenant of Man's *Redemption* was immediately concluded. *Chriſt*, for his Part, engaged, that he would aſſume human Nature, and ſo become the *Proxy* and Repreſentative of Mankind; that, in their Stead, he would fulfil the Law of *Righteouſneſs*, wherein they failed, and undergo the *Penalty*, which, by ſuch Failure, they had incurred; that he would die, in ſhort, for their Salvation; and (to effect a Reconciliation between their Creator and them) whatever the Divine Juſtice had to charge upon them he would be reſponſible for, and *bear, in his Body, the Tranſgreſſions of them all.* Upon theſe Performances, God promiſed to accept Mankind as *innocent*, and receive them into Favour again; for the future, to pardon their Offences, upon the Condition of their Humiliation and Repentance; to help the Infirmities of their Nature with the Supplies of *Grace*, upon their Supplications and Prayers; and to admit them into that State of Happineſs, they were intitled to before, upon their *ſincere*, though *imperfect* Obedience, joined with the *Merits* and Interceſſion of their great *Mediator*; and upon the Conſideration of theſe advantageous Conditions it is, that the Apoſtle founds the Diſparity of the two Covenants: * *Not as the Offence*, ſays he, *ſo alſo is the free Gift; for, if, through the Offence of one, many be dead, much more the Grace of God, and the Gift by Grace, which is by one Man Jeſus Chriſt, hath abounded unto many: The Judgment was by one to Condemnation, but the free Gift is of many Offences unto Juſtification.*

The two Covenants compared, and Advantages of the Second.

To form the *Compariſon* then, and ſo ſtate the Difference of theſe two Covenants, in order to perceive how much the one is preferable to the other, we ſhall conſider them, 1. With Reſpect to the Duty they require; 2. The Strength given for the Performance; and, 3. The Reward annexed to the Diſcharge of them. And here we may obſerve, [n] 1. That the *firſt* was properly a *Covenant of Juſtice*; its Conditions were ſtrict and rigorous; its Obedience was to be entire, performed by the Man's own Strength, without the leaſt Failing or Imperfections, and its Penalties and Rewards abſolute and indiſpenſable. No *Court of Equity* was here eſtabliſhed, to ſoften or mitigate the Rigour of the Command, or interpret in Favour of the Offender: If he tranſgreſſed in the leaſt Point, he knew his Doom; [o] *Curſed is he, that continueth not in all Things written in the Book of the Law, to do them*; and in this lies one great Difference, [p] that the Rigour and Severity of the *Covenant of Works* requiring that our Righteouſneſs ſhould be *perſonal*, and wrought out by ourſelves, is now relaxed by the *Covenant of Grace*, promiſing us the Remiſſion of Sin, and Acceptance of our Services, thro' the Righteouſneſs of our *Surety*, conveyed unto us by Faith.

2. IT muſt be preſumed indeed, that God gave the firſt Man a *native* Strength, ſufficient to enable him to keep his Commandments: But when it is conſidered, that [q] *he left him in the Hands of his own Counſel*, without any farther Direction or Aſſiſtance, and to grapple with an Adverſary, envious and deceitful, againſt whoſe Wiles and Stratagems he had no *Preſervative*, but only the Dread of the impending Puniſhment; we can hardly think, that his Virtue was ſo well ſecured, as that of thoſe, who live under this Covenant, whoſe Conditions are not *unſinning*, but *ſincere* Obedience, rendered eaſy and practicable by the Succours of Heaven, and the Grace and Strength of our Mediator. Under this Covenant indeed, [r] Sin may more eaſily make its Breaches upon us, by Reaſon of our preſent Infirmity, either through Ignorance or Surprize; but it cannot get Dominion over us, without our own deliberate Option: For it is an expreſs Goſpel-Promiſe againſt the Power of Sin, [s] that *it ſhall not have Dominion over us*; againſt the Power of the Devil, that *greater is he, that is in you, than he, that is in the World*; againſt the Power of Temptations, [t] *that God is faithful, who will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able*; againſt Diſcouragement from our Infirmities [u] that *we may do all through Chriſt, that ſtrengthens us*; and in caſe of falling, * that *we have an Advocate with the Father, and a Propitiation for our Sins*, by Means of which, the Favour of God may be regained, and that Principle of Grace recovered, to make us grow good again, and ſo find a new Acceptance.

3. To diſpute whether *Adam*, if he had not ſinned, ſhould, at ſome *Period* of his earthly Life, have been *tranſlated* into Heaven, and there united to God in his eternal Enjoyments, were only to be *wiſe above what is written.* If we will confine our Judgment to what we read in Scripture, nothing appears there, but that the Promiſe of Heaven was made in Chriſt alone; [x] and that, as our Impunity is the Effect of his

* Rom. v. 15, 16. [n] *Taylor*, on the two Covenants. [o] Deut. xxvii. 26. [p] *Hopkins*, on the two Covenants. [q] Ecclus. xv. 14. [r] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [s] Rom. vi. 14. [t] 1 Cor. x. 13. [u] Phil. iv. 13. * 1 John ii. 1. [x] *Bates*'s Harmony of the Divine Attributes.

his Satisfaction, our Title to Happineſs is the Purchaſe of his Blood, (which is therefore called *the Blood of the New Teſtament*) and the Fruit of his redundant Merit; with whoſe perfect Obedience God was ſo well pleaſed, that he promiſed to confer upon thoſe, *that believed in him*, all the glorious Privileges becoming the *Sons of God*; to make them *Aſſociates* with himſelf in his eternal Kingdom, and in thoſe celeſtial Abodes, whereof *Paradiſe*, with all its Pleaſures, was but a faint Shadow and Similitude.

Why God made not the Covenant of Grace firſt.

THESE are the Advantages of the *ſecond* Covenant, that it is founded upon milder *Terms*, better *Helps*, and richer *Promiſes*; that it admits of *Repentance* after Sin; accepts of *Sincerity* inſtead of Perfection; aſſiſts the *Infirmities* of human Nature, and crowns its *Services* with Immortality. "But if this Covenant was ſo excellent, "why did not God eſtabliſh it at firſt, and place Man, as ſoon as he was created, "under the beſt Means of Perſeverance in his Duty?" Now, in Anſwer to this, it ſhould be conſidered, that as it would have been inconſiſtent with the Glory, and Wiſdom, and Power of God, to have had any Creature come out of his Hands, but what was *perfect* in its Kind; ſo would it have been a Diſparagement to that Perfection, not to have given it a *Law* commenſurate to its Abilities; and an Encouragement to Sin, not to have enforced that Law with *Sanctions* of the greateſt Severity. We, indeed, in this degenerate State of ours, live under *eaſier* Terms; we have an *Indulgence* given to our Infirmities; nor is every Tranſgreſſion irreparable, and threatened with immediate Death: But then we are to remember, that not only our Condition requires theſe *Alleviations*, but that, when we do amiſs, we have a Saviour's *Propitiation* and Interceſſion to flee to. But our firſt Parents, in their State of Integrity, ſtood upon their own *Bottom*, and had none to anſwer for them; for which Reaſon any Mitigation in the Covenant, or Hopes of Impunity in the Violation of it, muſt neceſſarily have impaired their Attention to the divine Command. For, let us ſuppoſe God concluding the Covenant, he made with them, in ſome ſuch Terms as theſe: "Thus I have given you a Law requiring the ſtricteſt Obedience; "have inveſted you with Powers to enable you to perform it; and have annexed a "dreadful Penalty to engage your Care and Aſſiduity; but be not diſcouraged at "this *Severity*, my Wiſdom ſhall find out an Expedient, in caſe you ſhould tranſ-"greſs, to puniſh the Sin, and yet to ſave the Sinner." This is expreſſly the Form of the *Second*, and yet it had been highly improper in the Tenor of the *Firſt* Covenant, [y] ſince a comfortable Proviſion againſt Sin had been a ſtrong Temptation to it: For, certainly, if our firſt Parents could break through thoſe Reſtraints of Threatening and Terror, wherewith God had guarded his Commandments; of how much lighter Account would it have been to have made a *Sally*, where there was ſuch an *Avenue* opened to a vain Curioſity, as might, of itſelf, have been Inducement enough, to have put them upon the Trial?

NOR was it for Man's Security only, but for the Manifeſtation of God's greater Glory, that the Covenant of Juſtice preceded that of Mercy. 'Tis darkening *the Plot*, that gives Beauty to *the Diſcovery*; and the deeper *the Diſtreſs* is laid, the more conſpicuous is *the Deliverance*. [z] Whether therefore we ſuppoſe, that the Incarnation of Chriſt was *primarily* in God's Intention, even when he made the World, or was only a Deſign *ſubſequent* upon the Proſpect of *Adam*'s Fall, and the many Calamities attending it; yet ſo it is, that the Severity of the firſt Covenant did ſo far contribute to this Deſign, that there had not been that Neceſſity for a Redeemer, had *not Sin, taking Occaſion from the Commandment*, (as [a] the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *deceived* our firſt Parents, *and, by it, ſlain them*; not but that *the Commandment was holy, juſt, and good*; *but Sin, that it might appear Sin, (i. e.* very deſtructive) *worked Death in them by that, which was good.* Sin, indeed, in its own Nature, has no *Tendency* to Good, nor any proper *Efficacy* to promote the Glory of God: [b] But, as a *black* Ground in a Picture, which, in itſelf, only defiles it, when placed artfully, ſets off the *brighter* Colours, and *heightens* their Beauty; ſo the Evil of Sin, which, conſidered abſolutely, obſcures the Glory of God, by the over-ruling Diſpoſition of his Providence, ſerves to illuſtrate his Name, and make it more glorious in the Eſteem of all reaſonable Creatures; and therefore "*O happy Fault*, (as one of the Ancients "calls it) not in itſelf, but by the wiſe and merciful Counſel of God, which was

[y] *Taylor*, on the two Covenants. [z] Ibid. [a] Rom. vii. 11, 13. [b] *Bates*'s Harmony, *O fælix culpa, quæ tantum, & talem meruit habere Redemptorem!*

" repaired in a Way ſo advantageous, that the Salvation of the Earth is the Won-
" der of Heaven, and the Redemption of Man the Joy of Angels!"

God's Deſign in the ſecond Covenant.

THIS agreeable *Contraſt* of Danger and Eſcape, of Miſery and Happineſs in Man, diſplays the wonderous Work of our Redemption, and ſhews forth [c] the *Mercy* of God in deſigning it; the *Wiſdom* of God in contriving it; the *Power* of God in effecting it; and the *Holineſs* of God, in the Manner wherein it was effected; [d] *the Breadth, and Length, and Depth, and Height of the Love of Chriſt, which paſſeth all Knowledge*, in being the great Inſtrument and Performer of it; none of which had appeared to ſo much Advantage, had it not been for the Violation of the firſt Covenant.

IN ſuffering this Covenant then to be violated, and by that Means introducing a *new one*, [e] God intended to glorify *himſelf*; his unſearchable *Counſel*, in finding out a Means to reconcile Juſtice and Mercy; his perfect *Righteouſneſs*, in the Remiſſion of Sins through the Propitiation of Chriſt; and his abundant *Grace*, in giving his Son to die for Rebels. He intended to glorify his *Son*; his free *Love*, in ſubjecting himſelf to a ſhameful Death for our Ranſom and Deliverance; his Almighty *Power*, in ſupporting human Nature under the Load of God's Wrath; his compleat *Sacrifice*, in fully *perfecting thoſe, that are ſanctified*; and his effectual *Interceſſion*, in procuring to his Church the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit. He intended, laſtly, to glorify *us*; by the Precepts of the Goſpel purifying our Hearts and Hands from all Uncleanneſs, and by the Operations of his Spirit repairing his defaced Image in us; that ſo, being [f] *made Partakers of the Divine Nature* again, we might thereby [g] *be made meet* likewiſe *to become Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.*

The Antiquity of it.

BUT though for theſe, and ſeveral other Reaſons, that might be produced, the *firſt* Covenant was not to be ſuperſeded; yet it is worth our Obſervation, that the *ſecond* Covenant, or *Covenant of Grace*, which was to ſucceed it, was determined in the Divine Counſel, and commenced, and continued all along, from the firſt Foundation of the World; for [h] *God hath redeemed us* (ſays one Apoſtle) *with the precious Blood of Chriſt, as of a Lamb, without Blemiſh and without Spot, fore-ordained before the Foundation of the World, but manifeſt in theſe laſt Times*; and *he hath ſaved us*, (ſays [i] another) *and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpoſe, and the Grace given to us in Chriſt Jeſus, before the World began, but now made manifeſt by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

[k] NOW, in order to a right Underſtanding of this important Point, we muſt remember, that, ever ſince the Fall of Man, and the original Promiſe of a Saviour to come, *that Seed of the Woman alone*, who was *to break the Head*, and deſtroy the Power of the old *Serpent*, the Devil; the Covenant, under which all Mankind was placed, was no other than the *Covenant of Grace*, or the Covenant of the Redemption and Salvation of the World, upon the Conditions of *Faith* and *Obedience* to the *Meſſias*, the Son of God. We muſt alſo remember, that, though this Covenant was revived, explained, and publiſhed more ſolemnly to the World by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, yet was it, from the Beginning of Things, made known and delivered down to all future Generations; partly, by ſuch expreſs *Revelations*, as the frequent Appearance of the Son of God upon Earth did then permit; partly, by the ſeveral *Renewals* of it to *Noah*, to *Abraham*, to *David*, and others; partly, by the clearer and clearer *Intimations* of it to the Prophets, as the Fulneſs of Time drew near; and partly by the Inſtitution of *Propitiatory* Sacrifices, derived down from *Abel* to all future Ages, as conſtant and ſtanding Monuments and Memorials of the Neceſſity of that *great Propitiation*, that one *Sacrifice upon the Croſs*, on which this New Covenant was founded and eſtabliſhed for ever. Under this Covenant both *Jew* and *Gentile* lived; and, if they lived well, were made Partakers of its Promiſes. [l] The Covenant of *Moſes* was but a Kind of little *Codicil*, annexed to this great Teſtament, made with all Mankind. It was, indeed, a ſpecial Proviſion, to ſeparate one Nation (of which the *Meſſias* was to come) from the Idolatry and Wickedneſs of the reſt of the World; but the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, looking beyond the Bounds of this Diſpenſation, [m] *ſaw the Promiſes of the Goſpel afar off, and were perſuaded of them, and embraced them; they deſired a better, that is, an heavenly Country, and looked for a City, prepared for them, whoſe Builder and Maker is God:* And that the *Heathens*, eſpecially the wiſeſt of them, had the like Notion, and expected the ſame Proviſion,

[c] *Bates*'s Harmony. [d] Eph. iii. 18, 19. [e] *Hopkins*, on the two Covenants. [f] 2 Pet. i. 4. [g] Col. i. 12. [h] 1 Pet. i. 18, &c. [i] 2 Tim. i. 9, 10. [k] *Whiſton*, on the Antiquity of the Chriſtian Covenant. [l] Ibid. [m] Heb. xi. 10, &c.

Proviſion, appears by a remarkable Teſtimony in the moſt ancient Book of Holy Writ, I mean the Book of *Job*, where we find that noble *Arab*, in the midſt of his ſore Afflictions, and when he ſeems to have no longer preſerved any Hopes of a *temporal* Deliverance, profeſſing his Faith in his gracious Saviour, and in a joyful Reſurrection at the laſt Day; [n] *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and though, after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this Body, yet, in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God; whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold, and not another, though my Reins be conſumed within me.*

An Objection.

"BUT if the Covenant of Grace was all along, from the firſt Beginning, extant "in the World, why was the Law of *Moſes*, which, as the *Apoſtle* affirms, *could* "*not convey Righteouſneſs*, or [o] *juſtify any Man in the Sight of God*, inſtituted at all? "Of what Uſe or Purpoſe was it to the People, on whom it was impoſed? Or why "is it ſo frequently called [p] *the firſt*, and [q] *the old* Covenant, if there was another, "of ſo much Excellence, that preceded it?" To elucidate this Matter, the Apoſtle propoſes this Queſtion to himſelf, [r] *wherefore then ſerveth the Law?* And the Anſwer which he makes is this; *it was added becauſe of Tranſgreſſion, until the Seed ſhould come, to whom the Promiſe was made. It was added becauſe of Tranſgreſſion*; [s] for ſuch was the *Blow* given to human Underſtanding by our firſt Fall, and the Progreſſion of Degeneracy ever after, that even the natural Senſe and Diſtinction of *moral* Good and Evil was in a great Meaſure *obliterated*; and therefore, to repair this Decay, the Law of the *Ten Commandments*, which, in its *ſpiritual* Senſe, anſwers the pure Law of Nature, was promulgated, to give a clearer Perception of the Extent of Duty, and the Nature and Enormity of Sin; for ſo the Apoſtle ſeems to mean, when he tells us, [t] *I had not known Sin, but by the Law; for I had not known Luſt*, or the Sinfulneſs of coveting what belongs to another, *except the Law had ſaid, thou ſhalt not covet. It was added becauſe of Tranſgreſſion*; for ſuch was the general Prevalency of *Idolatry*, that few Nations were exempted from it. The Worſhip of the *Gentiles* conſiſted of many ſuperſtitious Rites and Ceremonies, which the *Iſraelites* being naturally addicted to, were in great Danger of falling into an Adoration of their Gods; and therefore frequent Injunctions were given them, [u] not to imitate the Manner of the *Land of Egypt*, from whence they came, nor of the *Land of Canaan*, whither they were going, but *to keep the Statutes and Judgments of God, which if a Man do, he ſhall live in them.* So that to employ their buſy Minds, and thereby prevent the Danger of Defection, God deſignedly appointed them a Worſhip, which conſiſted much in *bodily* Services, and inſtituted many Laws, * *which ſtood in Meats and Drinks, and divers Waſhings, and carnal Ordinances, impoſed on them, until the Time of the Reformation. It was added becauſe of Tranſgreſſion*; and that, not only to reſtrain the *Iſraelites*, but to reform all other Nations round about them, who, hearing of the Wiſdom of their Laws, and perceiving how proſperous they were, ſo long as they obſerved them, might then be induced to quit their idolatrous Practices, and *join themſelves to the People of the God of* Iſrael; even as it came to paſs in ſuch as were *Proſelytes* to their Religion. [x] *To them were committed the Oracles of God*, and from them it was expected, that they ſhould communicate Knowledge to ſuch as were ignorant of his Laws, by making their own Obſervance of them more conſpicuous; for [y] *this is your Wiſdom, and your Underſtanding*, ſays their great Lawgiver, *in the Sight of the Nations, who ſhall hear all the Statutes, and ſay, ſurely this great Nation is a wiſe and an underſtanding People; for what Nation is there ſo great, that hath God ſo nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is, in all Things, that we call upon him for? Or what Nation is there ſo great, that hath Statutes and Judgments ſo righteous, as all the Law is, which I ſet before you this Day?*

Anſwered, by ſhewing the Reaſons why the Law was inſtituted.

THE Apoſtle has ſuggeſted another Reaſon, why the Law of *Moſes* was inſtituted, even while the Covenant of Grace was in Being, by calling it [z] *a Schoolmaſter to bring us unto Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by Faith.* For, as Children are ſent to School to be taught the firſt *Rudiments* of Learning, but afterwards, as their Underſtanding advances, are initiated into higher *Sciences*; or, (to uſe another of the Apoſtle's Similitudes) [a] *as an Heir*, during his Minority, *is under Tutors and Governors, until the Time appointed by his Father*; [b] ſo God was pleaſed to deal with his Church,

[n] Job xix. 25. [o] Gal. iii. 11. [p] Heb. viii. 7. [q] Ibid. *ver.* 13. [r] Gal. iii. 19. [s] *Allen*, on the two Covenants. [t] Rom. vii. 7. [u] Lev. xviii. 3, *&c.* * Heb. ix. 10. [x] Rom. iii. 2. [y] Deut. iv. 6, *&c.* [z] Gal. iii. 24. [a] Ibid. iv. 1. [b] *Allen*, ibid.

Church, beginning with ſuch Inſtructions, as were adapted to their Capacities, in the State of their Ignorance, and thence proceeding gradually to ſuch as were higher; till being come *to a perfect Man, unto the Meaſure of the Stature of the Fulneſs of Chriſt*, (as the Apoſtle words it) they were to be admitted [c] *to all the Riches of the full Aſſurance of Underſtanding, to the Acknowledgment of the Myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt.* The Law, in the typical Nature of it, was of great Uſe to the *Jews*, to facilitate and ſtrengthen their Belief in Chriſt. The Predictions of their Prophets ſerved *of old* to raiſe their Expectation, as they do *now* to confirm our Faith in him, in whom they are all found to center. Their Ceremonies were moſt of them *prefigurative* of his Performances; and the *Inſtitution* of their Sacrifices, in particular, as Atonements for *legal* Guilt, was a ſufficient Indication of God's Willingneſs to accept of his own Son's offering himſelf, for the Expiation of ours; [d] *For if the Blood of Bulls, and of Goats,* (as the Apoſtle argues) *and the Aſhes of an Heifer, ſprinkling the Unclean, ſanctifieth to the purifying of the Fleſh; how much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himſelf without Spot to God, purge our Conſcience from dead Works to ſerve the living God?*

THUS the Law was an *Handmaid* to lead us to Chriſt; ſomething *preliminary*, to a clearer Manifeſtation of God's Will, when he ſhould think fit to reveal it; and the People, who lived under that Diſpenſation, were both *ſanctified* and *ſaved*, (as † the Apoſtle argues) not ſo much by the Performance of its *Ordinances*, as by *Faith* in the Covenant made with their *Forefather Abraham*, (the ſame which was made with the *Protoplaſt Adam*) and by the Merits of the *Meſſias* to come, [e] who was *all along the Mediator of the* New Teſtament, *that, by Means of Death, for the Redemption of Tranſgreſſions, that were under the firſt Teſtament, they which are called may receive the Promiſe of eternal Inheritance.*

The Law and Goſpel, both one Covenant.

THE Truth is, if we would ſpeak ſtrictly and properly, the Covenant of God with his Church has, in all Ages, ever ſince the Fall of our firſt Parents, been but *one* and the ſame. [f] Its Terms, *on God's Part*, are, Forgiveneſs of Sins, Reſtoring Mankind to Holineſs and Immortality, for the Sake of his Son, and in View of his Sacrifice and Death for them: *On Man's Part*, Belief in that Son, Dependence upon that Sacrifice, Repentance for paſt Offences, and ſincere Obedience for the future; and theſe Terms have always been required by God, always expected and hoped for by *ſuch*, as had an Eye to the Promiſes, and carried their Contemplations to a due *Extent*; in which Senſe our bleſſed Saviour tells the *Jews*, [g] *Your Father* Abraham *rejoiced to ſee my Day, and he ſaw it, and was glad.* [h] The Promiſes made to *Abraham* and the Patriarchs were *confirmed in Chriſt*, [i] the Spirit, ſpeaking by the Prophets, was *the Spirit of Chriſt*; nay, even before the Flood, [k] *it was Chriſt*, that preached to the old World, *while the Ark was preparing in the Days of* Noah; ſo that Chriſt being the ſame, [l] under all Diſpenſations, the Covenants of the *Law* and the *Goſpel* are not *two*, with Reſpect to the *Subſtance* and principal Intent of them, but only in Regard of their different Adminiſtration, and the more or leſs Obſcurity in the general Promiſe of Salvation. [m] The Promiſes and Covenant of the Goſpel are declared *better* indeed, than thoſe of the Law, as they are propounded with greater Clearneſs, confirmed with ſtronger Evidence, and are, in ſome Meaſure, accompliſhed; for the Goſpel *hath brought Life and Immortality to Light*, of which Mankind before had but dark and doubtful Expectations. It teaches, in *expreſs Terms*, what the Law taught in *Shadows* and *Types*, and with an Obſcurity, under which *carnal* Minds ſeldom diſcerned the *ſpiritual* and heavenly Bleſſings, that were to be underſtood: It changes the Object of our Faith from the Meſſiah *to come*, to one *already come*; but ſtill the *Meſſiah* is the Saviour; ſtill the Joys of Heaven the Reward; ſtill Virtue, and Piety, and Faith, the Conditions of attaining it; whether the ſimpler Worſhip of the Patriarchs, or the Rites of the *Moſaick* Law, or the Faith and Sacraments of the Goſpel, diſburdened from theſe Rites, were the *Method*, which Almighty God, in his Wiſdom, thought fit, each in their proper Seaſon, to preſcribe, as a neceſſary Qualification for them, at that Time. So that, though the Law and the Goſpel, as to their Difference in Modes and Circumſtances, were perfectly *diſtinct*; yet, in Effect, and as to the *Eſſentials* of Obedience and moral Virtue, the Reward aimed at, and the Ground and Foundation of Men's Hope, they were one and the ſame Covenant; but under different Denominations, according to the Period of Time,

Under different Denominations.

[c] Col. ii. 2. [d] Heb. ix. 13, 14. † Gal. iii. paſſim. [e] Heb. ix. 15. [f] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II. [g] John viii. 56. [h] Gal. iii. 17. [i] 1 Pet. i. 11. [k] Ibid. iii. 20. [l] Heb. xiii. 8. [m] *Stanhope*, ibid.

Time, wherein it was fully diſcovered.——I ſay *fully diſcovered*; for though the Covenant of Grace was certainly *prior* to the Giving of the Law, and (as we ſaid before) virtually included in it; yet, foraſmuch as it was not fully *revealed*, until the Preaching of Chriſt, which was about fifteen hundred Years after the Giving of the Law, the Apoſtles, in their Writings, call it the *new* and *ſecond* Covenant, in Conformity to the Manner of *Diction* obſerved among the Prophets; for [n] *Behold the Days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will make* a new Covenant *with the Houſe of* Iſrael, *and with the Houſe of* Judah; *not according to the Covenant I made with their Fathers, in the Day that I took them by the Hand, to bring them out of the Land of* Egypt; *but this ſhall be the Covenant that I will make with them:——I will put my Law in their inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts; I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People; and they ſhall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, ſaying,* Know the Lord; *for they ſhall all know me, from the leaſt of them, unto the greateſt of them, ſaith the Lord; for I will forgive their Iniquity, and will remember their Sin no more.*

Of the Conditions of the SECOND COVENANT.

IN the Beginning of this Work, we have diſcourſed, at large, of the Truth and Veracity of the *Moſaick* and *Prophetical, Chriſtian* and *Apoſtolical* Revelation; and (what more immediately concerns us here) from the *Miracles* and *Predictions* of Jeſus Chriſt, the Excellency of his *Doctrine*, and Wonderfulneſs of its *Propagation*; from the Atteſtation God gave of his being no Impoſtor, by many Signs and Tokens, eſpecially his *Reſurrection* from the Dead; and the undeniable Characters, concurring in his Apoſtles, to prove that they were *true* Witneſſes of what they relate concerning him; we have ſhewn, that *God, who, at ſundry* [o] *Times and in divers Manners, ſpake in Time paſt, unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath, in theſe laſt Days, ſpoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath made Heir of all Things, by whom alſo he made the Worlds: Who, being the Brightneſs of his Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon, and upholding all Things by the Word of his Power, when he had by himſelf purged our Sins, ſat down on the Right-hand of the Majeſty on high.* *The firſt Condition is* Faith. *Its Neceſſity.*

AND if God has been pleaſed to make ſuch a Revelation of his Will, and therein to declare the Covenant of Grace, by no leſs a Perſon, than his own beloved Son; the firſt and fundamental Duty, which this lays us under, is, (as the Apoſtle exhorts) to [p] *take the more earneſt Heed to the Things, which we have heard, leſt at any Time we ſhould let them ſlip*; to fix it indelibly in our Minds, and to give the utmoſt Conſent of our Hearts, without the leaſt Doubt or Reſerve, to this infallibly revealed Truth——* that the Man *Jeſus Chriſt*, who was ſo miraculouſly born, (as the Holy *Evangeliſts* relate) ſo wonderful in all the Works and Miracles of his Life, ſo ſurpaſſing all the Wiſdom of the World in the Excellency of his Doctrine, and by his own Choice (for the Sake of us miſerable Sinners) ſo ſhamefully treated, and put to Death upon the Croſs, was likewiſe no leſs than the eternal *Son of God*, and Saviour of the World, united, in one and the ſame Perſon, to our frail Nature, for this very Purpoſe, that he might redeem us from the Slavery of Sin and Satan, and ſatisfy the Juſtice of his heavenly Father for our Rebellion againſt him; without which gracious Interpoſition we muſt have lain under the *Almighty*'s Diſpleaſure for ever, and finally periſhed in our Sins.

FAITH then, or a thorough Perſuaſion of the Truth of our holy Religion, together with a full Aſſent of the Mind to the great and *fundamental Articles* of it, is one Condition of the *Covenant of Grace*; and a Condition of ſuch Importance, that our Saviour himſelf aſſures us, [q] *this is the Will of him that ſent me*, that [r] *whoſoever believeth in me, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life*; that the Evangeliſt informs us, this was the Intent of recording his Actions, [s] *that we might believe, that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, and that, believing, we might have Life through his Name*; and that the Apoſtle to the *Romans* puts the whole of our Salvation upon this Iſſue, [t] *If thou ſhalt confeſs with thy Mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thine Heart, that God hath raiſed him from the Dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved; for which the Heart of Man believeth unto Righteouſneſs, and with the Mouth Confeſſion is made*

[n] Jer. xxxi. 31, &c. [o] Heb. i. 1, &c. [p] Ibid. ii. 1. * *Slater*'s Conditions of the Covenant of Grace. [q] John vi. 40. [r] Ibid. iii. 15. [s] Ibid. xx. 31. [t] Rom. x. 9, 10.

Of Faith in general.

unto Salvation; † and therefore to explain the Nature and Neceſſity of our *believing in Chriſt*, or, what is all one, our believing the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion, we muſt obſerve, that *Faith*, in general, is the Aſſent of the Mind to any *Propoſition* upon the Credit of the Speaker; and herein it differs from other Sorts of *Knowledge*, becauſe in them we believe upon the *Evidence*, and apparent Reaſons of the *Things themſelves*, but in this, upon the *Witneſs* and *Authority* of the *Perſons that declare them*; we are then ſaid *to know*, when we aſſent upon the Authority of *Things*, but then *to believe*, when we aſſent upon the Authority of *Perſons*; when not the *Evidence*, in ſhort, of the *Things diſcovered*, but the *Word* and *Teſtimony* of the *Diſcoverer* makes us give Credit to what is ſaid. This ſhews the Difference between *Faith* and *Science*, properly ſo called; for whereas Science ariſes from the Light and Evidence of *Things*, and Faith, from the Authority of *Perſons only*, the Evidence which Faith begets, though it may be *ſure* and *certain*, cannot be ſo clear and *perſpicuous*, as that, which ariſes from Science; and accordingly, the Author of the *Hebrews* deſcribes it to be * *the Subſtance of Things hoped for, and the Argument of Things not ſeen*; [a] where by *Subſtance* and *Argument* he equals it with *Science*, in Regard to the *Firmneſs* and Certainty of Aſſent; but, by ſaying that it is *of Things not ſeen*, he makes it inferior to it, in Point of *Evidence*.

Whence it ariſes.

'Tis in the Authority of Teſtimony then that *Faith* has its Foundation, which will therefore be more or leſs *ſtable*, according to the *Ability* and *Integrity* of the *Teſtifier*; [b] his Ability in the Knowledge of what he declares, and his Integrity in declaring according to his Knowledge: For, in both theſe Ways, he that teſtifieth any Thing may deceive us, either when he is *ignorant* of the Truth, and ſo, for Want of better Knowledge, impoſes both on himſelf and us; or when he is *diſhoneſt*, and ſo aſſerts that for a *Truth*, which he knows to be *falſe*.

The different Kinds of it.
Human,

Now becauſe *all Men are Lyars, i. e.* [c] either may deceive, or be deceived, their Teſtimony partakes of their *Infirmity*, and ſo does the Degree of Perſuaſion, which it creates. But God, being both infallible and true, and conſequently, it being impoſſible that he ſhould either deceive, or be deceived, his Teſtimony begets the firmeſt Perſuaſion, and the higheſt Degree of Faith in its Kind. However, becauſe the only Way we have of proving any Teſtimony to come from God muſt be by *rational Arguments*, the Degree of Faith, or Perſuaſion wrought by ſuch a Teſtimony, will be according to the Strength of the Arguments, which we have to perſuade us that ſuch a Teſtimony is *divine*: So that it is the *Nature* of the Teſtimony, which differences and diſtinguiſhes our *Faith*. If we believe any Thing upon the bare Word of a Man, it is an *human*; if upon the bare Word and Teſtimony of God, it is a *divine* Faith: The general Nature of Faith is the ſame in both, ſince they both rely upon *Teſtimony*; only as *human* Teſtimony differs from *divine*, as much as *fallible* does from *infallible*, the ſame, in Proportion, will be the Difference between *human* and *divine* Faith.

and Divine.

Divine Faith then (if we will deſcribe it) is a full Perſuaſion of Mind concerning the Truth of what is teſtified, reported, or revealed by God himſelf, or by Perſons commiſſioned by him to reveal or bear Record to it. For, as *human* Faith is only the Perſuaſion of the Truth of what is told or teſtified by Man, ſo *divine* Faith muſt be a firm Perſuaſion of the Truth of what is teſtified or revealed to us by God: And from hence it will follow, that we may have a divine Faith of as many Things, as God has, any Way, atteſted or revealed to us. [d] Now the uſual Ways of God's revealing any Thing to Mankind have been either by his own immediate Voice or Inſpiration, whereof we have ſeveral Inſtances, eſpecially in the Lives of the Patriarchs, or by the Mediation and Meſſage of inſpired Men. In this Manner he revealed his Will to

Moſaick.

the People of *Iſrael* by the Mouth and Miniſtry of *Moſes*; and, becauſe both God and Man concurred in this Teſtimony, their Belief of his Meſſage was their *Faith*, not in God only, but, together with him, in his Servant *Moſes*; and, accordingly, is called the *Moſaick* Faith. But the cleareſt Revelation, that God ever vouchſafed Mankind was by the Meſſage and Mediation of his own Son *Jeſus Chriſt*; and the Belief of his Goſpel, or taking for certain Truth all thoſe Things, which he has de-

Chriſtian.

clared to us in God's Name, is called the *Chriſtian* Faith. So that, in like Manner as the *Moſaick* Faith was a Belief of the *Divinity* of the *Moſaick* Law and Religion, upon

† *Allen* upon the two Covenants. * Heb. xi. 1. [a] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. III.
[b] *Pearſon* upon the Creed. [c] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [d] *Kettlewell*'s Meaſures.

upon the Authority of *Moſes*, the *Chriſtian* Faith is a Belief of the divine Inſtitution of our Chriſtian Religion, upon the Authority of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

The Object of it.

[e] WHILE *Moſes* lived, and ſpake as a *Mediator* between God and the *Iſraelites*, they believed his Words, and ſo they did the *Prophets*, while they preached: When *Moſes* was gone up to Mount *Nebo*, and there died; when the reſt of the Prophets were gathered to their Fathers, they believed their Writings, and the whole Object of their Faith was contained in them. When the Son of God came into the World to reveal the Will of his Father, and [f] *made known* to the Apoſtles, as his Friends, *all Things, that he had heard of the Father*; then did the Apoſtles believe the Writings of *Moſes* and the Prophets, as alſo the *Words* of Chriſt, and in theſe, taken [g] *collectively*, did the Object of their Faith conſiſt. When Chriſt was aſcended up to Heaven, and the Holy Ghoſt come down; when the Doctrine, which Chriſt delivered to the Apoſtles, had been taught to others, and many thouſand Souls converted to the Faith, they believed the Writings of the Prophets, and the Words of the Apoſtles, and in theſe two was comprized the Object of their Faith. When the Apoſtles themſelves departed this Life, and confirmed the Truth of the Goſpel by their Sufferings and Death, they left the *Sum* of what they had received, in *Writing*, for the Continuation of the Faith, in the Churches they had planted, and the Propagation thereof, in other Places; and ſo Chriſtians, that have lived ſince their Days, have believed the Writings of *Moſes* and the Prophets, of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, and in the Whole of theſe is comprehended the *Matter* of their Faith: From whence it follows, that the Belief of a Chriſtian, as the State of Chriſt's Church now ſtands, and ſhall continue unto the End of the World, conſiſts in this——that it is *a firm Aſſent of the Mind to the Doctrines, both* ſpeculative *and* practical, *delivered unto us in the Writings of the Prophets and Apoſtles, and a full Perſuaſion that they are indubitably true, upon the Teſtimony that God gave of his Son, our Saviour Chriſt, who firſt revealed and publiſhed them.*

The Evidence of it.

[h] To ſet before us then, in one ſhort View, the *Teſtimony*, which God gave of his Son, or (what is all one) the Evidence of our Chriſtian Faith, we are to remember, that the great *Points* of our holy Religion are not only moſt reaſonable, and excellent in themſelves, but moreover taught and inculcated by *One*, who has given us the moſt convincing Evidence, that could poſſibly be deſired, of his being *ſent immediately from God*. The Miracles, which our Saviour wrought, were, to his firſt Diſciples, who were Eye-witneſſes of them, a full Demonſtration of the Truth of his Doctrine; and the Hiſtory of his Life, Death, and Reſurrection, delivered down to us, upon the Teſtimony of thoſe Diſciples, is, to us, alſo a ſufficient Evidence of the ſame Truth. Their having converſed, from the Beginning, with our Saviour himſelf, their having *heard, and having ſeen with their Eyes*, their having *looked upon*, and having *handled with their Hands the Word of Life*, (as [i] St *John* expreſſes it) made it impoſſible, that they ſhould be *deceived* themſelves; and their whole Life and Converſation, their Sufferings and Deaths, were invincible Proofs againſt the Adverſaries of *Chriſtianity*, that they had no Deſign of *impoſing* upon others. They ſaw all the Propheſies of the Old Teſtament preciſely fulfilled in the Life and Doctrine, the Sufferings and Death, of our bleſſed Saviour; they ſaw him confirm what he taught, with *ſuch mighty Works*, as his bittereſt Enemies could not but confeſs to be above the Power of Nature, even while they were *blaſpheming* that Holy Spirit, which wrought them; they ſaw the whole Courſe of his Life to be ſuch, as, to all unprejudiced Beholders, loudly proclaimed his divine Commiſſion; they ſaw him ſo conſtantly deſpiſe all worldly Greatneſs, as once, when the People would have made him a King, even to work a Miracle to avoid that, which was the only Thing, that was poſſible to be the Aim and Deſign of an *Impoſtor:* In fine, they ſaw him [k] *alive after his Paſſion by many infallible Proofs*, converſing with him for *forty* Days together, and at laſt beheld him *aſcend viſibly into Heaven:* Theſe were ſuch Demonſtrations of his being *a Teacher ſent from God*, and conſequently, that his Doctrine was moſt certainly an immediate *Revelation* of the Divine Will, that nothing, but the moſt inveterate Malice and Obſtinacy, could withſtand them. And the ſame Reaſon, that theſe Diſciples of our Saviour had to believe *his* Doctrine, the ſame Reaſon the reſt of the World had to believe *theirs*. They confirmed, what they had taught, by Signs and Miracles; they lived according to the Doctrine they preached, though manifeſtly

[e] *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [f] John xv. 15. [g] Ibid. ii. 22. [h] *Clarke*'s Practical Eſſays. [i] 1 John i. 1. [k] Acts i. 3.

manifeſtly contrary to all the Pleaſures and Intereſts of this World; and (what no *Deceiver* could ever do) they *died*, with all imaginable Chearfulneſs and Joy of Mind, for the Teſtimony of their Doctrine, and the Confirmation of their Religion.

An Objection. THIS, in brief, is the Evidence of the Truth of the *Chriſtian* Inſtitution: And the only Exception that can be made to it is, the Difference, which ſome may ſuppoſe, the Diſtance of Time may occaſion, between *primitive* and *traditional* Faith. [l] "*Bleſſed are the Eyes*, ſays our Saviour to his Apoſtles, *which ſee the Things which* "*ye ſee; for I tell you, that many Prophets and Kings have deſired to ſee thoſe Things* "*which ye ſee, and have not ſeen them; and to hear thoſe Things which ye hear, and* "*have not heard them.* His Diſciples ſaw the undeniable Tokens of the Wiſdom "and Power of God manifeſting themſelves in all their Maſter's Words and Actions, "and could therefore have no Room for Diſtruſt. The firſt Converts to Chriſtianity "ſaw his Diſciples giving the like Proofs of their divine Miſſion, and were therefore "directly placed under the Power of Conviction; for what they ſaw, they could "not but believe: But we live ſo *remote* from the Age, wherein theſe Things were "done, and are every Day ſo liable to be impoſed on by *falſe* Reports; that, at "this Diſtance of Time, 'tis an hard Matter to ſay what we are to believe, eſpecially "when the Objects of Faith are made ſo full of *Myſtery*, if not of *Contradiction*."

Anſwered. IT muſt be owned indeed, [m] that, as the firſt *Converts* to Chriſtianity had greater Difficulties and ſtronger Prejudices to maſter, than thoſe, who were afterwards born in the Boſom of the Church, and educated under her Care; ſo it was agreeable to the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, that their Attention to the Proofs of the Chriſtian Religion ſhould be excited, after a more powerful and affecting Manner. Thoſe, who lived in our Saviour's Days, attended to him, heard his Sermons themſelves, and ſaw his Miracles, the great Atteſtations of his *Divinity*; thoſe, who lived in the Apoſtles Days, had the Report and Teſtimony of Eye-witneſſes, confirmed by mighty Signs and Wonders to convince them; thoſe, who lived in After-ages, even down to our Days, have the Writings of the Apoſtles, and the univerſal Belief of all Ages, to aſſure them of the Truth of ſuch Matters; this indeed makes ſome Difference, as to the *external* Proof of the Thing, becauſe what I myſelf hear and ſee, ſtrikes and moves me more than what another only relates to me; but as to the *internal* Proof, which is properly the *Evidence of Faith*, it makes no Kind of Alteration.

The Evidence of Faith, not impaired by Diſtance of Time.

To make this in ſome Meaſure more *obvious*, we muſt remember what was ſaid before, *viz. that a divine Faith is ultimately reſolved into the Authority of God*; [n] but then the Authority of God is no more viſible, than God himſelf; and therefore to convince us, that the *Perſon*, who pretends to come from God, in order to reveal his Will to us, is really ſent by him, God muſt give Teſtimony to him by ſome divine and viſible Effects, by enabling him to work *Miracles*, or predict *future Events*. Theſe Predictions and Miracles, 'tis true, terminate in Senſe; but then the Evidence of Faith, which is built upon them, goes a great deal farther. [o] When the Apoſtles ſaw their Maſter raiſe up *Lazarus*, for Inſtance, their Eyes convinced them of the *Reality* of the Fact; but then, that this was an Atteſtation of his being ſent from God, of his being, what he pretended to be, the *Son of God*, and no *Impoſtor*; that, conſequently, all his Doctrines, all his Precepts, and all his Promiſes were true; this was not the Effect of Sight, but of Reaſon and Diſcourſe: And therefore whatever wonderful Things Men ſee, if they reſolve to reaſon perverſely, they may ſtill continue *Infidels*, in like Manner as the *Jews* did, who aſcribed our Saviour's Miracles to a *diabolical* Power, and entertained ſuch unreaſonable Prejudices againſt him, as precluded all Conviction. They had *Ocular* Demonſtration indeed to engage their Belief; but then it muſt be conſidered, [p] that their Minds were tinctured with wrong Notions, and poiſoned againſt him with early Prepoſſeſſions; whereas we, from our Childhood, have been trained up in an honourable Eſteem of Chriſt and his Goſpel, have lived to ſee his Propheſies, concerning the *Jews*, fulfilled, and, that other great Proof of the Truth of Chriſtianity, the miraculous *Propagation* of it; which, laid in the Balance together, will, at leaſt, be *equivalent* to their *ſeeing* the Wonders, that were wrought in Confirmation of it. The ſhort is, thoſe, who lived in the Time of Chriſt's Miniſtry, heard his Doctrines, and ſaw his Works; what they thus heard and ſaw, they recorded in a Book, which Book has, from Age to Age ever ſince, been handed down to us. This Book we have now in Poſſeſſion; ſo

[l] Matt. xiii. 17.
[m] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II.
[n] *Sherlock*'s Serm. Vol. II
[o] *Sherlock*, ibid.
[p] *Taylor*, of Faith in Jeſus Chriſt.

ſo that one Point of Enquiry, more than they had, is, to know whether this Book be *genuine*, and whether the Authors of it had, beyond all Controverſy, the Characters of *honeſt* Men; which, when once we are ſatisfied in, we argue then from what we read, in the ſame Manner as his Diſciples did from what they ſaw, that the Perſon, of whom ſuch wonderful Things are recorded, was certainly *a Teacher ſent from God*. Nor will the Diſtance of Time make any Alteration of the Caſe, ſince *Traditional* Truths, well atteſted, deſerve the Belief of one Age as well as another, and are ſo far from *loſing* their Credibility by being often told and repeated, that it ſhould rather be an Argument (the longer it has been ſince their Diſcovery, and the more they have been conſidered and examined) that their *Original* Evidence is ſo much the ſtronger.

Another Objection.

"BUT how ſtrong ſoever the Evidence may be, yet if the Revelation be *repug-*
"*nant* to Reaſon; if it croſſes our Conceptions, or tranſcends the Bounds of our
"Underſtanding; how can we bring ourſelves to believe it? *Knowledge* is certainly
"a great Ingredient of *Faith*; and therefore where we have no Notions, nor any
"competent Perception of the Thing, 'tis impoſſible for us to believe." It cannot be denied indeed, but that, in the *Chriſtian* Religion, there are many great *Myſteries*, or Doctrines of too much *Sublimity* for the Powers of Reaſon, unaſſiſted by Revelation, to find out, or, when diſcovered, fully to comprehend: But this is no more, than what we may reaſonably expect, conſidering the Nature and Quality of the Things, which it treats of. In its main Intendment indeed, it is a kind of *Comment* upon the Divine Nature, or an Inſtrument to convey right Conceptions of God into the Soul of Man, ſo far as it is capable of receiving them. [r] But now, God, we know, is an *infinite* Being, without any Bounds or Limitations of his Eſſence; *wonderful* in his Actions, *inconceivable* in his Purpoſes, and *inexpreſſible* in his Attributes; and how can ſuch vaſt and mighty Things be crouded in a little *finite* Underſtanding? How ſhall our poor ſhort Faculties be able to meaſure the *Length* of his Eternity, the *Breadth* and Expanſions of his Immenſity, the *Height* of his Preſcience, the *Depth* of his Decrees, and, laſt of all, that *unutterable*, *incomprehenſible* Myſtery of *two* Natures united into *one* Perſon, and again, of one and the ſame Nature diffuſed into a *triple* Perſonality. When a Man, that was born blind, (as [s] one expreſſes it) ſhall be able, on hearſay, to conceive in his Mind all the Varieties and Curioſities of *Colours*, or to draw an exact *Scheme* of ſome fine City, or *Map* of ſome large Province; then we may expect, in this degenerate State of our Underſtanding, to comprehend the *Ways* of the Almighty, and *by ſearching to find out God*: But, (to do Juſtice to the Argument on the other Side) as it would be extremely fooliſh and irrational for a blind Man to affirm, that there is no ſuch Thing as *Colours*, or *Lines*, or *Pictures*, becauſe he finds, that he cannot figure, in his Mind, any true Perception of them; ſo would it be equally, or rather ſuperlatively more unreaſonable, for us to deny the great Myſteries of our Faith, becauſe the *Plummet* of our Reaſon will not reach them.

Anſwered.

The Myſteriouſneſs *of Religion, no Argument againſt its Credibility.*

Myſteries *the Commendation of Religion.*

WISH therefore we may, that Religion were leſs difficult to us; but, at the ſame Time, we ought to remember, that we wiſh away that, which, in Reality, is Religion's preſent Commendation, as well as an Ingredient of our future Bliſs. 'Tis Eaſineſs of Acceſs, we know, [t] that, many Times, lays a Man open to Contempt, and a thorough Inſpection into the Secrets of any Object, that is apt to make us inſult over it; and therefore, to protect our Religion from rude Incroachments, by impreſſing an Awe and reverential Fear upon our Minds, God has thought proper to ſurround it (as it were) with a ſacred and *majeſtick* Obſcurity, and, in ſome Parts of it, to exhibit ſuch ſublime Truths, as tranſcend the Reach of human Wiſdom; thereby to humble the Pride and Haughtineſs of our Reaſon, and thereby to engage us in a cloſer and more diligent Search into ſuch *Subjects*, as will, every Moment, furniſh us with new Matter, to entertain the buſieſt *Contemplation*, even to the utmoſt *Period* of human Life. While therefore we continue in this State, we muſt be content [u] to *know in Part*: A full and adequate Perception of the Myſteries of our Religion is reſerved, as a principal Ingredient of our Felicity and Happineſs Above, when all the *Heights* and *Depths*, which we now ſtand amazed at, ſhall then be made clear and familiar to us; when God ſhall diſplay the hidden Glories of his Nature, the Wonders of his Providence, and the Wiſdom of his Counſels; and, withal,

[q] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [r] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. III. [s] Ibid. [t] Ibid.
[u] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

withal, fortify the Eye of the Soul to such a Degree, as to make it able (so far as the Capacity of an human Intellect can be able) to behold and take them in: When *Faith*, in short, shall be swallowed up in *Vision*; and we admitted into that Place, where *we shall see Face to Face, and know, even as also we are known.*

A Distinction of Things above and against Reason.

To have a right Notion of the Mysteries of our Religion then, we must be careful to distinguish between those Things, that are *above* Reason, and *incomprehensible*; and those, that are *against* Reason, and utterly *inconceivable*: For * some Things are *above* Reason, because of their transcendent Excellency, and Distance from us; whereas those, that are *against* Reason, involve a Contradiction, and have a natural Repugnancy to our Understandings, which cannot conceive any Thing, that is formally impossible: And from hence it will follow, [x] that though we neither can, nor should believe those Things, that are *contrary* to our Reason; yet we both may, and ought to believe those, that are *above* it. *Apprehend* indeed every Thing we must, before we can believe it; we must have some consistent Notion of what is propounded to us, before we can assent to it; but to expect, that we should fully comprehend every Thing we believe, that we should have an adequate Notion of it, and be able to free that Notion from all Appearance of *Difficulty* and *Abstruseness*, is to suppose ourselves *Gods*, and not *Men*. If then we can but shew, that, in the *Christian System, there are no Doctrines*, but such as stand clear of all Absurdity and Contradiction; the more abstruse or mysterious they are, the more they deserve our Belief, for this very Reason, [y] because, if what is revealed concerning God, were every Way easy, and adapted to our Comprehension, it could never reach, nor with any Fitness represent that Nature, which we all allow to be *incomprehensible*.

No Contradiction in the Mysteries of Religion.

The holy Scriptures, for Instance, teach us, that in the *Divine Nature* (which can be but one) there are three *distinct Persons*, to whom are ascribed the same Attributes and Perfections, the same Worship and Adoration: This indeed is a Doctrine above our Comprehension, as to the Manner how *three* should be *one*, and one three; [z] but still we affirm, that there is no Contradiction in it, if we will but distinguish between *Numbers* and the *Nature* of Things. For *three* to be *one* indeed is a Contradiction in Numbers; but, whether an infinite Nature can communicate itself to three *different Subsistences*, without such a *Division*, as is among *created* Beings, must not be determined by bare Numbers, but by the absolute Perfections of the Divine Nature, which must be owned to be above our Comprehension. The holy Scriptures teach us, that the Son of God was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and that therefore our *Redeemer* was both God and Man in *one Person*. This we own is, in its own Nature, one of the *great Mysteries of Godliness*, as St *Paul* calls it; but then we must remember, that, in Reality, it is not much more difficult, than the *Union* of the Soul and Body in all Mankind, which, how unaccountable soever it may be to our Reason and Imagination, yet it is too certain, *in Fact*, to be called in Question. Once more, the Holy Scriptures teach us, that our Saviour Christ, who was both God and Man in one Person, became the Redeemer of the World, offered himself a *Propitiation* for Sinners to his heavenly Father, and that, upon the Father's Acceptance thereof, depends the new *Covenant*, and all the great Benefits contained in it. This, in many Respects, is a *Mystery* too, and what we could not have known, had it not been revealed to us; but now, that it is revealed, 'tis far from deserving the Imputation of being *absurd*. [a] That all Mankind are Sinners, and fallen from their *primitive* Integrity, not only the Scripture, but the constant Experience of our own irregular Appetites, the Wickedness of the World in past Ages, and the known Complaints of the wisest Philosophers, are but too sad and too convincing Demonstrations. Now since this was our Condition, and God was minded to rescue us from it, but entirely at his Liberty, in what Method to effect it; since the Soul of our Saviour Christ was a free *immaculate* Being, that might voluntarily suffer for us, if he pleased, and, by the Dignity of his Nature, inhance the Value of his Sufferings to the full Pardon of our Sins, upon his Father's Acceptance of a *vicarious* Sacrifice; there appears nothing in this Doctrine of *Christ's Satisfaction* (now that we have it fully revealed to us) but what corresponds with common Reason, and all the *judicial* Proceedings among Mankind.

These are some of the principal Doctrines we profess; and being they are free (when rightly considered) from all Appearance of Contradiction, we may appeal to the

* *Bates*'s Harmony. [x] *Whiston*'s Essays. [y] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [z] *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons. [a] *Whiston*, ibid.

the Judgment of any conſiderate Perſon, [b] whether it be not for the Dignity and Advantage of Religion, that ſome *Articles* of it exceed the largeſt human Comprehenſion: Whether we ſhould entertain the ſame awful Impreſſions of the Divine *Majeſty*, if the Perfections of his Nature and Operations were only ſuch, as we could ſee to the End of: Whether it does not raiſe the Value of Man's Redemption, to have it brought about by Miracles of Mercy, not only without Example, but even beyond our preſent Underſtanding. Had all theſe Things been leſs, we ſhould indeed have known them better; but then, ſo much as we abate of their *Myſteriouſneſs*, to bring them down to our Capacity, ſo much we impair their *Dignity*, and weaken the Power of them upon our Affections. It is therefore the very Commendation (as we ſaid before) and Excellency of theſe Doctrines, that they are ſo far *above us*; and we ought to eſteem it an Inſtance of the Divine *Goodneſs*, no leſs than *Wiſdom*, ſo to have *tempered* his Revelations, that we want no Knowledge fit to engage our Piety and holy Wonder, and yet have not ſo much, as ſhould deſtroy our Humility and godly Reverence; and, upon the whole, have Reaſon to believe, it could not have been better, nay, probably not near ſo well, if either leſs had been *diſcovered* to us, or leſs *concealed* from us.

THUS we have conſidered the Nature, the Evidence, and the Reaſonableneſs of Faith; and ſhould now proceed to enquire into the Power and Efficacy of it; how it influences the Minds and Manners of Men, and, upon what Accounts, it is made the *federal* Condition of our Salvation; but that there is a *ſeeming* Repugnancy in the Sentiments of two great *Apoſtles* concerning this Doctrine, which (before we come to that) we ſhall endeavour to reconcile. St *Paul*, writing to the Chriſtians at *Rome*, concerning the Nature and Neceſſity of Faith, [c] *that a Man is juſtified by it, without the Deeds of the Law:* St *James*, writing to the Chriſtians, that lived among the diſperſed *Jews*, concludes quite the contrary, [d] *ye ſee then how that by Works a Man is juſtified, and not by Faith only:* The one affirms that Salvation is to be attained not by *working*, but by *believing*; the other as reſolutely affirms not by *believing*, but by *working*. St *Paul* proves his Doctrine by the *Example* of *Abraham*, [e] *to whom Faith was imputed for Righteouſneſs*; and St *James* makes uſe of the ſelf-ſame Argument to prove his likewiſe, for [f] *was not Abraham our Foreſather*, ſays he, *juſtified by Works, when he offered up Iſaac his Son upon the Altar?* Here indeed is a great Appearance of Contradiction, but this Appearance will poſſibly vaniſh, upon our conſidering the different Senſes of the Terms made uſe of by the Apoſtles, as well as the different Scopes, they might have in their reſpective Writings. *St* Paul *and St* James *reconciled.*

[g] 1. NOW the moſt obvious and uſual Signification of the Word *Juſtify* in holy Scripture, is to receive to Mercy, to abſolve, and acquit from former Tranſgreſſions; ſo that, when God *juſtifies* any Man, it is by forgiving him his Sins; by accepting, eſteeming, and rewarding him as a righteous Perſon, although, in Reality, he comes far ſhort of that Character. For, indeed, what other Juſtification is the beſt good Man among us capable of? We are all Sinners, and therefore, by a righteous God, cannot be acquitted as innocent; there is no other Way for us to be juſtified therefore, but by having our Sins forgiven, our Puniſhment remitted, and ourſelves graciouſly received to Mercy. Taking the Word in this Senſe then, we muſt farther obſerve, that there is a *two-fold Juſtification*; the *firſt* is, when we give up our Names to Chriſt, and take upon us the Profeſſion of his moſt holy Religion *in Baptiſm*; for then are our Sins waſhed away in the *Laver of Regeneration*, and ourſelves admitted into a *Covenant* of Grace and Pardon. This, however, is not a full Juſtification: Our Sins may afterwards be imputed to us, if either in Profeſſion, or Works, we deny that Faith, which we then took upon us: and therefore the *ſecond*, and indeed our *compleat* Juſtification is not till the Day of Judgment, when God will for ever acquit from Guilt, and free from all the Puniſhment of their Offences, thoſe, who continue faithful to that *Covenant*, which they entered into at their Baptiſm.

2. THE Word *Faith*, or *Belief* in Scripture, has many different Significations; three of which we need only here ſingle out, as the moſt uſual, and moſt applicable to the Caſe in Hand. The *firſt* is, when Faith is put to ſignify *a bare Aſſent of the Mind to ſome revealed Propoſition.* This, indeed, is the moſt *genuine* Senſe of the Word, and in this Senſe it is that St *James* uſes it, when he makes it *unavailable* to the Juſtification of any Man: But then, 2. There is a *larger* Signification, frequently occurring

[b] *Stanhope*'s Sermons. [c] Rom. iii. 28. [d] James ii. 24. [e] Rom. iv. 22.
[f] James ii. 21. [g] *Blackhall*'s Sermons.

occurring in St *Paul*'s Epiſtles, where it denotes, not only a *bare* Belief in the *Goſpel-Truths*, but likewiſe a *Life* led anſwerable to ſuch a Belief, and adorned with ſuch Virtues and Evangelical Graces, as are the proper Effects of it: And therefore,

3. When it is ſet in *Contrapoſition* to the Law, it generally means the whole *Complex* of Chriſtianity; *viz.* our believing the *Revelation*, and truſting in the *Promiſes*, and endeavouring to follow the *Precepts* of our holy Religion: In which latter Senſes are thoſe Paſſages to be underſtood, which make Juſtification the Effect of Faith.

3. THERE is the like Ambiguity in the Word *Works*; for ſometimes it is put to ſignify thoſe *moral* Doctrines of Piety, Juſtice, and Charity, *&c.* that are required under the Goſpel; ſometimes thoſe *ritual* Obſervances, that were in Force under the Law; ſometimes it is taken for a *perfect* and unſinning Obedience, ſuch as may challenge the Reward as a Debt; and at others, for a *ſincere* Endeavour only to pleaſe God, without any Notion of *Merit*, or Expectance of Reward (but through the Divine Grace and Beneficence) for what is done. Theſe Obſervations being premiſed, there may be ſeveral Ways of ſettling the Difference between the two Apoſtles; for,

1. WHEREAS we obſerved, that there is properly a *twofold Juſtification*, one when we are admitted to *Baptiſm*, and the other, when we are acquitted at the Day of *Judgment:* Suppoſe at preſent, that by *Faith* and *Works* both the Apoſtles mean the ſame Things; yet if they do not ſpeak of the ſame *Juſtification*; if St *Paul*, when he ſpeaks of Juſtification by *Faith only*, means the *firſt* Juſtification, which is diſpenſed to us in Baptiſm; and St *James*, when he ſpeaks of Juſtification *by Works*, in Conjunction with Faith, means the *ſecond* and final Juſtification at the laſt Day; there is plainly no Contrariety between them. They both ſpeak Truth, becauſe, to be admitted at firſt into the Covenant of Grace by Baptiſm, nothing more than *Faith*, or a full Perſuaſion of the Truth of Chriſtianity, is expected; but then, to be pronounced guiltleſs at the Bar of Heaven, a virtuous and godly Converſation, or a Life led anſwerable to ſuch a Perſuaſion, is certainly required.

2. AGAIN, *Faith*, as we ſaid, ſignifies ſometimes the *Chriſtian Religion*, ſometimes a Belief of the Goſpel-Truths, and, over and above that, ſometimes ſuch a Life and Converſation as becometh ſuch a Belief. Suppoſe then that both the Apoſtles uſe the Word *Juſtify* always in the ſame Senſe; yet if St *Paul* by *Faith* includes all, that St *James* would have us underſtand by *Faith* and *Works* too, then is there again no Contrariety in their Doctrines, for both aſſert the ſame Thing.

3. ONCE more, *Works*, as we ſaid, are known to ſignify ſometimes the Obſervance of *legal* Ceremonies, ſometimes the Merit of good Works, and ſometimes a ſincere Endeavour to pleaſe God in all Manner of holy Living. Suppoſe then that theſe two Apoſtles uſe theſe Words in *different* Senſes; St *Paul*, by the *Works*, which he rejects, means the Performance of *legal Ordinances*, or the *Merit* of good Works; and St *James*, by the *Works*, which he requires, means only an *Evangelical* Obedience to God's Precepts; though there be a *Diverſity*, yet is there plainly no Contrariety in what they affirm. They do not both indeed affirm the ſame Thing; but what they both affirm, is both conſiſtent and undeniably true. By *Ritual* Performances, ſays St *Paul*, we are not juſtified, becauſe they are uſeleſs and unneceſſary, they cannot make *the Comers thereunto perfect*, neither hath God required them of us now; or, (take him in the other Senſe) by the *Merit* of good Works we are not juſtified, becauſe our beſt Deeds are ſo full of Sin and Imperfection, that it is of God's gracious Mercy alone, that we are not condemned for them: But this hinders not, what the other Apoſtle aſſerts, from being true, *by Works a Man is juſtified*, always meaning not the Works of the Law, *i. e.* not the Obſervances of the *Levitical* Diſpenſation, or ſuch Works, as are ſuppoſed to be *meritorious*, and to need no Mercy, no Repentance, no Humiliation, and no Appeal to Grace and Favour; but always meaning *Works*, that are an Obedience to God by the Meaſures of a *good Will*, and a *ſincere* Endeavour, and *Faith* in the *Lord Jeſus*.

THUS, take the Words which Way we will, the Apoſtles cannot be ſaid to *contradict* one another. If St *Paul*, by the *Faith*, which he makes the ſole Condition of our *Juſtification*, means a lively and active Faith, which approves itſelf by a ready

Obedience, he means thereby the ſame Thing, that St *James* does by Faith and Works both; and conſequently affirms the ſame, *viz.* that a virtuous Life, as well as a right Belief, is made the Condition of Man's Salvation. Or taking it otherwiſe, that the *Works* and *Juſtification*, here under Debate, in St *Paul* are of one Sort, and in St *James* of another; then, indeed, are the Concluſions *different*; they do not both affirm the *ſame Thing*, but what they both affirm implies no Fallacy, no Inconſiſtency, no Contradiction to each other. St *James* aſſerts, that the Works of Piety, Juſtice, and Charity, *&c.* are requiſite to our Juſtification; and St *Paul* aſſerts, that the *Merit* of theſe Works, or the Performance of the *Jewiſh* Ceremonies, is not: And, as to this, they are doubtleſs both in the Right, though in arguing on different Occaſions, and to different Perſons, they propoſe their Arguments not in the ſame Manner. St *Paul*, writing to Chriſtians, [k] among whom were ſeveral *Jewiſh Converts*, who ſtill retained a Veneration for the *Moſaick* Ordinances, and thought that ſome of them (*Circumciſion* eſpecially) were ſtill neceſſary to Salvation, even under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, and being minded to antidote them againſt the Infection of ſuch erroneous Opinions, was naturally led to frame his Diſcourſe againſt Juſtification by *Works of the Law*; and, on the contrary, to aſcribe it chiefly to Faith in Chriſt, in his Death, and in his Doctrine, without the Addition of ſuch Works: Whereas St *James* writing to Chriſtians, among whom were many *Libertines*, who denied the Neceſſity of a godly Life, and maintained, that the *outward Profeſſion* of Chriſtianity, and a bare *ſpeculative* Faith, was enough to ſave them, intended to caution them againſt ſuch dangerous Poſitions; and thereupon, in like Manner, was naturally led to declare himſelf againſt a Faith deſtitute of good Works; and, on the contrary, to maintain, that the great Thing neceſſary to Salvation was Chriſtian Obedience. In a Word, [l] the one ſpeaks profeſſedly of the *Works of the Jewiſh Religion*, and the other of the *Works of the Chriſtian*; and therefore there can be no *Contradiction* between them, ſince it is plain, that the Faith of the Chriſtian Religion may avail to juſtify a Man without the Works of the *Jewiſh* Religion, (which is the Aſſertion of St *Paul*) though it cannot do ſo, without the Works of the Chriſtian Religion; (which is the Aſſertion of St *James*;) and therefore where St *James* extols Works, he means the *Moral* and *Evangelical*; where St *Paul* decries them, he means the *Jewiſh* and *Ceremonial*; for otherwiſe, when he has to do with ſuch wicked and erroneous Chriſtians, as *retain the Faith in Ungodlineſs*, he tells them plainly (even in thoſe Writings, where he ſeems to depreciate Works moſt) that [m] *in Jeſus Chriſt nothing will avail them, but Faith working by Love*; for [n] *tho' I have all Faith, ſo that I could remove Mountains, and have not Charity, I am nothing*; and therefore, ſays he to *Titus*, [o] *This is a faithful Saying, and theſe Things I will that thou affirm conſtantly, that they, who have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good Works.*

The Sum of the whole Matter.

IF then, at laſt, it come to be enquired, why *Faith* ſhould ſo frequently be made the Condition, not of our Juſtification only, but [p] of our eternal Happineſs and Salvation; the Anſwer is——That as Faith firſt puts us in the Way of Salvation, by procuring our *Admiſſion* into the Church of Chriſt, and a Participation of the Privileges belonging to that *Society*; ſo it is the Spring and Foundation of all the Obedience, we afterwards perform, and, when lively and conſtant, never fails of its Effect. [q] That Faith in God is the Foundation of all the Services we perform to him, is a Propoſition of undoubted Authority, for [r] *he that cometh to God* (as the Apoſtle lays it down) *muſt believe that he is a Rewarder of them, that diligently ſeek* to pleaſe *him*; and, from this Principle, he ſhews that the Patriarchs, and holy People, before the Revelation of the Goſpel, [s] *obtained Teſtimony, that they were righteous*, and, in the moſt difficult Inſtances, [t] *choſe rather to ſuffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleaſures of Sin for a Seaſon.* And that *Faith in Chriſt* is equally the Foundation of all our Obedience, is manifeſt from all thoſe Places in Scripture, where it is ſtiled [u] *the Work of Faith*, by Virtue of which we are enabled to [x] *overcome the World*, to mortify our inordinate Affections, and [y] *to quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil.*

Why Faith *is made a Condition of Salvation.*

[k] *Allen*, on the two Covenants. [l] *Clarke*'s Eſſays. [m] Gal. v. 6. [n] 1 Cor. xiii. 2. [o] Tit. iii. 8. [p] Vid. Eph. ii. 8, 9. Rom. iii. 28. Tit. iii. 5. [q] *Whitby*, in his Preface to the Epiſtle to the *Galatians*. [r] Heb. xi. 6. [s] Ibid. ver. 4. [t] Ibid. ver. 25. [u] 2 Theſ. i. 11. [x] 1 John v. 5. [y] Eph. vi. 16.

As the Spring of our Obedience.

AND indeed, if we conſider the great *Objects* of our Faith, the *Bleſſings* promiſed to the Obedient, and the *Evils* threatened to the Wicked; that the Bleſſings allotted to the Obedient exceed vaſtly any Thing we here enjoy; the Puniſhments entailed upon the Wicked are far more laſting and intolerable, than any Thing we here can ſuffer; and if, at the ſame Time, we believe that Chriſt our Saviour, who promiſed theſe Bleſſings, and threatened theſe Puniſhments, was really a *Divine Perſon*, and could therefore reveal nothing, but what was true, nor promiſe or threaten any Thing, but what he both can, and will make good to the utmoſt; it will be impoſſible for us to prefer a leſs Good, before the greateſt Bleſſings, or to incur the worſt of Miſery, in order to eſcape a leſs Evil, ſo long as the *Faith*, or a full Perſuaſion of theſe Things, is preſent to our Minds. [z] It would be impoſſible for Men to value any Thing, in Compariſon to the Joys of Eternity, ſuppoſing that they had a diſtinct *Sight* and *Feeling* of them: It would be impoſſible for them not to flee Sin, and dread every guilty Approach towards it, more than they do *Racks* and *Tortures*; did but the ghaſtly Scene open, and ſet before their Eyes the Pains and Anguiſh, the inſupportable and everlaſting Wrath, which the Damn'd endure; no Temptation, though otherwiſe never ſo *inſinuating*, would be able to make its Way, and ſeduce us, with ſuch a Proſpect as this before our Eyes. Now Faith is *the Evidence of Things not ſeen*; when it is ſtrong and lively, it brings diſtant Things to view, and makes Futurity preſent to the Imagination: And therefore we may lay it down for a certain Truth, that when we *neglect* to do what our Lord has declared abſolutely neceſſary to obtain, and to ſecure our eternal Intereſt, and venture upon the *Commiſſion* of what he threatens with everlaſting Miſery, that we do not at that Time actually believe theſe Things; we have not a full and vigorous Perſuaſion of them upon our Minds; we are hurried away with the Impetuoſity of our Paſſions, and the Preſence of the Temptation, which *blind* the Eye of Faith, and remove the Conſideration of all *diſtant* Objects from its Sight.

Means to improve it.

'TIS not enough then, that we are convinced in our Judgment of the Truth of the great Doctrines of Religion. [a] We muſt, by conſtant Meditation, endeavour to fix them indelibly in our Hearts, that they may, with more Prevalency, than worldly Objects can, move our Paſſions, and excite our Affections. 'Tis not enough, that we ſlightly believe the Exiſtence of a God, but we muſt preſent him frequently to our Thoughts in the moſt lively Colours of Glory and Majeſty; conſider him, as that Supreme Being, [b] *who hath meaſured the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand, and meted out Heaven with a Span; who hath comprehended the Duſt of the Earth in a Meaſure, and weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance*: Conſider him, as that all-powerful Being, [c] *before whom, the Pillars of the Earth tremble, and are aſtoniſhed at his Reproof*; before whom [d] *all Nations are as nothing, and are counted leſs than nothing and Vanity*. 'Tis not enough, that we believe in general the *Providence of God*, but we muſt think of him always, as actually preſent, obſerving all our Words and Actions, and [e] *underſtanding our Thoughts afar off*; not enough that we believe *a Judgment to come*, but we muſt frequently repreſent to ourſelves the *Solemnity* and Terror of that great Day, and imagine that we ſee our Saviour ſitting in Judgment (as [f] in the prophetical Alluſion) *with his Throne like the fiery Flame, and his Wheels as burning Fire; a fiery Stream iſſuing from before him, Thouſand Thouſands miniſtring unto him, and ten thouſand Times ten thouſand ſtanding before him; the Judgment ſet, and the Books opened*. 'Tis not enough, laſtly, to believe ſlightly, and in general, *a State of Reward and Puniſhment* for Virtue and Vice, but we muſt meditate frequently on the *Happineſs* of thoſe, who ſhall be admitted [g] *to the heavenly* Jeruſalem, *to the general Aſſembly of the Firſt-born, to an innumerable Company of Angels, to God the Judge of all, and to Jeſus the Mediator of the new Covenant*: And, on the contrary, meditate ſeriouſly on the *Miſery* of thoſe, who ſhall be caſt [k] *into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone*, where *the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched*; and where [l] *they ſhall be tormented Day and Night, for ever and ever*. Theſe Conſiderations, if ſo fixed in the Mind, as to be always preſent to our Thoughts, and influencing our Affections, cannot fail of being a ſtrong *Preſervative* againſt Temptations of every Kind, and (by the Aſſiſtance of Divine Grace) an effectual *Means* to make us [m] *conſtant and immoveable, and always abounding in the Work of the Lord*.

2. ANOTHER

[z] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. IV. [a] *Clarke's* Eſſays. [b] Iſa. xl. 12. [c] Job xxvi. 11. [d] Iſa. lx. 17. [e] Pſal. cxxxix. 2. [f] Dan. vii. 9, &c. [g] Heb. xii. 22, &c. [k] Mark ix. 44. [l] Rev. xx. 10. [m] 1 Cor. xv. 58.

2. ANOTHER Condition of the *Covenant of Grace* on our Parts is, *Repentance*, founded upon the Promiſe of *Pardon* and *Forgiveneſs* on God's; for ſuch was the Stipulation between God and Chriſt——[n] That, in Caſe God would engage to forgive the Sin of our firſt Parents, and from their Poſterity to remove the Imputation of Guilt; and, conſidering the State of their degenerate Nature, would be pleaſed to be merciful to their Tranſgreſſions, and ready, at all Times, to releaſe them from their Obligation to Puniſhment; he, on *his Part*, would undertake to fulfil the Law, which they were unable to do; to bear all the Penalty due to their Diſobedience; and, once for all, make a *ſtanding* Compenſation for what they, in all Ages, ſhould do amiſs; provided, that they, on *their Part*, whenever they found themſelves led away by Temptations, and deviating from the Path of God's Commands, ſhould, upon their firſt *Recollection*, return to their Obedience; and, by all the proper Indications of Sorrow and Repentance, make the beſt Reparation they could. For this is the Tenor of the Covenant *on God's Part*, that [o] *he hath ſet forth Chriſt, to be a Propitiation, through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteouſneſs, for the Remiſſion of Sins, that are paſt, that he might be juſt, and the Juſtifier of them, that believe in Jeſus*; and this is the Condition annexed *on our's*, that we ſhould [p] *repent and be baptized every one of us, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for the Remiſſion of Sin*; for God having promiſed [q] *that Repentance and Remiſſion of Sins ſhould be preached in his Name among all Nations, the Promiſe is to us, and to our Children* (as the Apoſtle tells us) *and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* *The ſecond Condition*, Repentance.

[r] NOW, in order to ſtate the right Notion of Repentance, we muſt obſerve, that, the Apoſtles of our bleſſed Lord, preaching either to the *Heathens*, or unbelieving *Jews*, do conſtantly exhort them to *repent*, as a proper *Introduction* into the Chriſtian Diſpenſation; becauſe, without a due Senſe of the Wickedneſs of their former State, they could not poſſibly be induced to believe in Chriſt, and ſo *initiated* into a Religion, ſo contrary to their avowed Notions. We muſt obſerve farther, that as ſoon as Men complied with this firſt Condition, being ſenſible of their former Impieties, and thereupon admitted into the Church by *Baptiſm*; the Exhortations of the Apoſtles take another Turn, and inſiſt chiefly on the *Newneſs of Life*, and Perfection of Virtue, required in Chriſtians; on the Danger of relapſing, and the Neceſſity of *working out their Salvation with Fear and Trembling*: And from hence we may infer, that, as the frequent Mention of *Repentance* was made to thoſe chiefly, who were *unconverted* and *Unbelievers*, but to ſuch, as were become *Believers* and *Chriſtians*, the *Practice* of all Virtue, and the poſitive Improvement in all, that is good and praiſe-worthy, was recommended; ſo, to us, who are *adult* Chriſtians, and *have our Senſes exerciſed to diſcern both Good and Evil*, *Milk* does not ſo properly belong, *as ſtrong Meat*; or, (as the Apoſtle explains the Metaphor) *the firſt Principles of the Doctrines of Chriſt*, ſuch as *Repentance from dead Works, and Faith towards God*, are not ſo ſtrictly the Conditions we are under, as a *Growth in Grace and Progreſſion to Perfection.* *The* primitive *Notion of Repentance.*

THIS, however, muſt be owned with Grief of Heart, that, ſuch is the *Weakneſs* of our Nature to betray, and the *Subtlety* of the Tempter to ſupplant us, the *Force* of our Paſſions to blind, and the *Agreeableneſs* of Objects to allure us, that *in many Things we offend all*, and, in Strictneſs of Speech, *there is none that doth Good, no not one*. The Goſpel therefore would in vain profeſs to bring Salvation to mortal Men, if every wilful Deviation from the Rules of Virtue were ſo *unpardonable*, that no future Amendment would be ſufficient to entitle the Sinner to the Forgiveneſs of what is paſt. *Repentance after Baptiſm.*

IN the *Primitive* Church indeed, there was [s] a Sect of Men, who, upon a miſtaken Interpretation of ſome Paſſages of the *Epiſtle* of St *Paul* to the *Hebrews*, contended, that there was no more Place of Repentance allowed to thoſe, who, after Baptiſm, ſhould fall into any *wilful* and *deliberate* Sin. In Baptiſm, they agreed indeed, that all Sin and Wickedneſs was forgiven, and waſhed away by the Blood of Chriſt, but, *Denied by the* Novattans.

[n] *Scott*'s Mediator. [o] Rom. iii. 25, 26. [p] Acts ii. 38, 39. [q] Luke xxiv. 47.
[r] *Houdley*'s Terms of Acceptance. [s] The *Novatians*, ſo called from *Novatus*, a Prieſt of *Carthage*, denied Abſolution, not only to *Apoſtates*, and ſuch, as, in the Times of Danger and Perſecution, renounced the Chriſtain Religion, but to ſuch, as had been guilty of any notorious Crime, and withdrew from the Communion of the Church, as thinking it defiled by the Re-admiſſion of Sinners and Apoſtates; though *this* was not done, till after a long Separation, and ſevere Courſe of Penance, as appears by the Canons of thoſe ancient Councils of *Eliberis*, *Arles*, and *Ancyra*, as alſo the Writings of *Tertullian*, and others. Vid. *Burnet* on the Articles, and *Payne* on Repentance.

but, after that general Remiſſion, if Men ſinned any Way preſumptuouſly, they then affirmed, that *there remained no more Sacrifice for Sin*; or that, as the Death of Chriſt could not be repeated, ſo they could not obtain any farther Pardon: And therefore how ſincerely ſoever they might repent, there was nothing now to be *expected*, but *a certain fearful looking-for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation.* This Opinion, however, is far from comporting well with the Deſcription God gives of his Nature; [t] *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful, and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in Goodneſs and Truth, forgiving Iniquities, Tranſgreſſions, and Sins*; with the ſolemn Declaration, he makes of his Will, [u] *as I live, ſaith the Lord, I have no Pleaſure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Way, and live*; and, above all, with that amazing Inſtance of his Mercy, the ſending of his only Son, out of his Boſom, to [x] *preach good Tidings unto the Meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the Opening of the Priſon to them, that are bound*, as the Prophet deſcribes the Bleſſings of the *Evangelical* State in a beautiful Variety of Metaphors. And therefore when our bleſſed Saviour makes this general Invitation to Sinners, [y] *come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Reſt*; when he gives his Apoſtles Commiſſion [z] *to preach Repentance and Remiſſion of Sins among all Nations,* [a] *being willing that none ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to Repentance*; when, purſuant to that Commiſſion, St *Peter* [b] exhorts *Simon Magus*, whoſe Sin was deteſtable enough in all Conſcience, *to repent of that his Wickedneſs*, and gives him Encouragement to hope, that he ſhould obtain Forgiveneſs; when St *Paul* reminds *Timothy*, [c] *to inſtruct in Meekneſs thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the Acknowledgment of the Truth, and that they may recover themſelves from the Snare of the Devil*; and (to inſtance no farther) when he adviſes the *Galatians*, that [d] *if any Man were overtaken in a Fault, they, who were ſpiritual, ſhould reſtore ſuch an one in the Spirit of Meekneſs, conſidering themſelves, leſt they alſo be tempted*; when theſe, and ſuch like Paſſages every where meet us in the Goſpel, 'tis plain, that, neither our bleſſed Saviour, nor his Apoſtles, had any ſuch Perſuaſion of the *Irremiſſibleneſs* of Sins, committed after Baptiſm. The Truth is, * that none, who continue obſtinately in the Commiſſion of Sin, might delude themſelves with the vain Expectations of Pardon; St *Paul* hath warned them not to be deceived; [e] *be not deceived*, ſays *he*, *neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abuſers of themſelves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God.* But on the other Side, that none, who have been guilty of the moſt abominable Iniquities, might, upon leaving their Sins, and applying themſelves to the Mercy of God, through the Merits of Chriſt, for Forgiveneſs, deſpair of Pardon, he immediately ſubjoins, *and ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

Unjuſtly, as appears from Scripture.

[f] THE *Primitive* Chriſtians, indeed, thought no Promiſes too great, nor any Threatenings too ſevere, whereby they might engage ſuch, as had eſcaped the Pollution of Sin by Baptiſm, to preſerve their *Innocence*; but yet they did not immediately give up to Deſpair thoſe, who had unhappily violated it. [g] They enjoined them indeed ſtrict Penance, and, for ſome time, excluded them the Communion of Saints; but [h] after *the Puniſhment, which was inflicted by many*, had been ſufficient to reduce them to Repentance, they then put in Practice the Apoſtle's Direction, *to receive them, and to comfort them, leſt peradventure they ſhould be ſwallowed up with over much Sorrow.* They taught, *that the Holy Word and Church of God always admitted of true Repentance*; that *to every one, who heartily and ſincerely repents, God ſets open a Door of Pardon, and the Holy Spirit returns again into a Mind purified from its Pollution*; that, out of his Compaſſion, *God will be patient and merciful, and keep the Invitation, which he made by his Son*; and that therefore, *as it will nothing avail a Man to have been formerly righteous, if he at laſt grows wicked; ſo he, that that has formerly lived wickedly, may afterwards, by Repentance and renewed Obedience, blot out his paſt Tranſgreſſions, and attain to the Crown of Virtue and Immortality.*

And the Practice of the Primitive Chriſtians.

WHEN therefore the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* tells us, [i] that *it is impoſſible for thoſe, who were once enlightened, and have been made Partakers of the Holy*

Some Paſſages in the Epiſtle to the Hebrews *explained.*

[t] Exod. xxxiv. 6. [u] Ezek. xxxiii. 11. [x] Iſa. lxi. 1. [y] Matth. xi. 28. [z] Luke xxiv. 47. [a] 2 Pet. iii. 9. [b] Acts viii. 22. [c] 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. [d] Gal. vi. 1.
* Biſhop *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [e] 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. [f] *Clarke*'s Eſſays. [g] *Cave*'s Primitive Chriſtianity. [h] 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7. [i] Heb. vi. 4, &c.

Holy Ghoſt, &c. *if they ſhall fall away,* [k] *and ſin wilfully, after they have received the Knowledge of the Truth, to renew them again unto Repentance*; we muſt remember, 1. That [l] it is very uſual in Scripture to expreſs *that* by *impoſſible*, which is extremely *difficult*, or impoſſible for human Strength, unaſſiſted by divine Grace, to accompliſh. Thus, in the Caſe of [m] *rich Men's entering into the Kingdom of God*, our bleſſed Saviour explains himſelf, by ſaying, that, though the Thing be *impoſſible*, with Regard to the Temptations, ſuch Perſons are liable to, and their *natural* Inability to reſiſt them; [n] *yet the Things, that are impoſſible with Men, are poſſible with God, i. e.* he, by the prevailing Influences of his Grace, may wean their Hearts from the World, and enable them to overcome their darling Inclinations: And, in like Manner, though Men, who reject and quench the Holy Spirit by Sin, cannot renew themſelves, yet God can give them the Heart and Power of Repentance and Renovation: And therefore the Word *Impoſſible* here is not to be taken in a *ſtrict* and rigorous, but *comparative* Senſe only; even to denote the great Labour and Pains, the many Struggles and Conteſts, the frequent Mortifications and Self-denials, it muſt neceſſarily coſt the wilful and habitual Sinner before he can be *born again*, (as the Scripture expreſſes it) [o] *put off the old Man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful Luſts; and put on the new, which, after God, is created in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs.* To remove this Difficulty effectually, we muſt remember, 2. That theſe *Texts* to the *Hebrews* are meant, not of every Sort of wilful Offenders, but of ſuch only as *revolt*, and *fly off entirely* from the Faith of the Goſpel. For this Reaſon they are branded with the Name [p] *of Adverſaries*, of ſuch as *crucify the Son of God afreſh, as trample him under Foot, count the Blood of the Covenant an unholy Thing, and do Deſpight to the Spirit of Grace*; and theſe Men, to be ſure, it is impoſſible to *renew*, while they continue in their *Apoſtacy*, becauſe they have caſt off their only *Remedy*. *Faith*, we all know, is the indiſpenſable *Condition* of Pardon; but this they have rejected, and diſclaimed, and, conſequently, are not within the *Covenant*, nor under the Influence of Grace. They have *denied the Lord that bought them*; they have renounced the whole Religion of Chriſt; and therefore cannot poſſibly reap any Benefit from the Sacrifice of *that Blood*, which they eſteem *common*, and *no Sacrifice at all*; or from the Merits of him, whom *they tread under Foot*, as if he were ſtill dead, and lying in the Grave; and conſequently account him a vile *Miſcreant* and Impoſtor. [q] But the Caſe is far otherwiſe with thoſe, who are engaged in a ſinful Courſe, and yet have not made ſuch dangerous Defection, or thrown off the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity. They may ſee their *Folly*, and acknowledge the Merit of their Saviour's Atonement; they may comply with the good *Motions* of the Spirit, which they have too long reſiſted, though they have not formally *done* publick *Deſpight to him*. There is a mighty Difference between walking *unworthy* of the Chriſtian Profeſſion, and being *open* and *avowed* Adverſaries to it; between a Converſation *unbecoming the Goſpel*, and *Principles*, that *profeſſedly* overthrow it: And, conſequently, thoſe Paſſages in Scripture, which ſtrike at one of theſe, and declare it incapable of Forgiveneſs, need not, muſt not, be applied to the other, ſo as to exclude from all Hope and Comfort, a Caſe ſo very much unlike it. There is one Caſe indeed, that of *Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, which (as the Scriptures teſtify) excludes from Repentance; and, yet, ſince ſome learned Men have *mollified* the Goſpel-Expreſſions, ſo as even to bring this Sin within the Compaſs of Forgiveneſs, it may not be amiſs to enquire a little into the particular Nature of it, and upon what Account the Scriptures have made it ſo peculiarly *unpardonable*.

NOTHING certainly can be plainer in Scripture, than that *the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, which our Saviour mentions as exempt from Pardon, is to be underſtood of the *Phariſees*, imputing the Miracles, which he wrought by the Power of the *Holy Ghoſt*, to the Power of the Devil; and yet, I know not how, a great many learned Men have made Shift to miſtake it. [r] A Denial of Chriſt's Divinity, a Denial of his Religion for Fear of Suffering, a wilful Oppoſition to the Truth, a malicious envying other Men's Graces, groſs Relapſes into Sin, or final Impenitence, and Perſeverance therein, have, ſome by one, and ſome by others, been made the *Characteriſticks* of this Sin; and yet the very Occaſion of our Saviour's Diſcourſe concerning it cannot but give us quite different Conceptions. He had juſt now, [s] *healed one poſſeſſed of a Devil, blind and dumb*, whereat *the People were much amazed*, and

The Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, *what.*

[k] Heb. x. 26. [l] *Payne*, on Repentance, and *Stanhope*'s Sermons. [m] Matth. xix. 23. [n] Luke xviii. 27. [o] Epheſ. iv. 24. [p] Heb. x. 27, 29. [q] *Stanhope*, ibid. [r] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. and *Payne*, on Repentance. [s] Matth. xii. 22.

and began to ſay among themſelves, *Is not this the Son of* David, *i. e.* the promiſed *Meſſias?* Which when the *Phariſees* perceived, they gave this vile and malicious Turn to the Miracle; *this Fellow does not caſt out Devils, but by Belzebub, the Prince of the Devils:* Which Calumny our Saviour undertakes to confute, by ſhewing how unlikely a Thing it was, that the Devil ſhould lend him his Power to uſe it againſt himſelf, and then proceeds to diſcourſe of this Sin; [e] *Wherefore I ſay unto you, all Manner of Sin and Blaſphemy* (which is of another Nature, and not aimed particularly againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*) *ſhall be forgiven unto Men, but the Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſhall not be forgiven unto them.* The *Phariſees* therefore are the Perſons charged with the Sin, and the Sin is their attributing what was done by the *Finger of God* to a *diabolical* Power.

The Heinouſneſs of it.

[f] OUR bleſſed Saviour, to ſhew that he was ſent from God, wrought Miracles, ſuch as did plainly evidence a Divine Power and Preſence accompanying him. Theſe Miracles (to which he frequently appeals) the *Phariſees* were Eye-witneſſes of, and therefore could not deny them; yet ſuch was their Hatred and Oppoſition to him, and his Doctrine, that, rather than allow his Divine Miſſion, they were reſolved to aſcribe all he did to the Power of the Devil: Hereby intending to deſtroy the whole Credit of *Chriſtianity*; and, by making him a *Confederate* with Satan, to repreſent his Religion as the Work and Contrivance of Hell, and ſuch as could tend only to the Miſchief and Deſtruction of Mankind. [g] To ſlander and calumniate *the Son of Man* was a great Sin, no doubt, but ſuch as might more eaſily be forgiven them, becauſe of his State of *Humiliation*, and poor Appearance, which might occaſion their Diſeſteem: But to repreſent the Spirit of God as an *Apoſtate-Angel*, and whatever he did for the Good and Salvation of Mankind, as the Work and Intrigue of the Devil, is a Sin of ſuch an horrid Nature, as may well deſerve a particular Exemption from the general Promiſe and Covenant of Pardon.

How it becomes unpardonable.

[h] GOD, no doubt, can, if he will, work ſo powerfully upon the Minds of Men, by his Grace and Spirit, as to convince the moſt Obſtinate; and, ſuppoſing them to be convinced and repent, it cannot be denied, but that they would be forgiven: And therefore, when our Saviour ſays, that ſuch, as *blaſpheme againſt the Holy Ghoſt, ſhall not be forgiven*, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he means, that, when Men are come to ſuch a Degree of inveterate Malice, God (as he juſtly may) will withdraw his Grace from them, and leave them to the *Biaſs* of their perverſe Minds, which will inſenſibly engage them in a farther Oppoſition to the Truth, and ſink them finally into Perdition; ſo that, being deſerted of God, and, for Want of the neceſſary Aid of his Grace, continuing finally impenitent, they become incapable of Forgiveneſs *both in this World, and that which is to come.* The ſhort then of all is this —— [i] That *the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt* is unpardonable, not becauſe there is not a Sufficiency of Merit in Chriſt to atone for it, or of Mercy in God the Father to forgive it, but becauſe thoſe, who commit it, are of ſuch a *refractory* and incorrigible Spirit, that they reſiſt the laſt and utmoſt Means of their Conviction and Amendment, and conſequently neither will, nor can, repent.

Whether it can be committed now.

WHATEVER *Mollifications* therefore [k] ſome learned Men may deviſe, yet our Saviour's Words are ſo expreſs, and repeated with ſo much Earneſtneſs, and the Nature of the Sin ſo heinous, and ſo repugnant to the Method of Man's Salvation, that it well may be judged a *Caſe exempted* from the general *Act* of Pardon: But then, whether this Sin may be committed now-a-days, or was peculiar to the Times of our Saviour's *Miniſtry*, is a Queſtion, that well deſerves our Conſideration. Now, ſince the Formality of this Sin lay in reſiſting the Evidence of Miracles, wrought in Confirmation of the Truth of Chriſtianity, and maliciouſly imputing the Things, which were done by the Power of the Holy Ghoſt, to the Power of the Devil, there ſeems not to be that Reaſon for confining it ſo ſtrictly to our Saviour's Days; ſince thoſe, who, at any Time, reſiſted the Evidence of Miracles, were chargeable with it, as long as Miracles laſted, which was a conſiderable Time after the Death, both of our Saviour, and of his Apoſtles. [l] The Power of the Holy Ghoſt was ſeen in working Miracles, whenever they were wrought; and therefore, at whatſoever Time this Power was attributed to an Evil Spirit, (as *Julian* and *Celſus* both aſcribed the Miracles, which the Apoſtles did, to their great Skill in *diabolical Magick*) or was any other

[e] Matth. xii. 31. [f] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [g] *Payne*, on Repentance. [h] *Tillotſon*, ibid.
[i] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [k] Vid. *Hammond*, upon Matth. xii. and *Payne*, on Repentance.
[l] *Edwards*, ibid.

other Way ſpoken againſt, or derided by any, the Perſons, who did this, were chargeable with the *Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*. But it does not therefore follow, that every one, who oppoſes Chriſtianity, or diſputes that Demonſtration of Divine Authority, which accompanies it, is therefore guilty of the ſame Crime. There is a great deal of Difference, in Point of Conviction, between *reading* an Account of Miracles wrought in Atteſtation of any Thing, and *ſeeing* them done before our Eyes: And therefore great Caution muſt be uſed, leſt we lay a *Stumbling-block* before our *weaker Brethren*, by extending this Sin too far.

What Sins come near it.

THIS, however, muſt be ſaid, for the Terror of thoſe, that dare venture upon the *Confines* of this dangerous Sin, that, tho' there are ſome particular Circumſtances, which make it *peculiar* to the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity; [m] yet, even among us, there are ſome great and *daring* Impieties, that have but too near a Reſemblance of it. Every wilful Act of Sin, eſpecially in a Chriſtian, is, in ſome Senſe, a *Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*; 'tis a *grieving*, a *quenching*, a *reſiſting*, and *doing Deſpight to the Spirit* in Scripture Language; and, therefore, all ſinning againſt the clear Conviction of our Conſciences, and the Motions and Suggeſtions of God's Holy Spirit to the contrary; all Obſtinacy in a vicious Courſe of Living, notwithſtanding the Motives and Arguments of the Goſpel to perſuade Men to Repentance; all profane ſcoffing at Religion, and *making a Mock of Sin*; all Abuſe of the Scriptures, and *ridiculing* the holy Word of God; all perverſe *Infidelity*, and malicious Oppoſition of the Truth, when the Arguments for it are very plain and evident to every *impartial* Mind, are Crimes of an high Nature, and of a near Affinity to this great and unpardonable Sin; and tho' God, to encourage the Repentance of Men, has not declared them irremiſſible, yet, where they once get Poſſeſſion of a Man, they, by Degrees, ſo waſte the Conſcience, and corrupt the Mind, as to make it incurable. They are, in ſhort, great and grievous Provocations to Almighty God, and, if they be long perſiſted in, we know not how ſoon he may withdraw his Grace from us, and ſuffer us to be *hardened through the Deceitfulneſs of Sin*.

The Nature of Repentance.

THUS we have conſidered the *Univerſality* of Repentance, and in what Inſtances only it fails; and now (to enquire farther into the Nature and Qualifications of it) we muſt obſerve, that, in the conſtant and plain Notion of the Scriptures, it is ſuch a *virtuous Alteration of the Mind and Purpoſe, as begets a like Change in the Life and Practice*, which, beginning in our Thoughts and Reſolutions, is made perfect in our Works and Actions. And, accordingly, thoſe, that have treated on this Subject, have always laid the *firſt* Foundation of Repentance in the Mind, in the inward working of its Thoughts, and the Shame and Sorrow it conceives, upon the Reflection on its paſt Sins, and the Conſideration of its wretched Condition. So that, [n] when the Heart is ſmitten within, and bleeds (as it were) for thoſe inward Wounds it feels in its own Conſcience; when it vents itſelf in all the ſorrowful Expreſſions of *inward* Trouble, and mourns and laments for its grievous Wickedneſs; when it is afraid of the Anger and Indignation of that God, whom it has offended, and has a juſt Dread of thoſe Puniſhments, it knows it has deſerved; when it is under great Convictions of the Folly and Evil of its Sins; and is very ſenſible of the ſad Fruits and Conſequences *of thoſe Things, whereof it is now aſhamed*; when it conſiders how little Benefit and Advantage it ever got by the Commiſſion of them, and to what ſad Account they will turn at laſt, if the *End of them* proves eternal *Death*: This *inward* Senſe and godly Sorrow, if it continue upon the Mind, and goes not off like the *Morning Dew*, will bring it, not only to Confeſſion, and Humiliation, and *afflicting its Soul by faſting*, which may be Signs and Attendants ſometimes, but to (what are the proper Parts and Acts of Repentance) firm Purpoſes and Reſolutions of becoming better, hearty Wiſhes, that it had never committed ſuch Offences, and ſincere Vows and Intentions to forſake them all for the future.

Internal.

External.

2. BUT, beſides this Diſpoſition of the Mind, there is an outward Part of Repentance, the forſaking the Sins we are guilty of, and practiſing the contrary Virtues, without which all our Sorrow and inward Repentance will be of no Avail. For, if we conſider the Nature of God, [o] we cannot ſuppoſe that our Sorrow or Grief, which (in the Degree of it) is *Miſery itſelf*, can, for its own Sake, be acceptable to him. Bare Sorrow is what he rather *diſlikes*, than *likes*; but it is that *Godly Sorrow* only that worketh Amendment and Alteration, which he approves. If we conſider our own

[m] *Payne*, on Repentance, and *Tillotſon*'s Serm. Vol. I. [n] *Payne*, ibid. [o] *Hoadley*'s Terms of Acceptance.

own Nature, we cannot but perceive, that all the Movements of our Minds were calculated to influence and govern our Actions; and, therefore, if we cannot but reflect with Sorrow and Concern upon ſome Part of our Conduct, which we find repugnant to the Laws of God, it is certain, that this very Power of Reflection was deſigned to influence our Behaviour for the Time to come; ſince to be ſorry for any Part of our Behaviour implies in it, that it was either *unbecoming* or *ſinful*; and to account it unbecoming or ſinful implies in it, that it ought never to be practiſed again: Or, laſtly, if we conſider the Nature of our holy Religion, we ſhall find, that the End and Deſign of it was not to beget in us a little Sorrow for Sin, or Conviction of Guilt, or Dread of Puniſhment, but [p] *to teach us to deny Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World*; that, [q] *being made free from Sin, and become the Servants of God, we may have our Fruit unto Holineſs, and our End everlaſting Life.*

Repentance a Goſpel Doctrine.

THUS, if we conſult the Nature of Things, our *Chriſtian* Repentance neceſſarily implies, not only Sorrow for having done amiſs, and Reſolutions for better Obedience for the future, but a putting thoſe Reſolutions likewiſe in Practice, by an actual relinquiſhing the Sins, *that do beſet us*, and an actual proceeding in all the Virtues of a godly Life. *Heathens*, indeed, might, in ſome Meaſure, have the ſame Notions of Repentance; for *Natural* Religion tells us, that, when we have offended God, we ought to be ſorry for it, and amend our Ways; but in this is the Doctrine of Repentance *peculiar* to the Goſpel, that the great Motive and Enforcement of it, the Aſſurance of Pardon and Remiſſion of Sins, through the Merit and Mediation of *Jeſus Chriſt*, is purely *Evangelical*. Before the Promulgation of the New Covenant, [r] wherein God has obliged himſelf to pardon us upon our Repentance, ſinful Men, though true Penitents, could never arrive to ſuch a Degree of *Security* of God's Reconciliation to them, as was neceſſary to ſet their Minds at Reſt, and free them from Anxiety. Some *wavering* Hopes, perhaps, a poor Penitent might have, upon the Conſideration of the infinite *Benignity* of the Divine Nature; but the utmoſt Comfort, that he could give himſelf, was that of the penitent King of *Nineveh*; [s] *who can tell, if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce Anger, that we periſh not?* But, alas! when a Man's Mind is *racked* with the Senſe of Guilt, and the Apprehenſions of Divine Wrath, *who can tell* is ſuch a *poor* Relief, as muſt neceſſarily leave it extremely anxious and deſponding? But now, upon the Foundation of the *Covenant*, which *Chriſt* procured for us, we all can tell, and that with as much Certainty, as that God is true, that, if we do repent, and turn from our evil Ways, *God will turn, and repent of his Anger and Diſpleaſure againſt us*; and therefore, whatever the *Heathen* World, living up, as far as they are able, to the Principles of *Natural* Religion, and, upon any Failure in their Duty, being heartily penitent, may do towards recommending themſelves to the pardoning Grace of God; or whether the Benefits of *Chriſt*'s Death, by ſome ſecret Determination of the Divine Will, may not extend to them, (which are Queſtions wherein we can never come to a certain Reſolution) this muſt be acknowledged by all, [t] that there is a mighty Difference between an *Article* of Faith, and a Concluſion drawn from a mere probable *Conjecture*; between a *fœderal* Right to a Promiſe, and an arbitrary, *uncovenanted* Act of Divine Grace.

The great Privilege of it.

ALL the Light then, which *Natural* Religion can afford a Sinner, as to the Acceptance of his Repentance with God, muſt needs leave him in great Doubt and Perplexity: 'Tis the Privilege of *Divine Revelation*, (and an ineſtimable Privilege it is) which aſcertains us of theſe great Truths, that, upon every Tranſgreſſion, *God is not ſevere to mark what is done amiſs*; that, when we go aſtray, he is patient to wait our Return; that no Sins are too heinous for his Mercy to forgive, or for the great Propitiation of *Chriſt*'s Blood to atone; that when, at any Time, [u] *we have fallen by our Iniquity, we can take with us Words, and turn to the Lord, and ſay unto him, Take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciouſly, ſo ſhall we render thee the Calves of our Lips:* Nay, even when our Provocations have been innumerable, in a long Courſe of Riot and Rebellion, that we have it in our Power to ſay to ourſelves, (and in full Aſſurance of Reception) * *I will ariſe, and go to my Father, and will ſay unto him, Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.*

The Conditions of it.

Only, that we may not abuſe his *paternal* Goodneſs, we muſt remember,

[p] Tit. ii. 12. [q] Rom. vi. 22. [r] *Scott*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. II. [s] Jonah iii. 9.
[t] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [u] Hoſea xiv. 1, 2. * Luke xv. 18, 19.

remember, that there are ſome Qualifications in our Repentance neceſſary to recommend it to his Favour and Acceptance: And what we may reckon the *firſt* of theſe is the *Earlineſs* of it, *i. e.* a Forſaking of our Sins ſo *timely*, as to acquire, and live in the Habits of the contrary Virtues. 1. *That is to be* early.

THE plain and expreſs Condition of the Covenant eſtabliſhed by *Chriſt* is *an holy Life*, i. e. [x] a conſtant and perſevering Obedience to all the Commands of God (allowing for human Weakneſſes and Imperfections) from the Time of our *Baptiſm*, or our coming to the Knowledge of the Truth, to the End of our Lives; and the leaſt that can poſſibly lay claim to the Reward promiſed upon this Condition, is ſuch a Repentance, which produces the actual Obedience of, at leaſt ſome proportionable, Part of a Man's Life: And therefore, tho' God may poſſibly have *Reſerves* of Mercy, which, in the Event, he may exerciſe towards Men in their laſt *Extremity*; yet *originally* 'tis certain, that the Goſpel-Covenant gives no Aſſurance of Comfort, but, either to a *conſtant* and perſevering Holineſs, or to a Repentance, evidenced by actually renewed Obedience.

[y] AT *Baptiſm* indeed, or whenever we firſt come to the Knowledge of the Truth, all paſt Sins are ſo intirely forgiven, and waſhed away by the Blood of *Chriſt*, that Repentance, tho' it has no Time to evidence itſelf in the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, is, without all Controverſy, available to Salvation. But when thoſe, who, by Baptiſm, have covenanted ſolemnly with God for an holy Life, and confirmed that Covenant by other repeated Promiſes and Reſolutions, ſhall yet wilfully live in Sin, and, notwithſtanding the expreſs Threatenings of our *Saviour* and his Apoſtles, that they, who do ſo, *ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*; notwithſtanding the earneſt Exhortations and Warnings of God's Miniſters, and notwithſtanding the perpetual Reproaches of their own Conſciences, will continue obſtinately to do ſo; ſuch Perſons have no Reaſon in the World to expect, that God will, at laſt, accept their late, unactive, and ineffectual Repentance. The *penitent Thief* was received by our *Saviour*, as any other *Infidel* may be, who, towards the End of his Life, is converted to the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion, and heartily embraces it; but there is nothing like a Promiſe in Scripture, that the *unactive* Repentance of a *Chriſtian*, who has lived all his Life in notorious Wickedneſs, ſhall be accepted at the Hour of Death. The *Labourers*, who were hired into the Vineyard, at the *eleventh Hour*, received indeed the ſame *Wages* with them, that had *borne the Burthen and Heat of the Day*; but our *Saviour* has no where promiſed, that baptized and profeſſed Chriſtians, who are hired into the Vineyard in the Morning, if they riot away *all the Day* in Idleneſs and Wickedneſs, ſhall, *at Night*, be accepted for profeſſing their Sorrow, that they have not *worked*.

THOSE, who argue for a *late* Repentance, place all the *Efficacy* of it in this Suppoſition,—— [z] That the Perſon, if he had Time and Opportunity, would ſtedfaſtly perſevere in his holy Purpoſes: But alas! how frequent Inſtances have we of the contrary? And who ſhall dare to preſume *that* to be his own Caſe, in which, if himſelf has not formerly failed, yet a Multitude of pretending Penitents fail daily? How many have we ſeen, who, if God had been pleaſed to take them away, while they ſeemed to be in a good Mind, had left behind them ſuch Hopes of their happy Condition, that it would have been thought uncharitable and unchriſtian to queſtion it; and yet all this was not the Man's *Heart*, but his *Fright*; a Violence upon his Nature, and ſettled Diſpoſition? The Fit of Sickneſs and that of Zeal abated and wore off together; and, as ſoon as the Smart of the Rod was over, all the Remembrance and good Effect of it was over with him too. Few Stomachs are ſo high and ſturdy, but that the *Approach* of Death, the *Terrors* of an incenſed God, and the near *Proſpect* of a gaping Hell will bring them down. When Men are juſt upon the Brink of Eternity, a new Scene opens upon them: Theſe Things will then be ſeen and heard: They intrude upon the Thoughts, whether they will or no, and make quite different Impreſſions, from what they did, when they were at a Diſtance; when Health and Strength, the Hurry of Buſineſs, and Variety of Pleaſures helped to divert and drive away the uneaſy Reflection. And when Matters are come to this Extremity, who is ſo nice, as truly to diſtinguiſh between the *Hatred of Sin*, and the *Dread of Puniſhment*; between the *Love* of God, and an anxious *Care* to preſerve one's ſelf; between the Sorrow of the Penitent, and the Amazement of his Fears, or Melancholy of his Diſeaſe; and conſequently, who can pronounce any Thing peremptorily con- *The Invalidity of a* late *Repentance.*

x *Clarke's* Eſſays. y Ibid. z *Stanhope's* Sermons.

cerning the dying Perſon's Condition? In ſhort, the *Uncertainties* of a late ance are ſo great, and the *Dangers* ſo many, and the *Examples* in Scripture ſo few, and, when nearly enquired into, ſo diſtant from our Caſe; the Pretences for Delay ſo vain, and the *Sophiſtry*, whereby Men delude themſelves in this important Affair, both ſo palpable and ſo fatal; that if ever we intend to approve our Repentance to God, and our own Conſciences, we muſt be careful both to begin, and perfect it in the Time of our Health, that, when we come to die, we may have the Comfort of a well-*grounded* Hope of a happy Eternity, to alleviate the Pain and Uneaſineſs of our *Paſſage* to it.

That it be great, *and proportionate to Offences.*

2. ANOTHER Qualification of a true and acceptable Repentance is, that it be *great*, and bear ſome Proportion, in its Sorrow and Humiliation, to the Nature and Heinouſneſs of the Sinner's Offences. For, though it be certain, that the *Amendment* of Life is the beſt Indication of a ſincere Repentance, [a] yet, whoever have lived in a State of Sin, ought to do ſomething to teſtify their Sorrow for their paſt Tranſgreſſions, and [b] *to judge themſelves, that they may not be judged of their Lord.* [c] They have to deal with a God, to whom they are in no Condition of bringing any Atonement; and therefore, the only Satisfaction they can make him is, their taking the Shame of their Faults to themſelves, and being unfeignedly afflicted for all their unworthy Behaviour; and this the rather, becauſe their Care to avoid Sin for the Future will naturally be proportionable to their Concern for having committed it heretofore: *For behold this Self-ſame Thing* (ſays the Apoſtle to the [d] *Corinthians*) *that ye ſorrowed after a godly Sort, what Carefulneſs it wrought in you, yea what Clearing of yourſelves, yea what Indignation, yea what Fear, yea what vehement Deſire, yea what Zeal, yea what Revenge?* For this Reaſon it was, that St *James* adviſes thoſe, who had ſinned, *to be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; to let their Laughter be turned into Mourning, that he might exalt them in due Time:* And for this Reaſon the *primitive* Church always taught,, that Sins, committed wilfully, after the Knowledge and Belief of the Truth, were to be done away with Labour and Sorrow; that the *afflictive* Duties of Repentance ought to bear ſome Proportion to the Greatneſs of the Sin; and that, by how much the more ſeverely any Man judged himſelf *here*, by ſo much the more might he hope, that God would ſpare him, and be merciful to him *hereafter*. The *penitential* Exerciſes, in thoſe early Times of Chriſtianity, were very *ſevere*; and thus far they are an Inſtruction to us, that we ought to afflict our Souls with ſad Remembrances, in Proportion to the Delight, and the Aggravations, with which we have offended, in order to increaſe our Hatred againſt Sin, which can never be too great, nor any Sorrow, that contributes to it, too intenſe, provided it be neceſſary to reclaim us more perfectly, and do not drive us to Deſpair, or Diſtruſt of God's Mercy.

IT muſt be remembered however, that God meaſures our Performances of this Kind, neither by the *Quantity* of our Tears, nor the *Degree* of our Contrition, but by the *Sincerity* of our Hearts, and the Amendment of our Lives: And therefore the beſt, the greateſt, and moſt effectual Repentance, that a Man can poſſibly exerciſe, is to endeavour to be ſo much the more careful in mortifying his Vices, and ſo much the more zealous in improving all Opportunities of doing Good, by how much he has once been more faulty in any Particular; to be more eminently conſpicuous in thoſe Virtues, which are moſt directly contrary to the Vices he formerly indulged; and, where he has been vanquiſhed by any Temptation, there to reſolve to ſtrengthen himſelf ſo much the more againſt it: *He, that thus endeavours to appeaſe God,* (ſays St *Cyprian*) *and, by his Repentance, and Shame, and Sorrow, for his paſt Offences, is ſpurred on to exerciſe greater Faith, and Virtue, and Courage; ſuch an one, by the Aſſiſtance of God, may become a Joy to the Church, which he before made ſorrowful; and ſhall obtain, not only the Pardon of his Sins, but alſo the Crown of Righteouſneſs.*

That it be conſtant.

3. ONE Qualification more in a true and acceptable Repentance is, that it be *conſtant* and perſevering in its Effects, *i. e.* it muſt put a Man into ſuch a State, as that he will not any more return to his Vices. 'Till it arrives at this Pitch, Repentance is not right, and (however Men may deceive themſelves with vain Imaginations) can never be effectual to Salvation. [e] The Condition, that our Saviour expreſsly requires in the Goſpel, is a *continued Holy Life*, from the Time of our knowing and embracing the Truth: But certainly he will never accept of any Thing leſs, than a Life

[a] *Clarke's* Eſſays. [b] 1 Cor. xi. 13. [c] *Stanhope's* Sermons. [d] 2 Cor. vii. 11.
[e] *Clarke*, ibid.

Life of Holineſs and perſevering Obedience from ſome Period of Reformation and Repentance. He therefore, that repents, ſhould be as fearful of *relapſing* into Sin, as one that is recovering out of a dangerous and almoſt mortal Sickneſs: Whenever he wilfully relapſes, he make his Caſe worſe, than it was at firſt, and his Diſeaſe more in Danger of being mortal: It becomes much harder for him to renew himſelf into Repentance, and much more difficult to procure Pardon. [f] Evil Habits, 'tis true, are not to be rooted out at once, nor vicious Cuſtoms overcome in a Moment: So long therefore, as a Man does not return *wilfully*, and *deliberately* into the Habit of Sin, many *Surprizes* and Interruptions, in the Struggle with a cuſtomary Vice, may be conſiſtent with the *Progreſs* of Repentance; but 'tis then only that it becomes *compleat* and effectual, when the evil Habit is ſo far extinguiſhed, that the Man, from thence forward, obeys the Commandments of God without looking back, and returns no more to the Sin, he has condemned.

To conclude this Argument then with ſome Motives and Encouragements to Repentance; let it be conſidered, that, when God calls upon us to relinquiſh our Sins, and perform the Duties of our Holy Religion, he only deſires us to be kind to ourſelves, [g] by abandoning that, which is ſo deceitful in its Appearances, and ſo deſtructive in its Effects, the *Parent* of Sorrow and Shame, and ſad Remorſe; that cheats us with *imaginary* Pleaſures of a Moment, but leaves real and laſting Pains behind, the Horrors of Conſcience, the Agonies of Guilt, Amazement, and Deſpair; and plunges us at laſt into the *bottomleſs Pit*, there to endure the *Gnawings* of a *Worm* that never dies, and the Burnings of a *Fire*, that can never be quenched; only deſires us, to be kind to ourſelves, by embracing a State, *whoſe Ways are Ways* of *Pleaſantneſs*, and all *its Paths are Peace*, the Parent of Eaſe, Happineſs and Health; that is attended with the ſweet *Tranſports* of a good Conſcience, the ſupporting *Senſe* of a reconciled God, the happy *Experience* of his Favour and Protection *here*, and the joyful *Expectation* of a bleſſed Eternity *hereafter*. Let it be conſidered then, [h] that there cannot be a more unaccountable Folly, than, by *Impenitence*, to loſe the Hopes of a certain and eternal Happineſs, for the Sake of thoſe Pleaſures, which are the Diſgrace, as well as Diſquiet of human Nature; that, to continue in Sin, with the Hopes to repent, is to ſtab ourſelves with the Hopes of a Cure; that, to delay our Repentance, 'till the Time of our Death, is to cripple ourſelves in order to run; and that the ſooner we ſet about it, the ſooner ſhall we find our Minds at Eaſe, and we enjoy ſuch Pleaſures in forſaking our Sins, as are far more noble and manly, than ever we found any in committing them. And, to engage us to ſet about the Work, let it be conſidered, laſtly, that we have all the Encouragement imaginable, a Covenant of Pardon and Forgiveneſs to plead; a ſtanding Satisfaction to appeal to; ſufficient Help and Aſſiſtance to rely on; the Bowels of an indulgent Father calling us; the Merits of a powerful Advocate interceding for us; the Examples of other *ſucceſsful* Penitents exciting us; the Judgment of our own Minds applauding us; and both holy Men and Angels viewing our Conflict, and *rejoicing in our Conqueſt and Converſion*.

4. THERE is one *Condition* more, purſuant upon God's Promiſe of Heaven and Happineſs, which the *Covenant of Grace* obliges us to perform, and that is, *Obedience* to the Divine Commands. For ſuch is the Purpoſe and Determination of God, that [i] *to every Man he will render according to his Deeds, to them, who, by patient Continuance in well-doing, ſeek for Glory and Honour, and Immortality, eternal Life; but unto them that obey not the Truth, but obey Unrighteouſneſs, Indignation, and Wrath; Tribulation, and Anguiſh upon every Soul of Man that doeth Evil:* For [k] *I come quickly*, ſays our Lord in the *Revelation*, *and my Reward is with me, to give to every Man according as his Works ſhall be*; when [l] *not every one, that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord*, or makes Profeſſion of my Religion, *ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father, which is in Heaven.* And therefore, to ſtate the true Nature and Neceſſity of our Chriſtian Obedience, we may not improperly reduce it to theſe three Qualifications: *Obedience.*

1. THAT it proceed from a religious Principle.
2. THAT it have reſpect to *all* God's Commandments. And,
3. THAT we perſevere in the Performance of it, even unto the End.

1. THE

[f] *Payne*, on Repentance. 6, &c. [g] *Stanhope*'s Sermons. [h] *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons. [i] Rom. ii. [k] Rev. xxii. 12. [l] Matth. vii. 21.

Its Qualifications.

1. THE firſt Qualification of our Chriſtian Obedience is, that it proceed from a religious *Principle*. For of ſuch Importance are the *Motives*, upon which any Thing is done, that there can be no juſt Diſtinction between Virtue and Vice without them.

Sincerity.

[m] A Man may be *liberal* to the Poor out of *Charity*, and he may be ſo, out of *Oſtentation* too. He may be *temperate*, in Obedience to ſome *natural Antipathies*, or in Favour of a weak Conſtitution; he may be *juſt* for Reputation; *frugal* and diligent for the Sake of Wealth; or *devout, to be ſeen of Men*: And, how highly ſoever he may deſerve to be commended for his *Prudence*, yet ſurely there is no *Religion* in all this, nor conſequently any Foundation for Reward. Our bleſſed Saviour, ſpeaking of ſuch as *give Alms*, and *pray*, and *faſt*, with a Deſign to be taken Notice of, tells us, with ſome Sort of Solemnity, that this is all they are to expect, [n] *verily, I ſay unto you, they have their Reward:* Their Reward, *i. e.* what they propoſed to themſelves, for the End of ſuch Actions, when they did them; and ſo are to look upon this as a full *Payment*, ſince they thought the Duties worth undertaking at ſo low a Price. The Caſe is much the ſame with thoſe, that are temperate, merely for their Health, or diligent, and juſt, for Reputation and Convenience: A ſound Conſtitution, a florid old Age, plentiful Fortunes, and Credit, and Countenance in the World, are properly the Rewards of theſe Men, and all that they have any juſt Pretence to: For, as to the Retributions of the laſt Day, there is a great deal of Reaſon to believe, that they will proceed upon the ſame eternal Rules of Equity, which our Returns to one another are founded upon now. If a Friend, for Inſtance, labours *ſincerely* in my Intereſt, and yet cannot be ſucceſsful, his Inclination and Endeavour hath, *to me*, the *Merit* of a Performance; but if a Man, in Proſecution of his own private Advantage, by ſome providential Turn of Affairs, finds it neceſſary, for his own Sake, to do me a Kindneſs, I rejoice in the Benefit indeed, but, ſtrictly ſpeaking, I *owe* him no Thanks. In like Manner, God has promiſed to reward our mere Diſpoſition and Good-will to ſerve him, though our Power of effecting it do not, in all Points, anſwer our Deſires; but the ſpecious Actions of *Hypocrites* ſhall meet with no Regard, becauſe, though they did, in ſome Degree, contribute to his Glory, and the Good of Men, and ſo may ſeem to have ſome Colour of a Plea; yet theſe Effects were purely *accidental*, and no Part of their Deſign, when they did them. Their Avarice, or Vain-glory, or whatever elſe it was, that moved them to affect ſuch Appearances of Virtue, hath already received Satisfaction in *this* World; and therefore, when they come to demand more Wages in the *next*, what ſhould hinder the great Maſter of the *Vineyard* from anſwering them, as he does the murmuring Labourer in the Parable, [o] *Friend I do thee no Wrong; didſt thou not agree with me for* ſo much? *Take that is thine, and go thy Way.*

Reſpect to our own Advantage, conſiſtent therewith.

THIS however is to be underſtood with ſome *Reſtriction*, becauſe *the having Reſpect to our own Advantage, in our Obedience to God's Commands*, is, upon many Accounts, not only an innocent Thing, but, in ſome Meaſure, neceſſary and unavoidable. [p] In itſelf it can neither offend God, nor exclude us from the promiſed Reward, becauſe the Neceſſity of our Nature requires it; our Faith is made effectual by it; God's Laws directly propoſe it; and the beſt Men, that ever yet lived, made it a Part of their Conſideration: To which Purpoſe, the Author to the *Hebrews*, recounting the *Worthies* of old, tells us expreſſly, that [q] *they had all a Reſpect to the Recompence of Reward*; and, in an higher Inſtance than any of them, even in that of Chriſt himſelf, he aſſures us, that his own Advantage, as well as the Glory of God, was the Motive of his Obedience, when, [r] *for the Sake of the Joy, that was ſet before him, he endured the Croſs, and deſpiſed the Shame of it.*

When culpable.

'TIS not barely the *Intention* then of our own Advantage, in the Service of God, that is *culpable*. To have Reſpect to the *Eternal Advantages*, which, in his Laws, are promiſed to our Obedience, is always *lawful*; and to have an Eye to thoſe *temporal* Advantages, which will accrue to us by obeying them, is not always ſinful: 'Tis then only, that the Deſign of our own Self-intereſt, in Conjunction with the Deſign of ſerving God, makes our Services inſincere, and cuts off our Hope of Reward, when together with our Deſign of ſerving God, we join a Deſign of ſerving Sin; or when we deſign ſome *temporal* Ends of our own, as much, or more, than we do the Service of God.

2. AN-

[m] *Stanhope's* Sermons. [n] Matth. vi. 2. [o] Ibid. xx. 13, 14. [p] *Kettlewell's* Meaſures of Obedience.
[q] Heb. ii. 2. [r] Ibid. xii. 2.

2. ANOTHER Qualification of our Chriſtian Obedience is, that it have an *equal* Reſpect to *all* God's Commandments. There is no Man ſo loſt to Reaſon and Virtue, but that he finds it for his Purpoſe to obſerve *ſome* of them; natural Modeſty, Self-Preſervation, and the promoting an Intereſt with others, perſuade the Practice of many commendable Things; Poverty and Sickneſs, publick Shame and publick Puniſhment, reſtrain Men from gratifying many corrupt Inclinations; nor will the Fear of God immediately ceaſe to have a *Check* upon the Conſcience, and to enforce other Conſiderations more powerfully; and theſe Impreſſions, People, that make any Pretenſions to Goodneſs, are, many Times, not averſe to ſubmit to: But ſtill, if there be any reſerved Caſe, any *favourite Corruption*, upon which Religion exerciſes its Power but *feebly*, though it be but *one*, yet if it continues Proof againſt all the Charms, and all the Terrors of the Goſpel, that ſingle Exception is a *Blemiſh* to the Whole, and renders all the reſt of a good Life ineffectual, though a Man ſhould labour never ſo zealouſly, in other Inſtances, to pleaſe God, and ſave his immortal Soul. Integrity.

THE Miſchief and Danger of ſuch *favourite Corruptions* is ſo much the greater, becauſe Men are apt to flatter themſelves with a vain Hope, that a few Spots will eaſily be overlooked, in the Multitude of good Actions, which give a Grace and Beauty to their Lives. They account it hard, that the Reward of ſo *many* Virtues ſhould be loſt, for the Sake of *one* Vice; and are therefore inclinable to think, that Almighty God will admit them to compound with him, and to *buy off* the Breach of one Command, by a punctual *Diſcharge* of another. But ſince the Law was eſtabliſhed with *a Curſe* [t] *upon every one, that continueth not in all Things written therein, to do them*: This cuts off all Hopes of Heaven, when grounded upon ſuch an Obedience, as ſhall preſume to diſpenſe with any particular Precept contained in it. The Goſpel, 'tis true indeed, was intended to abate the *Rigour* of the Law, by making Proviſion for Forgiveneſs upon Repentance, and uſing great Tenderneſs to the *Infirmities* of human Nature; but ſtill, as it gives no Man Licence to tranſgreſs wilfully, nor the leaſt Indulgence to any known Sin, in this Reſpect, the Curſe continues ſtill in full Force; and St *James* has proved it muſt needs do ſo by that remarkable Paſſage in his Epiſtle: [u] *Whoſever ſhall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all. For he that ſaid, do not commit Adultery, ſaid alſo, do not kill; now, if thou commit no Adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a Tranſgreſſor of the Law*: Where the Apoſtle evidently ſhews, that the *Authority* of the *Law-giver* is that, which binds the Law upon us; that the Contempt of that Authority is the Thing to be accounted for; and if that be once violated, it matters very little, whether it be done in this or that particular Inſtance. For, though ſome Crimes be more heinous than others, yet Obedience or Diſobedience is not to be meaſured, ſo much by the *Quality* of the Actions, as by the Regard or Diſregard to the Will of our Superiors; and ſince our Lord's Pleaſure is ſignified by *all* his Laws, it is ſufficient to condemn us, that we wilfully neglect *any*. It will become us therefore to look upon every Command of his as *armed* with Thunder, and to remember, that, when he comes to Judgment, he will exact all, that he has required, whatever our Concern in it may be; becauſe he comes, in ſhort, not as a *corrupt Party*, to make his Laws *bend* to our Intereſt, and to diſannul ſuch, as make againſt us; but as a juſt and *impartial Judge*, to inflict, what his Goſpel threatens, and to make his Sentence conformable to what it ſays, and not what we can bear. *The Danger of favourite Sins.*

3. THE other Qualification of our Chriſtian Obedience is, that we ſhould *perſevere* in the Keeping of God's Commandments, *all the Days of our Lives*. For this is what he indiſpenſably exacts of us, that * *having ſet our Hands to the Plough, we ſhould not look back*, but [x] *being faithful unto Death*, and [y] *holding the Beginning of our Confidence ſtedfaſt unto the End*, we ſhould [z] *be always abounding in the Work of the Lord, foraſmuch as we know that our Labour is not in vain in the Lord*. And indeed the Scriptures, by comparing our Life to a Work, to a Race, to a Fight, and other Actions of a ſtated *Period*, do plainly enough imply, that, as there are no *Wages* to be looked for, without finiſhing our Taſk; no *Prize* to be had, without coming up to the Goal; no *Triumph* to be expected, without fighting it out to the laſt, and gaining a compleat Victory; ſo there is no future Reward to be hoped for, without Steadineſs and Perſeverance in well-doing: And therefore (to continue one of the Perſeverance.

[s] *Stanhope*'s Sermons. [t] Gal. iii. 10. [u] James ii. 10, 11. * Luke ix. 62.
[x] Rev. ii. 10. [y] Heb. iii. 14. [z] 1 Cor. xv. 58.

Compariſons) ſince the *Impediments* in running the Race, that is ſet before us, are ſo many, the *Corruptions* of human Nature ſo prevalent, and the *Temptations*, that beſet it, ſo aſſiduous and ſo ſtrong, that good Men ſometimes feel dreadful Interruptions; [a] there will be greater Occaſion for us, at all Times, to keep up our Reſolution and Vigour, by remembering, that nothing leſs than running the whole Courſe can entitle us to the Prize; great Need often to take ourſelves aſide, and ſee, what *Progreſs* we have made, and whereabouts we are; what *Length* of the Field there is ſtill before us, and how ſhort a Time is left us to compaſs it in; that ſo, when the Race of Life comes to a Concluſion, and *our Departure is at Hand*, we may have it to ſay, with the bleſſed Apoſtle, [b] *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith; henceforth, there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, ſhall give to me at that Day, and not to me only, but unto all them alſo, that love his Appearing.*

THESE are the Terms of our Chriſtian Obedience; and, from the Conſideration of them, there are two Queſtions that naturally occur to our Thoughts.

1. WHETHER the Goſpel requires of us a *perfect* and *unſinning* Obedience. And,

2. BY what Signs we may perceive, whether our Obedience be ſuch, as God accepts.

The Goſpel requires not an unſinning Obedience.

1. THAT God Almighty requires an Obedience to all and every of his Commands, at all Times, and in all Places equally; and that there is likewiſe no Sin or Tranſgreſſion of his Law, in any one Inſtance, but what he diſapproves, and abſolutely forbids, is evident from the whole Tenor of the Goſpel; and therefore, in this Senſe, it may be juſtly ſaid, that he requires a *perfect* Obedience at our Hands; [c] as it is no more than reaſonable indeed, that the moſt wiſe and holy God ſhould enjoin every Law of his (which entirely agrees with Reaſon) to be conſtantly obſerved by reaſonable Creatures, and condemn every wilful Tranſgreſſion of it, as an abſurd and irrational Practice: But then, becauſe no ſuch Obedience was ever yet performed by any (our Saviour Chriſt only excepted); becauſe all Men in the World have found themſelves ſurrounded with Infirmities, and miſled by Temptations and Trials, in ſome Inſtance or other, ſo that they cannot but condemn themſelves for ſome *wilful* Deviations from the Rule of right Reaſon; it has pleaſed God (out of his abundant Goodneſs) at the ſame Time that he requires an *entire* Obedience, not only to excuſe the *Imperfection* of our Services, occaſioned by the Frailties and Infirmities of our Nature; [d] not only to overlook our *involuntary* Slips and Miſcarriages, occaſioned by our Ignorance and Inadvertency; but, for the Sake of *Jeſus Chriſt*, his Son, and our Saviour, to pardon our *wilful* and preſumptuous Sins, upon ſuch Conditions, as he has preſcribed; and ſuch, as are not inconſiſtent with his Exaction of our perfect Obedience. For, as the Father may command ſuch and ſuch Particulars, and yet admit his Son to *Reconciliation*, upon ſome Terms, after he has tranſgreſſed ſome of his Commands; ſo likewiſe may Almighty God require Obedience to every one of his Commands, at all Times, and in all Places, and yet, after his Creatures have been ſo unhappy, as to tranſgreſs any of his Commands, he may forgive them theſe Tranſgreſſions, upon ſome certain Terms and Conditions. In a Word, [e] the univerſal Obedience, which the Chriſtian Law requires, is the Obedience of *the Penitent*; and, though we have failed in our Duty, yet we may, with good Comfort, repair our Neglects for the future, being aſſured, that thereupon God will not impute to us our former Tranſgreſſions. This therefore is to be conſidered, together with the Strictneſs of the Rule, that *Repentance* will be accepted, that great and ineſtimable *Grace* of the Goſpel, without which, the *beſt* of Men can have no Hope, and with which, the *worſt* may have ſome.

SINCE therefore, it is certain, that Almighty God forbids every Sin always, and enjoins the Practice of every Virtue, at all Opportunities, and in this Senſe may be ſaid to require a *ſinleſs Obedience*; and ſince it is certain, that, by his own open Declarations, there is Room left for Favour and Mercy to ſuch, as have committed wilful Sin; it is evident, that the *Perfection*, which is ſo much required of Chriſtians, as a Condition, without which they ſhall not be finally happy, can be no other, than an *Amendment* and Reformation in thoſe Inſtances, wherein they have wilfully failed,

[a] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels. [b] 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. [c] *Hoadly*'s Terms of Acceptance.
[d] *Kettlewell*'s Meaſures. [e] *Clagget*'s Sermons.

failed, and a conſtant *Progreſſion* and Improvement in ſuch Virtues and Godlineſs of living, as they have already entered into: And from hence it will be no hard Matter to give a Reſolution to the

2. OTHER Queſtion, *viz. how*, or by what *Signs*, we may beſt perceive, whether our Obedience be what God will be pleaſed to accept. For if the Terms of Goſpel-Obedience be ſuch, as have been declared, then [f] he, who makes no other Uſe of its gracious *Propoſals*, than to encourage himſelf to recover from any Sin, of which he knows he has wilfully been guilty; and is ſo affected with any Inſtance of his paſt Weakneſs, as to keep a greater and ſtricter Watch over himſelf for the Time to come: He, who, at any Time, finds, upon a *Review* of himſelf, that tho' he be not abſolutely perfect, yet he gets Ground of his Imperfections, and proceeds, by a daily Courſe, farther and farther in the Paths of Virtue: He, who carefully avoids the Opportunities and Temptations, whereby, he knows, he has formerly fallen; and when, unavoidably, and without any Fault of his own, he meets with the ſame Trials and Temptations, which have formerly vanquiſhed him, finds Faith, and Senſe of God, and Strength of Mind enough to vanquiſh them, and reſiſt all their Inſinuations and artful Onſets, has good Ground to hope, that he is in a Way acceptable to God. Whereas, on the contrary, he, who takes Encouragement, from the Doctrine of Acceptance and Reconciliation delivered in the Goſpel, to venture ſtill farther in the Paths of Sin, with a fooliſh Hope of coming up to the Terms of Acceptance ſome Time or other: He, who finds himſelf led, by his ſinning at any Time, to *love* the Sin, rather than to *deteſt*, and guard againſt it; and to run to the Temptation, rather than to flee from it: He, who finds the Senſe of the Importance of *Morality* and Virtue diminiſhing, and the *Power* of the World, or the Fleſh, ſo far increaſing over him, as, every Day, by their Terrors or Allurements, to carry him into the Practice of Wickedneſs: In a Word, he who finds himſelf ſuch a Captive to any wilful Sin, that he has not yet got out of its Power; that his Faith in God, his Senſe of Religion, and his Belief of a future State are not all ſufficient to diſengage him from it; may be well aſſured, that he is not, as yet, in ſuch a Condition, as that he may entertain any rational and well-grounded Hopes of Salvation, upon the Terms of the Goſpel, which, notwithſtanding all its rich Promiſes of Pardon and Forgiveneſs, [g] *teacheth us, that, denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World; looking for that bleſſed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the Great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

How to judge of our Acceptance with God.

SECT. I.

Of the Mediator of the NEW COVENANT.

THE Word Μεσίτης, which we tranſlate *Mediator*, ſignifies a Perſon, who interpoſes between two *Parties*, either to obtain a *Favour* from the one to the other, or to adjuſt ſome *Difference*, and make a Reconciliation between them. [h] The Perſon, who undertakes this Office, does it, either *voluntarily*, or by *the Deſignation* of both Parties: If *voluntarily*, he can act but *precariouſly*, and not ſo properly determine any Thing, as only intreat and perſuade; if by *Deſignation*, and both Parties are *equal*, he acts by the Authority of both, and conſequently has a full Power to determine the Matter in Debate, juſt as he thinks fit: But if it ſo happen, that the one Party be *ſuperior* to the other, even to ſuch a Degree, as Maſter and Servant, Sovereign and Subject, *&c.* 'tis enough then, that the Mediator be authorized by the Delegation of the *Superior*; and the *Subject*, or inferior Party, will be as much obliged by his Determinations, as if he himſelf had voluntarily appointed him. In the Caſe between the Sovereign and the Subject, the Mediator indeed is the Sovereign's *Vicegerent*, and the Subject's *Advocate*; and therefore, as the Sovereign has, at all Times, a Right to the Subject's Duty, and, what Favours he confers on him, confers *ſpontaneouſly*, and of his free Accord; he may (whether the other conſent to it or no) demand his Duty, by what *Vicegerent*, and beſtow his Favours by what *Advocate*, he pleaſes.

A Mediator, what.

Now,

[f] *Hoadly*'s Terms of Acceptance. *poſth. de M. Claude*, Tom. ii.

[g] Tit. ii. 12, *&c.*

[h] Vid. *Scott*'s Mediator, and *Les Oeuvres*

Of whoſe Appointment.

Now, ſince the *Degeneracy* of our Nature had made us unfit to converſe with God *immediately*, and yet his tender Mercy and Compaſſion was ſuch, that he would not utterly reject and abandon us; there was no *Expedient* (at leaſt within our Knowledge) wherein the *Holineſs* of his Majeſty could ſo fairly accord with the *Tenderneſs* of his Mercy, as in this of tranſacting with us by a *Mediator*; by whoſe *Interagency*, he, though a moſt holy *Sovereign*, may, without *Debaſement*, freely converſe with us; and we, though his guilty *Subjects*, may, without *Terror* or Anxiety, as freely draw near to him. But then, becauſe God's Sovereignty over us was *abſolute*, and the Bleſſings, he intended to beſtow on us, free and undeſerved; therefore was the Right of chuſing and appointing this Mediator entirely in him; and, accordingly, the holy Scripture has aſſured us, that as [j] *there is one God, ſo there is one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Chriſt Jeſus*, who [k] *did not aſſume that Honour to himſelf*, but [l] *was appointed thereunto by God*; and [m] *therefore* the Apoſtle *lets all the Houſe of* Iſrael *know aſſuredly, that God hath made that ſame Jeſus, whom they had crucified, both Lord and Chriſt. Chriſt* ſignifies *anointed*; and as anointing with Oil was anciently the viſible Sign, by which the *Regal*, *Prieſtly*, and *Prophetick* Offices were conferred; ſo, by this Application, St *Peter* meant to inform the *Jews*, that God had inveſted Jeſus with the Character of a Mediator, which included in it all theſe Offices.

When firſt appointed.

WHEN Chriſt was firſt of all inveſted with this *Character*, whether at the *Beginning* of the New Covenant, or not till the Time of his *Incarnation*, is a Queſtion, wherein the Learned are not ſo entirely agreed. This, however, can hardly be gainſay'd, [n] that, ſince the Scriptures aſſure us, he is now the Mediator of the new and better Covenant, he muſt have been ſo all along, from the Time of the Fall, upon which it commenced: Otherwiſe this New Covenant (upon which he now *mediates*) muſt have been four thouſand Years without a Mediator; which, conſidering the whole State and Condition of it, can by no Means be a reaſonable Suppoſition. For, beſides that the Fall of Man was the true Cauſe of God's withdrawing himſelf from all immediate Converſe with him; and conſequently, whatever Intercourſe he had with him afterwards, muſt have been carried on by a *Mediator*; there is nothing more evident from Scripture, than that this very Covenant, which is the ſtanding *Medium* of God's Converſe with Men, was granted to us, in Conſideration of Chriſt's Death and Sacrifice. Since therefore it was granted long before Chriſt died, even from the Time of Man's *Apoſtacy*, it muſt be granted, upon Chriſt's engaging himſelf to the Father, by his Death to atone for our Sins, when the *Fulneſs of Time* ſhould come; which Engagement was *virtually*, and, in Effect, an Oblation of himſelf as a Sacrifice for us; and accordingly was accepted by God in the ſame Manner, as if it *actually* had been offered: And ſince, in Conſideration of Chriſt's future Sacrifice, God firſt granted this Covenant to Men, it neceſſarily follows, that, upon the ſame Conſideration, he, at the ſame Time, appointed Chriſt to be the *Mediator* of it. In ſhort, Chriſt's Sacrifice was as *certain* in God's Account, and therefore as *prevalent* with him, *before*, as *after* it was offered; and therefore, ſince [o] his Mediatorſhip of the New Covenant is wholly owing to the Prevalence of his Sacrifice, there was the ſame Reaſon, why God ſhould admit him to be the Mediator of it *before* it was offered, as *after*. And, accordingly, long before he offered up his Sacrifice, he is called the [p] *Angel* or *Meſſenger of the New Covenant*, which Covenant (as St *Paul* aſſures us) four hundred and thirty Years before the Law of *Moſes*, was [q] *confirmed of God to Abraham in Chriſt*; and, if it was *then confirmed by Chriſt*, it is certain, that Chriſt was *then* the Mediator of it, though the full Exerciſe of that Office was not till the Days of his Incarnation.

The Manner of it.

THE Apoſtle, [r] in a Verſe or two following this Paſſage, ſpeaking of the *Jewiſh* Law, gives us to underſtand, that it was *ordained* or delivered *by Angels in the Hand of the Mediator*, *i. e.* in the Hand of *Moſes*, who was appointed to *mediate*, not only for God, with the People of *Iſrael*, but alſo for the People of *Iſrael*, with God: For this (as he argues) is implied in the very Notion of a Mediator, that he be a *third* Perſon acting between two others; but *God* is only *one* of the Parties, between whom this Mediation is made, and therefore *Moſes* muſt be ſuppoſed, not only to act for God with the People, as his *Vicegerent*, but likewiſe to act for the People with God, as

[j] 1 Tim. ii. 5. [k] Heb. v. 5. [l] Ibid. iii. 2. [m] Acts ii. 36. [n] *Scott's* Mediator. and *Les Oeuvres poſth. de M. Claude*, Tom. ii. [o] *Vid.* Phil. ii. 6, &c. [p] Mal. iii. 1. [q] Gal. iii. 17. [r] Ibid. 19, 20.

as their *Advocate!* In ſhort, he muſt act for both Parties, otherwiſe he is not a *Mediator*. And accordingly as *Moſes*, who was the *Mediator* of the *Jewiſh* Covenant, acted between God and the People; ſo *Jeſus*, who is the Mediator of the *Chriſtian* Covenant, acts between two oppoſite Parties, God and Man. As God's *Vicegerent*, he acts *for* him, *with* us, in order to reduce us to our Duty and Allegiance; and as our *Advocate*, he acts *for* us, *with* God, in order to induce him to be gracious and favourable to us; that ſo, having prevailed with us, to lay down our Enmity againſt God, and obtained of God, to remit his Diſpleaſure againſt us, he may effect an happy Reconciliation between us: And in this Senſe the Author to the *Hebrews* ſeems to have laid down both Parts of his Mediation; [s] *wherefore he is able to ſave to the utmoſt, thoſe, who come unto God by him*, who ſubmit to God upon his Intreaty, *ſeeing he ever lives to make Interceſſion for them*, or to plead with God the Merits of his Sacrifice in their Behalf.

THE vaſt Diſproportion between the *Divine* Nature and *ours* ſets us at an infinite Diſtance from God, and the Pollution of our Sins removed us ſtill farther from the Hopes of Communion with him: The Senſe of Guilt alienated our Hearts, and the Suſpicion, which it ingendered, made us averſe to God's Intreaties, and diffident of his Promiſes, in Caſe we ſhould lay down our Arms: God too, on his Part, had abundant Reaſon to hate us for our Sin and ſad Apoſtacy, and no Manner of Encouragement (conſidering our natural Averſion to Good) to depend upon our better Obedience for the future, in caſe he ſhould grant an Act of *Indemnity*. To remove therefore all theſe Obſtructions at once, the Son of God, by aſſuming the Human Nature, has tempered and qualified the *Effulgency* of his infinite Majeſty, and ſo made a nearer Approach to us; and by paying a full and *adequate* Satisfaction to God's Juſtice, has appeaſed his Wrath and Indignation againſt us. [t] *In negotiating with us for God*, he not only wooes, and intreats us to be reconciled; but, to engage our Obedience as much as poſſible, has laid ſolemn Injunctions upon us, and theſe ſtrengthened with every Thing that may affect our Hopes and Fears. [u] *In negotiating with God for us*, he not only prays and intreats him to be reconciled to us, but pleads our *Right* likewiſe, and prefers our *Claim* to the Bleſſings, he has purchaſed for us by his Blood, by the daily Preſentation of that ſame Blood before the Throne of Grace. [w] *As God's Mediator with us*, he calls us by his Word and Sacraments; he diſcovers to us the Secrets of the Will of God; he bleſſes, he ſanctifies, he ſtrengthens, he comforts, he protects, he conducts us in this Life; raiſes us from the Dead, and exalts us to Heaven; And, *as our Mediator with God*, he takes our Sins upon him; he atones for them with his Blood; he devolves his Merits upon us; he engages, with his Father, for the Performance of our Promiſes; for our Perſeverance in Faith, in Piety, in Sincerity; and, in Caſe of Failing, is always pleading for Mercy, and making Interceſſion for us, that, being *renewed in the Spirit of our Minds*, we at laſt may *become his Rejoicing, by having our Fruit unto Holineſs, and our End everlaſting Life*.

The Neceſſity of a Mediator.

THESE are ſome of the Acts of our Saviour's *Mediation* between God and Man; and from hence it appears, that the Perſon, who undertakes ſuch an Office, [x] ought to be ſo qualified, as to have an equal Power and Intereſt with both Parties; to be of ſufficient *Dignity*, to approach the *Superior*; of ſufficient *Humility*, to give Acceſs to the *Inferior*; and of ſuch *Aſcendency* over both, as to have nothing denied him, which he ſhould think proper to aſk. But, if he undertakes to make Satisfaction for the Offences of either Party, he ſhould (over and above all this) be a free and independent Maſter of himſelf; capable of ſuffering, that he may atone for the *Delinquent*; but uncapable of ſinning himſelf, that he may make his Atonement *meritorious*: All which is anſwered, by his partaking of the Nature of both. [y] That therefore this high and moſt important Office might more effectually be executed, the *eternal* Father thought fit to place it in the Hands of his *eternal* Son, to whom he communicated, from all Eternity, his own *divine* Eſſence, and whom, in due Time, he appointed to aſſume the *human* Nature into a *perſonal* Union with his *Divinity*, that ſo, being both God and Man in one Perſon, he might be the better accompliſhed to *mediate* between both.

IN *mediating for God with Man*, [z] he was to perform the Office of a divine *King* to rule and govern us, as God's *Vicegerent*, ſo as, either to *reduce* us by his Authority or

And his partaking both of the divine and human Nature, 1. *On God's Account.*

[s] Heb. vii. 25. [t] Les Oeuvres poſth. de M. Claude, Tom. ii. [u] *Scott's* Mediator. [w] Claude, ibid. [x] Ibid. [y] *Scott's* Mediator. [z] Ibid.

or *chaſtiſe* us for our Rebellion. And this was a Sphere, ſo vaſt, and ſo ſublime, that nothing, but a *Divine Intelligence*, could inform it. The chief Seat and Subject of the divine Government is in the Soul of Man; But now, nothing leſs than an *Omniſcient* Being, can take Cognizance of all the Thoughts and Affections, of all the Purpoſes and Reſolutions, that are ſecretly tranſacted there, in order to reward or puniſh them: Nothing leſs than an *Omnipotent* Power can order and diſpoſe of all thoſe outward Accidents, whereby theſe Thoughts and Affections, theſe Purpoſes and Reſolutions are, in a great Meaſure, framed and regulated. To over-rule and manage ſuch infinite Numbers of Events, as concern ſuch infinite Numbers of Men, ſo vaſtly diſtant from one another, in Place, Condition, and Temper, requires a Power, that can [a] *do whatſoever it pleaſes both in Heaven and Earth*: And therefore, ſince our bleſſed Saviour was appointed to this Office, he could, in no Senſe, have been qualified to perform it, without partaking of the Perfections of the *Divine* Nature, and being, in Reality, what the *Evangelical* Prophet, ſpeaking of his Government, ſtiles him, [b] *wonderful, Counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace.*

AND as, to qualify him for this high Office *of mediating with God for Men*, it was moſt fit that he ſhould be *God*; ſo it was no leſs requiſite, that he ſhould be *Man*. God, we know, is an *inviſible* Spirit, and, living *in Light, that is inacceſſible*, can only be approached by our *Imaginations*; and our Imaginations are generally ſo groſs and ſenſual, that they cannot perceive *ſpiritual* Objects, and therefore, often form ſuch *Miſconceptions* of God, as incline them to *Idolatry*. In Condeſcenſion therefore to this deplorable Weakneſs of their Minds, God has all along vouchſafed to converſe with Mankind under ſome *ſenſible* Appearance of his Divine Preſence. When he conducted his choſen People through the *Red-Sea* and the *Wilderneſs*, he went before them in a *Pillar of Cloud by Day*, and in *a Pillar of Fire by Night*; when he gave them the Law from Mount *Sinai*, he deſcended in a bright and glorious Flame, overcaſt with thick and ſolemn Clouds; and, as ſoon as the Tabernacle was erected, in this Appearance, he made his Entrance into it, and, there conſtantly reſiding, did often exhibit himſelf, to the People's Eyes and Senſes, in a Body of viſible Light and Glory. In Alluſion to this Condeſcenſion to the *Jews*, St *John*, in the Beginning of his Goſpel, tells us that, [c] *the Word was made Fleſh, and dwelt among us*; or (as the Original ſignifies) *pitched his Tabernacle* in our Fleſh and Nature, from whence we *beheld his Glory (viz.* at his *Baptiſm*, and Transfiguration) *as the Glory of the only Begotten of the Father*; or as the Glory, wherein the Son of God was wont to diſplay himſelf from between two *Cherubims*. Since therefore, in Compliance with our Weakneſs, it was requiſite, that God ſhould addreſs to our Senſe in ſome viſible Appearance; and ſince, upon many Accounts, there was no viſible Appearance, ſo proper for this Purpoſe, as that of *human* Nature; it muſt evidently follow from hence, how neceſſary it was, that he ſhould aſſume our Nature to his Deity, that ſo they, whoſe Conceptions could reach no farther than a viſible Emblem of God, [d] might have one, to whom they might pay Divine Worſhip, without Danger of Idolatry, and without Injury to the Divine Nature; even a true and natural *Image* of God the Father, the Fountain of the Deity, or (as the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* deſcribes the Son of God) the Reſplendency, or [e] *Brightneſs of his Father's Glory*, and *the expreſs* Character or *Image of his Perſon.*

2. *On Man's.* IN *mediating for Men with God* there were two Things, (as we ſhall have Occaſion to ſhew hereafter) that were requiſite for him to do: 1. To make Atonement for our Sins with his Blood; and, 2. To make Interceſſion for us in Heaven. [f] 1. *Foraſmuch then, as the Children are Partakers of Fleſh and Blood*, (as the Apoſtle argues in the former Caſe) *he alſo himſelf took Part of the ſame, that, through Death he might deſtroy him, who hath the Power of Death, that is, the Devil.* [g] His Divine Nature is purely *impaſſable*; and therefore, to make him capable of ſuffering, ſome other Nature was to be aſſumed, and the *human*, rather than any other, that Sin might be expiated in the ſame Nature, wherein it was committed: But then the *Divine* Nature was ſtill to be retained, to make his Sufferings ſufficiently *meritorious*, both to *ſatisfy* the Divine Juſtice for what was paſt, and to *ſecure* the Divine Authority for the future: And accordingly, we are ſaid to be [h] *purchaſed with the Blood of God*; not that the Divine

[a] Pſal. cxxxv. 6. [b] Iſa. ix. 6. [c] John i. 14. [d] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[e] Heb. i. 3. [f] Ibid. ii. 14. [g] *Scott*'s Mediator, and *Les Oeuvres poſth. de M. Claude*, Tom. ii.
[h] Acts xx. 28.

Divine *Eſſence* can any Way ſuffer, or bleed, but, being united into one Perſon with the human Nature, the Properties of the *human*, and the Actions and Paſſions thence proceeding, may not unfitly be attributed to the *Divine*. And therefore, ſince in the Perſon of *Chriſt*, God was united to Man, whatever his *Humanity* ſuffered, may be truly called the Suffering of God; and, in this Senſe, was a Suffering equivalent to the eternal Puniſhment of the whole World of Sinners.

BUT, 2*dly*, as he was to be our *Advocate* and *Interceſſor*, *in all Things*, [l] *it behoved him* (as the Apoſtle argues again) *to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Prieſt, in Things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People; for in that himſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted.* The ſenſible Experience he had of the Weakneſs and Infirmity of our Nature, while he was among us, will make him more nearly concerned, and more tenderly touched with Compaſſion for it; and conſequently, ſollicit its Cauſe and Intereſt, at the Right-Hand of God, with greater Zeal and Importunity. But then, to make his Sollicitations available, it was requiſite, that he ſhould retain his *Divine* Nature, thereby to preſerve his Intereſt in the Court of Heaven, that we, in his Name, might, at all Times, [k] *come boldly to the Throne of Grace*, and find Favour and [l] *Acceptance in the Beloved.*

THUS, to qualify *Chriſt* for the ſeveral Parts and Offices of his Mediation, it was highly expedient, that he ſhould be both God and Man in one Perſon. [m] To diſcharge his *Prophetical* Office, he muſt be *God*, that he might deliver his Rules and Doctrines with more *Authority* and Efficacy, than any mere Creature could; and he muſt be *Man*, that he might more *familiarly* converſe with us, and convey the Counſels of God, in ſuch a Manner, as Man could receive. To diſcharge his *Prieſtly* Office, both of *Expiation*, and *Interceſſion*; he muſt be *Man*, to make him *capable* of ſuffering; and *God*, to make his Sufferings *meritorious*; *Man*, to make him intercede with Compaſſion to us; and *God*, to give him Credit above, and make his Interceſſions prevalent: And to diſcharge his *Kingly* Office, he muſt be *God*, to appoint us Laws; and *Man*, to go before us in obeying them; *God*, to conquer and ſubdue our Enemies; and *Man*, to encourage us in our ſpiritual Warfare by his Example: For ſo the Apoſtle tells us, [n] *that it became him, for whom are all Things, and by whom are all Things, in bringing many Sons to Glory, to make the Captain of our Salvation perfect through Sufferings.*

The ſeveral Offices of Chriſt's Mediatorſhip.

THE Wants, which the World laboured under, before the Coming of *Chriſt*, were chiefly theſe,——The Want of a ſufficient Teacher to inſtruct them in the Will of God, for which Reaſon he was ſent as a *Prophet*; the Want of a ſufficient Sacrifice, and Interceſſor with God, for which Reaſon he was conſtituted a *Prieſt*; and the Want of a Conqueror to ſubdue their Enemies, and a Law-giver to direct their Obedience, for which Reaſon he was appointed a *King:* And how excellently fitted and accompliſhed he was for theſe ſeveral Offices, as well as how fully and effectually he has diſcharged them, we ſhall now endeavour to make appear.

A PROPHET.

I. THO' the Word *Prophet*, according to its common Acceptation, denotes one who foretels future Events, yet, in a ſtrict *Etymology*, it ſignifies no more, than a Perſon, who ſpeaks from, or [o] in the Stead of another: And when that *other* is God, it means one, [p] that expounds and makes known his Will to us by a Divine Revelation. How well fitted and accompliſhed our bleſſed *Saviour* was for this Purpoſe, the holy Evangeliſt has taken Care to inform us; [q] *No Man*, ſaith he, *has ſeen God at any Time, the only begotten Son, who is in the Boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.* And indeed his being *in the Boſom of the Father*, i. e. his being ſo near and intimate to him, did perfectly qualify him to reveal his Will to Mankind, becauſe, in that Nearneſs and Intimacy, he could not but have a perfect Knowledge of him; not by the Inſtruction of Angels, or by Dreams and Viſions, as other Prophets had: Nay, nor merely by the Inſpiration of the *Holy Ghoſt*, but by an immediate *Perſonal* Intuition of his Father's Thoughts and Purpoſes, which, from all Eternity, were expoſed to his View and Proſpect. [r] *No Man hath aſcended up to Heaven*, (ſays the ſame Evangeliſt in another Place) *but he that came down from* HEAVEN,

[l] Heb. ii. 17, 18. [k] Ibid. iv. 16. [l] Eph. i. 6. [m] *Bates*'s Harmony. [n] Heb. ii. 10. [o] In which Senſe the Prepoſition περὶ is the ſame in Compoſition with ὑπὲρ. Thus God ſaid to *Moſes, I have made thee a God to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy Brother ſhall be thy Prophet*, i. e. he ſhall be thy *Mouth*, to deliver to *Pharaoh* what I ſhall deliver to thee. *Exod.* vii. 1. [p] In this Senſe the Poets were anciently called the Prophets of the Muſes; and St *Paul*, quoting a Paſſage out of *Epimenides*, (Tit. i. 12.) calls him a *Prophet*, though, if we may credit *Ariſtotle*, ὁ περὶ τῶν ἐσομένων μαντεύετο, he never propheſied of Things to come. *Rhet.* Lib. iii. c. 17. [q] John i. 18. [r] Ibid. iii. 13.

HEAVEN, *even the Son of Man*: [t] He might have come down from Heaven *inrobed* with Splendour and Light, and preached his Goſpel to the World, in the Midſt of a *Choir* of Angels, from ſome bright Throne in the Cloud; but, as he conſulted our *Advantage*, more than his own *Majeſty*, he knew very well, that it would be more for our Intereſt to *conduct* us by his Example, than to *amaze* us by his Appearance: And therefore he choſe to appear to us in our own Nature, that ſo, by going before, as a *Man*, he might, by his Example, ſhew us, what it became Men to do, and trace out the Way of Happineſs to us by the Print of his own Footſteps. Thus coming from the *Boſom of his Father* with a full and perfect Knowledge of his Will, and coming in the Form of the Son of Man, to make his Addreſſes eaſy and familiar to us, as well as conduct us by his Example, he was every Way accompliſhed for the *Prophetick* Office; and how well and effectually he has executed the ſame, we may beſt perceive, by conſidering the Excellency of the Revelation he has left us, in Reſpect of the Things neceſſary *to be known* and *practiſed*, in order to our Salvation.

The Excellency of Chriſt's Doctrines, in Relation to what we are to know concerning the Nature of God.

1. THE Things neceſſary for us to *know*, are, the Nature of God, and his Attributes; the Original and Demerit of our Sins; the Way of atoning for them; and the Methods of our being *juſtified* and *ſanctified* here in this World, in order to be *glorified* in the World to come. [t] That there is a God, and that there is but *one* God; that the only one God is incorporeal, inviſible, immortal, eternal, omnipotent, omniſcient, of Infinite Juſtice, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, the Supreme Governor of the World, and of all Things therein, and a gracious Rewarder of thoſe, that ſeek him, is abſolutely neceſſary to be known by all, who would attain eternal Life; and it cannot be doubted, but that the Faithful, from the Beginning, had this Knowledge of God: But then, before the coming of Chriſt, they had not ſo certain, ſo clear, and ſo diſtinct a Knowledge of theſe Things, as we have now under the Goſpel. For, over and above the Knowledge of theſe Things, which the *Pious* before *Moſes* had, either from a ſerious *Contemplation* of the Works of God, or from the *Tradition* and Inſtruction of the Patriarchs, and which the *Jews*, in ſucceeding Ages, had from the Writings of *Moſes* and the *Prophets*; we Chriſtians have a more clear, more diſtinct, and evident Manifeſtation thereof, from the Books of the *Evangeliſts*, and *Apoſtles*. What was obſcurely delivered, and hidden under a Veil in the *Old Teſtament*, is diſcovered openly, and placed in a full Light by the *New*.

THE Doctrine of the ever-bleſſed Trinity may perhaps, by learned Men be *traced*, and ſome obſcure Footſteps thereof diſcerned in the Writings of *Moſes* and the *Prophets*; but it is ſo legibly written, and ſo clearly and plainly expreſſed in the Writings of the Apoſtles, that there is no Need of Learning to diſcover its being taught therein, though a great deal of Learning (falſely ſo called) has been uſed, to puzzle and perplex, and, by nice and *metaphyſical* Diſtinctions, to obſcure the Truths, that are there plainly and expreſsly delivered. The Faithful, under the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation (not to mention the Wiſeſt among the *Gentiles*) did, without Doubt, believe God to be an inviſible, and omnipreſent Spirit; and yet his frequent Appearances, ſometimes under one *Reſemblance*, and ſometimes under another; the Building of an Ark, a Tabernacle, and Temple, whither he was pleaſed to call his People together into his immediate Preſence, and to talk with him (as [u] *Moſes* expreſſes it) *Face to Face*, muſt neceſſarily turn their Eyes and Minds towards the *Mercy-Seat*; make them apprehend God ſhut up, as it were, within the *Holy of Holies*, and conſequently, perplex and obſcure their Notions of his *Spirituality* and *Omnipreſence*: Whereas there is no Room now, under the Goſpel, for any groſs Conceptions of the Deity, when we are not called upon to turn our Eyes towards a viſible Tabernacle, but [*] *to pray every where*, in any Place, *lifting up holy Hands*; and are taught by Chriſt, [x] *that God is a Spirit, and that they, who worſhip him, muſt worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth*. The Philoſophers of old, as well as the Believers under the *Law*, were perſuaded, that all Things were ordered and governed by an *all-wiſe* and *all-powerful* Being; and yet the moſt ſagacious of them were not able to account for the *Juſtice* of Divine Providence, in ſuffering the Wicked to proſper, and the Righteous to be afflicted. But now, this Difficulty every common Chriſtian is able to ſolve, by the Help of what he has learned from the Goſpel, concerning the Retributions

[t] *Scott*'s Mediator. [t] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [u] Deut. v. 4. [*] 1 Tim. ii. 1.
[x] John iv. 24.

butions of a future State; and can apply to all ſuch Caſes the Reflection, made by *Abraham* on the *rich Man's* Deſire of ſome Relief from *Lazarus*, [y] *Son, remember that thou, in thy Life-time, receivedſt thy good Things, and likewiſe* Lazarus *evil Things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

The Nature of Sin.

2. THE Nature and Obliquity of Sin is what Men, in all Ages, could not but perceive; but, how to account for its Cauſe and Origin they were at a ſtrange Loſs: And therefore ſome imagined a *pre-exiſtent* State, from whence they brought Depravity along with them, while others deviſed *two* contrary Principles, equally actuating the World, the one the Author of all the *Good*, and the other of all the *Evil* they did. [z] *The Wickedneſs of Man* (as *Moſes* tells us) *was great in the Earth, and every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was evil continually*; but whether theſe Expreſſions are to be extended to the whole Race of Mankind, and ſo are a Proof of the general *Depravation*, has been doubted by ſome; whereas all ſuch Doubts muſt now be ſilenced by the plain Aſſertions of the *New Teſtament*, that † *by one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin*, ſo that [a] *by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation*; that all who are of the Race of Mankind, *are Sinners, ungodly, Enemies of God, Children of the Devil, and by* [b] *Nature the Children of Wrath*; that, [c] *when they would do Good, Evil is preſent with them*, having *a Law in their Members warring againſt the Law of their Mind, and bringing them into Captivity to the Law of Sin*; and that this is the State of depraved Nature, wherein Men are born, and wherein thoſe that live and die ſhall [d] *be puniſhed with everlaſting Deſtruction, from the Preſence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power.*

Its Atonement.

3. AND as the Goſpel gives us a more diſtinct Account of the Origin and Demerit of Sin, ſo does it furniſh us with a clearer Diſcovery of the *Method*, whereby the Guilt of it is atoned. Thoſe, who lived under the Law of Nature, as well as thoſe, who lived under the *Moſaick* Diſpenſation, were ſaved by the ſame Means of Redemption, as we, who live under the *Evangelical*; but the Myſtery of our common Redemption was not, in any Degree, ſo fully manifeſted to them, as it is to us; And hence it is, that the Apoſtle compares the Writings of the *Old Teſtament* (which yet far exceeded thoſe of the greateſt *Sages* in the heathen World) to a [e] *Light*, or (as the *Original* is) to a *Candle, ſhining in a dark Place*; but the Revelation, which was made by Chriſt in the Goſpel, to the Day-dawn, and the *Day-ſtar ariſing in our Hearts.* The Revelation, made to the *Jews*, was to them a *Light*, but a faint one; it *ſhone*, but in a dark Place. The Nativity, Life, and Death of Chriſt, the ſeveral Offices of his Mediatorſhip, the Remiſſion of our Sins through his Blood, the Sanctification of our Hearts by his Spirit, and the Glories of the World to come, were taught them, not in Words at Length, but in Figures; and a dark *Veil* was over the Writings, as well as over [f] *the Face of* Moſes, *ſo that the Children of* Iſrael *could not ſtedfaſtly behold* his Doctrine, any more than they could *his Countenance.* In a Word, [g] they were ſaved, as well as we, by the Blood of Chriſt; but there was as great a Difference between *their* Knowledge of the Myſtery of our Redemption by the Sacrifice of the Death of Chriſt, and *ours*, as there was between that *dark Cloud*, wherewith God led the People at one Time, and that *Pillar of Light*, wherewith he guided them at another.

Our Juſtification.

4. AND as the Goſpel gives us clearer Notions of the Expiation of Sin, ſo does it exhibit a fuller Aſſurance of our being *juſtified*, or having our Sins pardoned thereby. *Religious* Perſons, who lived before the Coming of Chriſt, knew that they were Sinners, and that they therefore had Need of the Favour and Mercy of God, for the Remiſſion of their Sins; but then, being not ſufficiently inſtructed in the Method of obtaining God's Favour, they could not but groan ſorely under the Weight of them. Severe *Curſes* were denounced in the Law againſt all, who ſhould, in any Caſe, tranſgreſs it; theſe Curſes were *plain*, and eaſy to be underſtood; but the Promiſes of a Pardon, through the Merits of a Saviour, were more *intricate* and involved: When therefore the Danger, which threatened them, was ſo apparent, and the Methods of their Eſcape ſo obſcurely notified to them, it is no Wonder, if their Fears did very much over-balance their Hopes. Hence it is, that the *Spirit*, by which they were governed, is, in the Goſpel, repreſented as a *Spirit of*

[y] Luke xvi. 25. [z] Gen. vi. 5. † Rom. v. 12. [a] Ibid. *ver.* 18. [b] Eph. ii. 3.
[c] Rom. vii. 21, 23. [d] 2 Theſſ. i. 9. [e] 2 Pet. i. 19. [f] 2 Cor. iii. 7. [g] *Smalridge's* Sermons.

Bondage, but the *Spirit*, by which we Chriſtians are influenced, is a Spirit of Adoption: [h] *Ye have not now*, ſays the Apoſtle, *received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry* ABBA FATHER, *i. e.* whereby we are as well aſſured of the Love of God, as a Child is of the Affection of an indulgent Father; as ſurely intitled to the Joys of Heaven, as an *adopted* Son is to the Inheritance of him, who *therefore* adopted him, that he might make him his Heir; for (as the Apoſtle goes on to diſplay the *Privileges* of the Chriſtian) *the Spirit itſelf beareth Witneſs with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God, and if Children, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Chriſt.*

And future Glory.

5. AND as the Aſſurances given us of this Inheritance, are greater; ſo, laſtly, is the Inheritance itſelf much more plainly revealed to us in the Goſpel, than ever it was before. Whatever could be learned of a future State from the Light of Reaſon, that, and much more, was known to the *Jews*: What, by Reaſon, and by Revelation was made known to the *Jews*, concerning an immortal Life, that, and much more, is revealed to us *Chriſtians*. The Texts, in which a future State is revealed to the *Jews*, are few, and here and there thinly ſcattered, in ſome particular Books of the *Old Teſtament*; but there is no one Book, ſcarce one Chapter, in which this Doctrine is not taught in the *New*. Thoſe, in the *Old Teſtament*, are not ſo clear of Ambiguity, but that they are capable of another Interpretation, and even are actually interpreted of *temporal* Promiſes by ſome pious and learned Chriſtians; thoſe in the *New* are ſo clear, that there is no Room for the moſt *ignorant* to miſapprehend, or the moſt *impious* to pervert them. Some in the *Old Teſtament* ſeem not more clearly to *aſſert* an immortal Life, than others do to *deny* it; and even the ſame Writer ſometimes delivers Things upon this Head, which, at firſt View, appear to be inconſiſtent; but, as a future State of Happineſs and Miſery is ſupported by many more Texts in the *Goſpel*, and thoſe much more clear, than in the *Law*; ſo can it not be pretended, that it is in the leaſt impugned by any *ſuſpicious* Paſſage, through the whole *New Teſtament*; and therefore it is with great Juſtice, that the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* (who himſelf was excellently well verſed in the Knowledge of the *Jewiſh* Law) hath obſerved, that [i] *the Law had only a Shadow of good Things to come, but not the very Image of the Things*; *i. e.* it did, but obſcurely and faintly, typify the Glories of Heaven; not give us ſo bright an Image, and ſo lively a Repreſentation of the Rewards of another World, as is pictured out to us, and, in all its full Proportion and Lineaments, accurately deſcribed in the Goſpel; wherein the [k] *Myſtery*, (as the Apoſtle words it) *which hath been hid from Ages, and from Generations, God hath now made manifeſt to his Saints.*

The Excellency of Chriſt's Doctrine in Relation to what we are to do, *in our Duty* to God.

THESE are ſome of the Pre-eminences of the *Chriſtian* Revelation, in what we are to *know*; and, if we proceed now to the Conſideration of what we are to *do*, we ſhall perceive the like Excellency and Perfection in it. For, 1. *with Relation to God*, the full Diſcovery, which the Goſpel has made of his Nature and Attributes, [l] teacheth us, to place the true and acceptable Worſhip of him, not ſo much in *poſitive* and *ritual* Obſervances, as in approaching him with *pure Hearts*, and undefiled Bodies, with unfeigned Repentance for all paſt Miſcarriages, and ſincere Reſolutions of conſtant Obedience for the future; teacheth us, to pray to him for every Thing we want, and to return him our moſt hearty Thanks for every good Thing, we receive, with ſuch Submiſſion and Humility, ſuch Truſt and Reliance on him, as are the proper Affections of dutiful Children. All the great Men among the *Heathens* were defective, in Point of Piety, by Reaſon of their Ignorance of the Divine Nature: [m] Even *Ariſtotle*, who was ſo clear-ſighted in other Matters, when he comes to diſcourſe of God, not only in his *Phyſicks*, where he conſiders him as the firſt Cauſe, and *Mover* of all Things, but even in his *Morals*, where he was naturally led to treat of him, as an Object deſerving our moſt ardent Love and Affection, is far from making any ſuch Repreſentation of him, though the Love of God is that alone, which gives Price and Value to all *moral* Virtues. In the *Platonick* Philoſophy indeed, there are ſome Things, that have a Tendency this Way; but then they are ſo *frigidly*, and ſo obſcurely expreſſed, that, like the Inſcription on an ancient *defaced Marble*, they are hardly legible: 'Tis the ſingular Character of the Goſpel, and what diſtinguiſhes it from all human Inſtitutions, that it repreſents the infinite Amiableneſs of God, and his manifold Goodneſs to us, in ſuch a Manner, as to excite our

[h] Rom. viii. 15, &c. [i] Heb. x. 1. [k] Col. i. 26. [l] *Clarke*, on the Being and Attributes. [m] *Bates*'s Harmony.

our Affections, and enliven our Devotions with the moſt ſeraphick Love. For who can refuſe the Oblation of his whole Heart to God, who conſiders, that [n] *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only-begotten Son* everlaſtingly to ſave it; or, who [o] *beholds what Manner of Love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God?* Thus a *ſpiritual* and *internal* Service, proceeding from a Principle of *Love*, and terminating in the Glory of God, it becomes the Duty of a *Chriſtian*; though an *Heathen* or *Jewiſh* Worſhipper might be excuſed, if, moved by no higher *Principle* than Fear and the Dread of Puniſhment, they intended no more than a bare Performance of outward Ceremonies in God's Service.

2. WITH *Relation to our Neighbour*, the Notice which the Goſpel gives us of his near Relation to us; that we are not only ſprung from the ſame *Original*, and Partakers of the ſame Nature, but are admitted into the ſame *Fellowſhip*, and Partakers of the ſame Grace; that, [p] *by one Spirit, we are all baptized into one Body, whether we be* Jew *or* Gentile, *whether we be Bond or Free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit*; and that, [q] *as we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not the ſame Office; ſo we, being many, are one Body in Chriſt, and every one Members one of another*: The ſtrict *Union*, I ſay, which the Goſpel diſcovers, in making us all Members of one and the ſame *Body*, whereof *Chriſt* is the *Head*, plainly teaches us, what endeavouring Love and Sympathy ſhould interfere between *Chriſtians*; that, [r] *as when one Member ſuffers, all the Members ſuffer with it; or when one Member is honoured, all the Members rejoice with it*; ſo ſhould we [s] *be kindly affectioned one to another; rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep*; [t] *be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering Evil for Evil, nor Railing for Railing,* [u] *that there be no Schiſm in the Body, but, contrariwiſe, Bleſſing*; being ready to aſſiſt, and willing to do good Offices, not only to Friends, but even to our bittereſt Enemies; tho' ſuch Inſtances of Kindneſs and Condeſcenſion, to People bred up under a ſeverer Diſpenſation, where *Revenge* was held glorious, and *Retaliations* tolerated, might ſeem Marks of an abject Spirit, and imprudent Provocations of future Affronts. *Our Duty to our Neighbour.*

3. WITH *Relation to ourſelves*, the Knowledge, which the Goſpel gives us of the Tendency of our Nature, † that, notwithſtanding the near Union and Commerce that is between *Soul* and *Body*, there are no two in the World at ſuch Enmity one with another, none that drive on ſuch quite different Intereſts, as they; that *all our fleſhly Luſts* are an Army, that *war againſt the Soul*, and the ſpeedieſt Way to Ruin is to hearken to the Whiſpers of our own Boſom; this Knowledge of ourſelves, I ſay, teacheth us, that Humiliation and Poverty of Spirit, the Mortification of our Paſſions and Inclinations; and, in order thereunto, ſuch voluntary Reſtraints and Inflictions, as the Goſpel calls *taking up the Croſs*, are neceſſary Parts of a *Chriſtian*'s Duty, though they never came into the Catalogue of *Heathen* Virtues. And, *laſtly*, the Knowledge, which the Goſpel gives us of the World; that it is but a *Paſſage*, and not a Place of *Abode*; that here we are *Strangers* and *Pilgrims*, and muſt therefore expect croſs Accidents, and not every Thing accommodated to our liking; that we are deſigned for an happier Country, and muſt therefore look upon *this*, as a Place of Exerciſe, rather than Enjoyment; that our chief Intereſt is not *here*, but *above*, and therefore *the Love of the World* muſt needs be *Enmity with God*; becauſe to place our Affections *here*, is to vilify that better Proviſion, which he hath made for us: This Repreſentation, I ſay, which the Goſpel gives us of the World, teacheth us, that Patience under our greateſt Sufferings, and Abſtinence even in the moſt lawful Pleaſures; that Heavenly-mindedneſs, and Contempt of the World, and chuſing rather to *die*, than commit a *moral* Evil, are the neceſſary Offices of a *Chriſtian*, though a *Jew* might have been excuſed, if he had looked upon them as *Indiſcretions*. *Our Duty to ourſelves.*

IN a Word, [x] the Rules which *Chriſt* hath left us, for the Direction of our religious Services, for the governing our Paſſions, for ſuppreſſing the firſt Motions of unclean Deſires, for putting up Injuries, for enlarging the Object of our Charity to Strangers, to Enemies, to all Mankind; the Commands, ſo often repeated, of *forſaking all*, and laying down our Life for the Sake of Truth and our Duty, and the reſtraining his Followers from ſome Liberties, allowed the *Jews*, in Regard to *Polygamy* and *Divorce*: Theſe, and ſome other Inſtances, have not undeſervedly been thought *Its Excellency above the old* Moral *Law.*

[n] John iii. 16. [o] 1 John iii. 1. [p] 1 Cor. xii. 13. [q] Rom. xii. 4, 5. [r] 1 Cor. xii. 26. [s] Rom. xii. 10, 15. [t] 1 Pet. iii. 8, 9. [u] 1 Cor. xii. 25.

† *Young's* Sermons, Vol. I. *Stanhope's* Sermons, at *Boyle's* Lectures.

thought Commands perfectly *new*, and peculiar to the Goſpel. But ſuppoſe they are contained in the *old moral* Law, yet this muſt be allowed, that the Advantage is very great in the Goſpel-Promulgation of them: For, ſince the conſtituent Parts of a Law are its *Precepts* and its *Sanction*, there is no Doubt to be made, but that one Law may excel another, in either, or in both theſe Reſpects. In Reſpect *of the former*, the Law, that is full, and clear, and expreſs, is confeſſedly more *perfect*, than one that is dark, and perplexed, and involved in general Terms, which leave Men to find out the Meaſure of their Duty by remote Conſequences: And, in Reſpect *of the latter*, a Law is more or leſs perfect, according to the Encouragement it propoſes to the Obſervation, or the Penalty it threatens to the Tranſgreſſion of it. Since then the *moral* Law has, under the *Chriſtian* State, explained Men's Duty more *fully*, and if not extended it farther, yet expreſſed it in its juſt and utmoſt Extent; ſince it has cut off all Evaſions, from pretended Ignorance, in many Caſes of great Importance, which neither the common People, nor even the Teachers of the *Jews* held themſelves obliged to before; ſince it engages our utmoſt Diligence, by expreſs Promiſes of eternal Life, which the Law, under the old *OEconomy*, did no where poſitively covenant for; ſince it reſtrains the Sinner by Threatenings of certain and eternal Vengeance, whereas the other denounced only *temporal* Sufferings: In a Word, ſince the Goſpel-Compenſation is an Over-balance for all we can do, or endure, to attain it; and the Goſpel-Penalty ſuch, as no Pleaſure or preſent Profit can make us Amends for incurring it; but the Law, ſuppoſing it to require all that the Goſpel requires, (as Dying for Religion in particular) does not propoſe a valuable Conſideration for the Duties it enjoins; it cannot but be granted, that the *moral* Law is exalted by *Jeſus* and his Doctrine; and that, either by adding to the *Matter* of it, or, at leaſt, by adding to the *Clearneſs* and Strength, to the Efficacy and Obligation of it, he hath left it a more perfect *Rule* and *Motive* of Obedience, than he found it at his Coming.

Chriſt's *ſecond mediatorial Office.*

II. THE ſecond Branch of *Chriſt's mediatorial* Office is his *Prieſthood*, whereby he becomes both our *Atonement* for Sin, and our *Advocate* with Almighty God. In the firſt Ages of the World, it cannot be denied, but that, in Matters which concerned himſelf alone, every one was his own Prieſt. Thus, in ſacrificing to God upon their own Accounts, [y] *Cain* and *Abel* officiated for themſelves; but, in Sacrifices of a more general Nature, [z] the Inſtances of *Noah* and * *Job* make it manifeſt, that the Father of each Family was the Prieſt. In Proceſs of Time, when Families began to multiply into Tribes, and greater Societies, the Prince of each Country was alſo the ſupreme Prieſt of it; ſo that [a] the *Sacerdotal* Honour was, for a long while, annexed to the *Regal*. In the Days of *Abraham*, we find, that *Melchiſedec* was both [b] *the King of Salem*, and *the Prieſt of the Moſt High God*; and the Reaſon why the ſacred Hiſtory takes Notice of him more eſpecially, is not becauſe he was the only Perſon inveſted with this *double* Character, but becauſe all other Kings, that were contemporary with him, had, very probably, revolted to Idolatry, ſo that he only remained *the Prieſt of the Moſt High God*.

A PRIEST.

The Difference between the Prieſthood of Aaron, *and that of* Melchiſedec.

WHO this *Melchiſedec* was, and in what Senſe thoſe Characters are to be taken, wherein [c] the Author to the *Hebrews* has deſcribed him, in order to make his Prieſthood a more perfect *Type* of *Chriſt*'s, is what we had Occaſion to take Notice of before; and need only obſerve farther, wherein the main Difference between the *Aaronical* and *Melchiſedecal* Prieſthood (which was prefigurative of that of *Chriſt*) may not improperly be ſaid to conſiſt. The Conjunction of the two Offices of King and Prieſt in one Perſon was undoubtedly continued until the Time of *Moſes*; for we find that Prince and Law-giver of *Iſrael* officiating likewiſe as their Prieſt, in [d] the ſolemn Sacrifice at the Foot of Mount *Horeb*, whereby he confirmed the Covenant between God and them. 'Tis very probable therefore, that the firſt *Separation*, which was ever made of theſe two Officers, was in the Perſon of *Aaron*, whom God appointed to

[y] Gen. iv. 3, 4. [z] Ibid. viii. 20. * Job i. 5. [a] Thus *Ariſtotle* has obſerved, that μοναρχίᾳ καὶ ἱερατείᾳ, to *rule* and *ſacrifice*, were Offices conjoined in the ſame Perſon, *Pol. Lib. iii. Rex Anius, Rex idem hominum Phœbique Sacerdos*, is a Line in *Virgil*, (*Æn.* iii.) whereupon *Servius* has this Note, *Sane majorum hæc erat conſuetudo, ut Rex eſſet etiam* Sacerdos *vel* Pontifex. Which Cuſtom was, for a long while, continued in *Egypt*, and from thence derived to the *Greeks*, and from them to the *Romans*, as *Plutarch* (Quæſt. Rom. p. 279.) tells us, τὸ παλαιὸν οἱ Βασιλεῖς τὰ πλεῖστα καὶ μάλιστα τῶν ἱερῶν ἔδρων, i. e. *of Old, Kings performed the moſt, and greateſt Parts of the ſacred Rites, and, together with the Prieſts, ſacrificed the Victims*, &c. and therefore *Dionyſius Halicarnaſſæus*, ſpeaking of the Power of Kings, tells us expreſsly, πρῶτον μὲν ἱερῶν καὶ θυσιῶν ἡγεμονίαν ἴσχον, &c. i. e. *They had the Government of Sacrifices and ſacred Rites, whatſoever was to be done to the Holy Gods, was done by them.* [b] Heb. vii. 1. [c] Ibid. vii. [d] Exod. xxiv. 6, 7.

to the Prieſthood, but without any *Regal* Power, and ordered it ſo to continue ſucceſſively in his Family. During this Separation, none could be a Prieſt of the *Aaronical* Order, but ſuch as were deſcended from his Loins. Our Saviour therefore, being ſprung, not from the Houſe of *Aaron*, but from that of *Judah*, which was the *Royal* Line, could not be of the *Aaronical* Order; but re-aſſuming the *Prieſtly* Office from the Tribe of *Aaron*, and rejoining it to the *Kingly* Office, with which it was *originally* united, he thereby became a *Royal* Prieſt, after the ancient Order of *Melchiſedeck*, which was prior to that of *Aaron*. The Difference therefore between the *Aaronical* and *Melchiſedecal* Prieſthood does not, as ſome imagine, conſiſt in the Nature of their *Sacrifices*, as if *Melchiſedeck* had ſacrificed only *inanimate* Things, whereas *Aaron* ſacrificed Animals: Their Sacrifices, in this Reſpect, were certainly both alike; otherwiſe, how could *Aaron*'s bloody Sacrifices be typical of our Saviour's Prieſthood (which was after the Order of *Melchiſedeck*) if *Melchiſedeck*'s Prieſthood admitted of no bloody Sacrifices? And therefore the true Difference between the two Orders was this—That, whereas the *Regal* Power was *united* to *Melchiſedeck*'s Prieſthood, it was wholly *ſeparate* from *Aaron*'s, who, in all Probability, was the firſt High-Prieſt in the World, that was not a *King*, as well as a *Prieſt*.

Wherein the Prieſthood of Aaron *and that of* Chriſt *both* differ *and* agree.

THE Author to the *Hebrews* has made uſe of ſeveral Inſtances, thereby to ſhew, both the Difference, and Similitude, between the Prieſthood of *Chriſt*, and that of the Houſe of *Aaron*. *They differ*, in that the latter was repoſed in the Hands of frail Men; was deſtitute of all *Regal* Power; deſigned for no long Continuance; and incapable of making any effectual Atonement for Sin, and was therefore obliged to repeat, *every Day*, ſuch Sacrifices, as were only available *to the purifying of the Fleſh*: Whereas the *former* was committed to the Adminiſtration of the Son of God; was inveſted with ſovereign Power and Dignity; was effectual to Expiation of all Kinds of Sin; and deſigned to abide as long as the Sun and Moon endure, *&c.* but herein *they agree*; that, whereas *every High-Prieſt is ordained for Men, in Things pertaining to God, i. e.* to avert his Anger, and obtain his Favour and Bleſſings for them; there are two more eminent Acts, whereunto they were both appointed: Firſt, to offer *Sacrifices* for the Sins of the People; and then, ſecondly, to preſent ſuch Sacrifices to God, in order to make *Interceſſion* for them. To this Purpoſe we read, that the High-Prieſt under the Law (eſpecially on the great Day of *Expiation*, when he ſtood in his neareſt *Reſemblance* of *Chriſt* acting in his *ſacerdotal* Capacity) was appointed to bring the Beaſt, which was ſet apart to die for the Sins of the People, to the Door of the Tabernacle, and there to kill it with his own Hands; after which, he was to take the Blood of it, and, preſenting it before the Lord *in the Holy of Holies*, was to ſprinkle it, ſeven Times, with his Finger, *upon*, and *before*, the Mercy-Seat: Both which Offices the Author to the *Hebrews* plainly aſcribes to our bleſſed Saviour, and makes them *typical* of what he did; for [g] *Chriſt*, ſays he, *being come an High-Prieſt of good Things to come, by a greater, and more perfect Tabernacle, not made with Hands, that is to ſay, not of this Building; neither by the Blood of Goats and Calves, but by his own Blood, he entered in once, into the holy Place, having obtained eternal Redemption for us.*

The Neceſſity of Chriſt's Prieſthood, *as to* Sacrifice.

THAT Sacrifices are Acts of Religion addreſſed to God; [h] that they were of different Kinds, and deſigned for different Purpoſes; *ſome*, as decent Tributes and Significations of *Gratitude*, due to the Divine Bounty for Benefits already received; *others*, as *Atonements* for Offences committed, to avert that Diſpleaſure and Puniſhment, to which Men, conſcious of their Guilt, apprehend themſelves liable; *all*, as Means judged proper for procuring Favour and Bleſſing from the Fountain of all Goodneſs; are Truths ſo manifeſt, and ſo univerſally allowed, as not to need either Proof or Enlargement. Whence the Practice of expiating Sin by Sacrifice had its firſt *Riſe*; whether from *human* Diſcourſe, or (what ſeems more probable) from *Divine* Inſtitution, and was afterwards propagated from Age to Age by *Tradition*, is no Part of our preſent Buſineſs to enquire. *That the Wages of Sin is Death*, and that, *without ſhedding of Blood, there is no Remiſſion of Sin*; theſe two Notions (whence ſoever they came into the Minds of Men) ſeem to have ſuggeſted the Rite of offering up living Sacrifices at firſt. Sadly ſenſible they were that they had ſinned; their Lives they knew they had forfeited by their Sin; [i] but how to redeem them, and appeaſe the Wrath of God, this they were ignorant of. The beſt Expedient, that could be thought on, in this Exigence, was the ſacrificing Brutes, and *ſubſtituting* one

[f] *Scott*'s Mediator. [g] Heb. ix. 11, 12. [h] *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures. [i] *Scott*, ibid.

Life in the Room of another? But, alas! This would not do: For what Proportion is there between the *momentary* Sufferings of a Beaſt, and the *eternal* Sufferings, which are due to Sin? The Death of a Beaſt is a Puniſhment far ſhort of the Death of a Man, but infinitely ſhort of that eternal Death, to which a Man's Sinfulneſs conſigns him. And therefore the *Heathens*, finding the Imperfection of theſe Sacrifices, in Caſes of great Extremity, and where they had highly offended God indeed, were accuſtomed to ſacrifice Men. But here likewiſe they were miſerably miſtaken: They never conſidered that the Men, whom they offered, were Sinners, as well as themſelves, and that it was a greater *Flaw* in an *Expiatory* Sacrifice, to be a *Sinner*, than to be a *Brute*.

And as to Interceſſion.

AND, as Mankind, before the Coming of Chriſt, ſtood in need of a ſufficient Sacrifice, ſo wanted they no leſs a powerful *Advocate*, to whom they might addreſs, and by whom they might find Acceſs to the Moſt High God. For this was the natural Effect of Sin in all Ages, that it, filling Mens Minds with dreadful Apprehenſions of God, and making them afraid to approach him of themſelves, [k] drove them to the Neceſſity, either of giving off all Intercourſe with him, or of finding out ſome other, to make Interceſſion for them; and this ſeems to have given Riſe to the firſt Inſtitution of *Demon-worſhip* among the *Gentiles*. Their Minds were ſo ſtung with the Senſe and Remembrance of their Guilt, that they could not approach God without Horror and Anxiety; and thereupon they caſt about to find out other Beings, that might interpoſe with him on their Account: And being informed by *Tradition*, that there were certain *middle* Beings, between God and Man, called *Angels*, or *Demons*; theſe they addreſſed with Petitions, and bribed with Sacrifices, to uſe what Intereſt they had with the Supreme God, in their Favour. However this be, 'tis certain, that the *Jews*, who had no explicit Revelation of a *Mediator*, were always *tremulous* in their Approaches to God, and, whenever they had gone aſtray, *diffident* of their Reception to Mercy; which is the beſt Reaſon, that can be given, why we meet with ſo many melancholy Expoſtulations from them, *Wilt thou be angry for ever? Haſt thou forgotten to be gracious? Wilt thou turn away thy Face for ever, and remember thy loving Kindneſs no more?* Thus deſtitute was the World both of a ſufficient *Atonement* for Sin, and of a competent *Advocate* with God, till Chriſt, whoſe Divine Nature derived an infinite Value upon the Oblation, and whoſe Oblation gives infinite Power and Efficacy to all his Requeſts, [l] *appeared in the End of the World to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himſelf*, and is now at the Right-Hand of God *making daily Interceſſion for us*. Theſe are the great Acts of his *ſacerdotal* Office: And how well he has quitted himſelf herein, we ſhall now endeavour to evince, by conſidering,

I. THE *Nature* and *Extent* of the Sacrifice, he once offerd And,

II. THE *Manner* and *Efficacy* of the Interceſſion, he now makes.

Chriſt's Death a real Sacrifice for Sin.

I. THAT the Death of our Lord and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt* was really intended to be a *Sacrifice* for Sin, in order to pacify the Divine Wrath, and ſatisfy the Divine Juſtice, is manifeſt from thoſe various Texts in Scripture, wherein we are told, that, [m] *he was made an Offering for Sin*, and [n] *brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter*; that [o] *he is the Lamb, which taketh away the Sins of the World*, and [p] *who gave his Life a Ranſom for all*; [q] that *God ſent him to be a Propitiation for our Sins*, gave him [r] *this Commandment to lay down his Life*, and that [s] *he loving us, and giving himſelf for us, an Offering and Sacrifice to God*, [t] *by his Death we have Remiſſion of our Sins, and Reconciliation with God*. That *Chriſt*, this *Expiatory* Sacrifice, was *ſubſtituted* in our Room, to undergo the Puniſhment, which we, by our Offences, had incurred, is plain from ſundry Declarations, both in the *Old* and *New* Teſtament; that [u] *he was cut off, but not for himſelf*; that * *he bore our Griefs, and carried our Sorrows; was wounded for our Tranſgreſſions, and bruiſed for our Iniquities*; [x] *was made Sin and a Curſe for us*; [y] *ſuffered for the Unjuſt, died for the Ungodly, was offered to be bear the Sins of many*, and [z] *taſted Death for every Man*; that [a] *through Death he might deſtroy him, that had the Power of Death, that is the Devil, and deliver them, who, through Fear of Death,*

[k] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Vol. I. [l] Heb. ix. 26. [m] Iſa. liii. 10. [n] Ibid. ver. 7. [o] John i. 29. [p] 1 Tim. ii. 6. [q] 1 John iv. 10. [r] John x. 17, 18. [s] Eph. v. 2. [t] Rom. v. 10. [u] Dan. ix. 26. * Iſa. liii. 4, 5. [x] 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13. [y] 1 Pet. iii. 18. Heb. ix. 28. [z] Heb. ii. 9. [a] Ibid. ver. 14.

Death, were, all their Life-Time, ſubject to Bondage: And that this Sacrifice of ours was *allowed* and accepted of by God, as a full, perfect, and ſufficient Oblation, and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World, is apparent from all thoſe Places wherein we are reminded of the bleſſed Effects of his Paſſion, *viz.* [b] *to finiſh Tranſgreſſion, and make an End of Sin; to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in everlaſting Righteouſneſs*; wherein we are told, that, [c] *the Chaſtiſement of our Peace was upon him, and with his Stripes we are healed*; that [d] *we are reconciled to the Father in his Croſs, and in the Body of his Fleſh through Death*; that [e] *we are ſanctified by the offering of his Body once for all*, and [f] *are redeemed with his Blood, as of a Lamb without Blemiſh, and without Spot*. For ſuch is the Excellence of our High-Prieſt; that, whereas [g] *every Prieſt, under the Law, ſtandeth daily miniſtring, and offering, oftentimes, the ſame Sacrifices, which can never take away Sins; he, after he had offered one Sacrifice for Sins*, in Token of God's Acceptance of it, *for ever ſat down on the Right-Hand of God: For by one Offering he hath perfected for ever them, that are ſanctified.*

Some Obſervations upon the Cuſtoms in ſacrificing under the Law.

IN theſe and many more Paſſages, which lie diſperſed in all the Parts of the Holy Scriptures, it is as plain, as Words can make any Thing, [h] that the Death of Chriſt is propoſed to us, not only as a *Pattern* of holy and patient Suffering, but as our Sacrifice and Reconciliation, our Atonement and Redemption. And to confirm us in the Truth of this, as well as to illuſtrate the Force and Energy of ſome of theſe Expreſſions, which allude ſo plainly to the Manner of ſacrificing under the Law, we muſt obſerve, 1. That, in all Sacrifices of Beaſts, the Owner laid his *Hand* [i] upon the Head of them, not only to ſignify the *Property* he had in them, but to intimate likewiſe the *Tranſlation* of his Sin and Guilt upon them; more eſpecially [k] in the Caſe of the *Scape-Goat*, the Prieſt, as the People's *Repreſentative*, lays his Hands upon its Head, and, confeſſing their Iniquities over it, is ſaid to *put them upon it*, and ſends it away, ſuppoſed to be polluted therewith, *into the Wilderneſs*. 2. That the Bodies of thoſe Beaſts, which were offered with the greateſt Solemnity, were burnt without the Camp, during the Service of the Tabernacle; and without the [l] Gate of *Jeruſalem*, after the Building of the Temple: And that they conveyed a *legal* Impurity to thoſe, that touched them, as being in the Eye of the Law charged with their Sins, in whoſe Behalf they were offered. 3. [m] That all ſolemn Offerings were neceſſarily to be performed by the Prieſts, as a Branch of their *ſacerdotal* Function; and on the great Day of *Atonement*, even the moſt ſervile Offices of this Kind lay upon the High-Prieſt alone. 4. That, in all Sin-offerings for the People, the *Prieſts* were to carry the Blood within the *Sanctuary*, and *ſprinkle it* ſeven Times before the Veil of the *Sanctuary*; but, on the Day of Expiation, the High-Prieſt only was to carry it into the *Holy of Holies*, and there ſprinkle it ſeven Times before the *Mercy-Seat*. And, 5. That the Uſe of Blood in common Food was therefore prohibited the *Jews*, becauſe it was appropriated to God's Service; [n] *for the Life of the Fleſh*, ſays God, *is in the Blood, and I have given it to you upon the Altar, to make an Atonement for your Souls; for it is the Blood that maketh an Atonement for the Soul.*

Their Uſe in the Explanation of ſome Scripture-Paſſages.

[o] THESE few Obſervations, carried along with us, will, in ſome Meaſure, be a *Key* to let us into the Propriety and juſt Importance of many Phraſes and Scripture-Paſſages. By theſe we may plainly diſcover the mighty Force and Elegance of the Prophetick Stile, in which God is ſaid [p] *to lay* on Chriſt *the Iniquity of us all*; and of the Apoſtles expreſſing the ſame Notion, when they tell us, [q] *that he bore our Sins, in his own Body, on the Tree*; that [r] *he ſuffered without the Gate, to the End that he might ſanctify the People with his own Blood*; that [s] *God made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin*; that [t] *being a Prieſt, he muſt of Neceſſity have ſomewhat to offer*, and *therefore God prepared him a Body*, and that *with his Blood* (which is therefore called [u] *the Blood of ſprinkling*) *he entered into the Holy Place, (i. e.* into Heaven, the Antitype of the Holy of Holies) *having obtained eternal Redemption for us.* Theſe, I ſay, are all of them Terms of a peculiar Energy; and being uſed to Men, who worſhipped God by Sacrifices, they could not, upon their own Principles, but be underſtood to imply, that the ſame Perſon, who is thus declared to ſuffer and die for us,

[b] Dan. ix. 24. [c] Iſa. liii. 5. [d] Col. i. 21, 22. [e] Heb. x. 10. [f] 1 Pet. i. 19. [g] Heb. x. 11, &c. [h] *Burnet*, on the Articles. [i] Lev. i. 4. Ch. iii. 2, 8, 10. [k] Lev. xvi. 21, 22. [l] Ibid. vi. 11. [m] Heb. v. 1. [n] Lev. xvii. 11. [o] *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures. [p] Iſa. liii. 6. [q] 1 Pet. ii. 24. [r] Heb. xiii. 12. [s] 2 Cor. v. 21, [t] Heb. viii. and x. [u] Heb. xii. 24.

us, did not die only *for our Benefit*, but *in our Stead*; by a proper *ſacrificial* Subſtitution of his Life for ours, and by taking upon himſelf the Puniſhment of thoſe Iniquities, which belonged to us. Nothing leſs than this fills the Ideas of thoſe Terms of Art, thoſe Phraſes, which are *otherwiſe* jejune and mean; but, in their proper Senſe and due Extent, do prove his Death, in the ſtricteſt Senſe of the Word, to be a true *piacular Sacrifice*: A Sacrifice, * whoſe Merit and Influence was not confined to the Age, in which is was offered, but had a Retroſpect to Generations long ſince paſt and gone; for Chriſt is [x] *the Mediator of the New Teſtament, that by Means of Death, for the Redemption of the Tranſgreſſions under the firſt Teſtament, they, which are called, might receive the Promiſe of eternal Inheritance:* And a Sacrifice, which looks forward to all Generations yet unborn; for [y] *the Promiſe* (ſays St *Peter*) *is to you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call*; *who is* [z] *become* (as St *Paul* tells us) *the Author of eternal Salvation unto all them, that obey him, being able to ſave to the uttermoſt them, that come to God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make Interceſſion for them.*

An Objection againſt Chriſt's Satisfaction.

THUS the whole Tenor of the Goſpel (if we may be allowed to underſtand the Propriety of its Diction) teſtifies, and proclaims aloud, that the Death of our bleſſed Saviour was really and truly a Sacrifice, *expiatory* of Sin, and *ſatisfactory* to Divine Juſtice. But here ſome may aſk us, "Why all this *Expence* for the Expiation of "Sin, when the Thing might have been compaſſed at a much eaſier Rate? Why "ſuch vaſt Pains taken in the *Satisfaction* of Divine Juſtice, when, once for all, "God might have paſſed an *Act* of general Indemnity, and cancelled the Tranſgreſ-"ſions of all Mankind, at one Word's ſpeaking? As he is the ſovereign Lord and "Maſter of the *Univerſe*, he could have forgiven the Iniquities of his People with-"out any *penal* Exactions; and it ſeems more conſiſtent with the Diſcoveries we "have of his Goodneſs and Clemency, *ſo* to have forgiven them, than to have "ſtood in need of any external Motive to oblige him. At leaſt, if any Compen-"ſation was requiſite, ſomething of leſs Moment (the Sacrifices, for inſtance, ap-"pointed under the Law, or Sufferings of ſome good Man, or mighty Angel) "might have been deemed more proper and convenient, than the Offering up of the "Son of God, the moſt innocent, and moſt excellent Perſon that ever was; beſides "the manifeſt Incongruity of a Divine Perſon's ſuffering for the Satisfaction of Di-"vine Juſtice.

Fully anſwered.

NOW though we preſume not to limit the *Prerogative* of the ſupreme Governor of the Univerſe, or to preſcribe to the Goodneſs, or Wiſdom of a Being infinite in all Perfections, and ſhall not therefore diſpute, whether God could not, either remit Sins without any Satisfaction at all, or accept any, that he thought fit, how mean and worthleſs ſoever in itſelf; yet conſidering God [a] (as he ought to be conſidered in the preſent Caſe) in the Quality of a *Law-giver* and *Judge*, as it was moſt reaſonable, that, in the firſt giving of the Law, he ſhould lay the ſtrongeſt Reſtraint upon Man, for the Prevention of Sin; ſo is it no leſs reaſonable, when the Command was broken by Man's Rebellion, that the Penalty ſhould be inflicted, either on his Perſon, according to the immediate Intent of the Law, or that Satisfaction, equivalent to the Offence, ſhould be made, that the *Majeſty* and *Holineſs* of God might appear in his Juſtice.

[b] THE Deſign of every wiſe Governor is to contain Men in their Duty, by *enacting* ſuch Laws, as may be a Rule for their Obedience, and *enforcing* thoſe Laws with ſuch Puniſhments, as ſhall render the Breach of them terrible and exemplary, that all may be deterred from doing the like, and that a juſt Reverence for the *Conſtitution* may be maintained. To theſe Purpoſes Almighty God having made Man *immortal*, gave him a Law, the Tranſgreſſion whereof he threatened with *Death*, the moſt terrible of all Puniſhments. That Law being broken by our firſt Parents, they, and, in them, human Nature became obnoxious to the Penalty of eternal Death. To preſerve his Workmanſhip, in ſo noble a Part of the Creation, from periſhing, it pleaſed God to accept of a *vicarious* Puniſhment: But, ſince he ſtill continues to rule us by Laws, it was requiſite, that this vicarious Puniſhment ſhould be ſuch an one, as might anſwer the abovementioned Ends of Government. [c] The Life of the Law depends upon the Execution of it; for *Impunity* occaſions a Contempt of Juſtice, and, by extenuating Sin in the Account of Men, encourages the free Commiſſion of it:

* *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures. [x] Heb. ix. 15. [y] Acts ii. 39. [z] Heb. v. 9. Chap. vii. 25. [a] *Bates*'s Harmony. [b] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels. [c] *Bates*, ibid.

it: If therefore God had proclaimed a general Pardon of Sin to all Mankind, without any Teſtimony of his Wrath and Diſpleaſure againſt it, how highly ſoever we may think of his Generoſity, yet certainly it would either reflect upon his Wiſdom, as if he had not, upon juſt Reaſons, made the Offence and Penalty inſeparable; or upon his Power, as if he were not able to vindicate his own Authority; or upon the Sacredneſs of his Truth, if, after ſevere Threatenings to the contrary, he ſhould ſuffer the Sinner, at laſt, to go unpuniſhed.

The Difference between temporal Rulers, and God.

SOME Caſes there are indeed, wherein the *Law-giver* is obliged to diſpenſe with the Law, (as when the ſparing of an Offender is more Advantage to the State, than his Puniſhment;) and when ſome are too mighty to be brought to Juſtice, there is a ſuperior Tribunal, to which ſuch Offenders are obnoxious; and good Magiſtrates, when, through Weakneſs, they are forced to ſpare the Guilty, refer them to God's Judgment. But 'tis otherwiſe in the Divine *Adminiſtration*; for, as God is infinitely free from all Neceſſity of Compliance, ſo is there no Exigence of Government, that requires any Offenders ſhould eſcape his Severity, nor any Juſtice above *his*, to exact Satisfaction of them. And therefore, as the Majeſty of his Laws is more ſacred, than that of thoſe, which preſerve earthly *States*, and ought to be more inviolable, 'tis reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that (if even there were any other Motives pleading for Forgiveneſs) the Holineſs and Juſtice of his Nature, as well as Regard to the Sanction and Veneration of his Laws, would preponderate with him, to exact the Penalty, incurred by the Violation of them, and to call out the guilty Offender to Execution.

The Neceſſity of Chriſt's Satisfaction.

THUS, [d] to declare God's Hatred againſt Sin, which is eſſential to the Perfection of his Nature; to prevent the Commiſſion of Sin, by preſerving in Men an holy Fear of offending; and to maintain the Honour of God's Laws, which would otherwiſe fall under Contempt, it was expedient, that the Breach of his Commands ſhould not go unpuniſhed. But then, *how*, or on *whom*, this Puniſhment was to be inflicted, is the Queſtion. The Perſons, indeed, who were the Offenders, were the *prime* Objects of God's Indignation; but then, in this Method of Proceeding, all Mankind (for all had offended God) muſt have finally periſhed. By God's own Appointment, the Sacrifice of Beaſts was inſtituted under the Law; but, beſides the Imperfection of ſuch *Atonements*, what Apprehenſion of Divine Vengeance, what Terror, what Example can there be in the Death of a Brute? [e] To ſee a Creature die, when devoted to an holy Uſe, will not much affect them, who, every Day, kill the like for their own Suſtenance and Refreſhment: To purchaſe Pardon at ſo cheap a Rate would be a Means to encourage Wickedneſs, rather than produce a Reformation; and the Senſe of Divine Majeſty would not long continue, when ſo poor a Matter, as the Life of a Brute, ſhould come to be thought a ſufficient Reparation for the groſſeſt Affronts of it. A Creature of leſs Merit, than the eternal Son of God, may be ſuppoſed deputed to the Office of making Satisfactions for the Sin: But [f] admitting ſuch a Perſon to be, not only innocent, but able likewiſe to bear the heavy Wrath of God; yet, as the Obedience and Sufferings of no *Creature* could, from his own Worth and Excellency, be equivalent to the Obedience and Sufferings of all Mankind; ſo, not only the Performance of his Sufferings, but even his Innocence and Perſeverance in Righteouſneſs muſt be aſcribed to the Grace and Goodneſs of God, not to any Power of his own to ſuſtain himſelf; and conſequently, the Obedience and Sufferings of no created Being, how perfect, how excellent ſoever, could have been of that Value, as to *merit* for others, to make Satisfaction to the *Divine* Juſtice, or procure the Remiſſion of *human* Sins. For, ſince Death is ordained the Puniſhment of Sin, [g] the Effect of its Remiſſion muſt be immortal Life: But now, how can we imagine, that the Death of any Creature, not immortal itſelf, could procure for us a Right to Immortality? No, the Sacrifice, that *takes away Sin*, muſt *not* only *die*, but *live* again; muſt be able to give itſelf Immortality, before we can be immortal by Virtue of it: Which brings the Matter, at length, to this Concluſion, that ſuch a Sacrifice muſt neceſſarily be Man, muſt be an innocent Man, muſt indeed be much more than Man, muſt be God, God as well as Man; for the Scripture is expreſs, that [h] *God only has Immortality*; and it is evident to common Senſe, that a Being, which itſelf has not Immortality, cannot give it to others.

THE Office of making Atonement for Sin then redounds *ultimately* upon the Son of God; and as God, for the Vindication of his Honour, and the Reparation due to his Juſtice, was pleaſed to demand of his Son all that human Nature, in its higheſt

[d] *Bates's* Harmony. of Chriſtianity, Vol. II.
[e] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II.
[g] *Stanhope*, ibid.
[f] *Jenkins's* Reaſonableneſs
[h] 1 Tim. vi. 16.

State of Innocence and Righteouſneſs, could undergo; ſo he, by the Aſſumption of that Nature, fully qualified himſelf for that great Work. [l] 'Human Nature had the ſuffering Part, which was to be compleat in its Kind, and then to receive the utmoſt Perfection, and become fully meritorious and expiatory, by Virtue of the Union between the Human and the Divine Nature; in which Senſe we are ſaid [k] *to be purchaſed with the Blood of God*, and to [l] *be redeemed, not with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of Chriſt*; for the Sufferings of *the Son of Man*, tho' in themſelves great beyond Conception, and valuable beyond Compariſon, are of infinite Merit and Efficacy, for this Reaſon, becauſe he is *the Son of God*. Nor need we add, how well the Ends of Government are anſwered by this Method of our Redemption; for [m] when the Son of God became a Sacrifice for Sin, the World may ſoon perceive, how fully God has vindicated the Honour of his Laws, how highly he is offended at, and how effectually he has diſcouraged the Commiſſion of all Kind of Wickedneſs; there being the ſame *Terror*, though not the ſame *Rigour* in this Diſpenſation, as if all Mankind had been finally condemned.

THE Sum of this Argument, thus far purſued, is this——That ſince no wiſe and good Governor either pardons Crimes, committed againſt the End and Order of his Government, upon ſlight Terms, nor omits any due Care to provide, both that Satisfaction may be made for the Violation of his Laws, and that thoſe, who have been guilty of the Breach of them, may be deterred from the like Provocations; God, the great Governor of the World, was, for theſe Reaſons, determined, not to remit the Sins of Mankind without an *equivalent Satisfaction*: And ſince, among the whole Order of *created* Beings, none was found ſufficient to make ſuch a Satisfaction, the Buſineſs of Atonement (if it was to be done at all) was to be performed by the Son of God. But here, if it be aſked, "How God could receive this "Satisfaction, ſince himſelf was the Party that gave it? Or, how the Saviour of "Mankind, ſuppoſing himſelf to be God, could make Satisfaction to himſelf?" The Anſwer is,

The Objection,

farther anſwered.

1. [n] THAT the infinite Goodneſs of God, in giving us a Redeemer, does not diveſt him of the Office of Supreme Judge, nor hinder him from receiving a Ranſom, to preſerve the Rights of Juſtice inviolable. To help us to illuſtrate this Matter, we have a memorable Inſtance, not unlike it, in the Caſe of *Zaleucus*, the Prince of the *Locrians*, who paſſed a Law, that *Adulterers* ſhould loſe both their Eyes; and, when his Son was convicted of that Crime, the People, who reſpected him for his excellent Qualities, came and interceded for him. ‖ *Zaleucus*, in a Conflict between Zeal for Juſtice, and Affection for his Son, took but one Eye from him, and parted with one of his own, to ſatisfy the Law; and in this Action he both paid and received the Puniſhment; *paid it*, as a *Father*; and *received it*, as a *Conſervator* of publick Juſtice. In like Manner, when guilty Mankind, by Reaſon of their Poverty, could not pay the Forfeiture of the Law, God, the Father of Mercies, was pleaſed to give it from the Treaſures of his Love, *i. e.* was pleaſed to give the Blood of his Son for their Ranſom, which he, nevertheleſs, as the Supreme Judge, received from Chriſt upon the Croſs, and declared it an *Offering of a ſweet-ſmelling Savour unto him*, or a ſufficient Compenſation for the Sins of the whole World.

2. NOR is there any Inconſiſtency with Reaſon, that the Son of God, cloathed with our Nature, ſhould, by his Death, make Satisfaction to the Deity, *i. e.* to himſelf. [o] 'In a Difference between two Parties, a Perſon, that belongs to one of them, may certainly interpoſe for Reconciliation, provided he diveſts his own Intereſt, and leaves it with the Party, from whom he comes. When a Father and Son, (for Inſtance) both poſſeſſed of imperial Power, have been offended by rebellious Subjects, it may not be improper for the Son to interpoſe, as *Mediator*, to reſtore them to the Favour of their Prince; and yet, at the ſame Time, he reconciles them to himſelf, and procures them the Pardon of an Offence, whereby his own Majeſty was violated. Juſt in the ſame Manner, all the Perſons of the ever-bleſſed Trinity are equally provoked by our Sins, and, to obtain our Pardon, the Son, with the Conſent of the Father, depoſits his Intereſts in his Hands, and, as Mediator, intervenes between us and him; and ſo, having performed what Juſtice required, reconciles the World to God, *i. e.* to the Father, himſelf, and the Eternal Spirit: But in all this Tranſaction his Perſon is the ſame, tho' his Capacity be different; for he makes Satisfaction as *Mediator*, and receives it as *God*; which is Diſtinction enough to clear the

[l] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, Vol. II. [k] Acts xx. 28. [l] 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.
[m] *Bates*'s Harmony. [n] *Bates*, ibid. ‖ Ælian. Var. Hiſt. Lib. XIII. [o] *Bates*, ibid.

the Words of the Apoſtle from any fancied Impropriety, when he tells us, that [p] *God was, in Chriſt, reconciling the World to himſelf, not imputing their Treſpaſſes unto them.*

" BUT why ſhould not God *impute their Treſpaſſes* to the Perſons that are guilty? *Another Objection,* " Why ſhould he transfer their Penalty upon the Innocent? [q] Since the Juſtice of " the Puniſhment muſt ariſe from the *Demerit* of the *Delinquent*, the Puniſhment " can in Juſtice be inflicted only there, where the Demerit is; and therefore, if our " Saviour was no Sinner (as certainly he was not) neither ought he in Juſtice to " have been a Sufferer." We muſt be careful however, upon this Occaſion, to re- *fully anſwered.* member the Difference there is between the ſame Perſon, when abſtractedly conſidered, and by himſelf, and when ſuſtaining the Character and Repreſentation of others; ſince ſuch an one's Innocence, though it renders him incapable of ſuffering, ſtrictly ſo called, in the former of theſe Reſpects, yet hinders not at all, why he may not be a juſt and proper Object of it, in the *latter*. The Reaſon is, becauſe then the Law no longer looks upon his *private*, but altogether upon his *repreſentative* Capacity; conſequently, if they, in whoſe place he ſtands, be guilty, the Penalty, due to their Guilt, is now devolved upon their *Proxy:* And therefore the whole Matter in Debate turns, at laſt, upon this, whether, in the Nature of the Thing, it be juſt to admit of ſuch *Proxies*, and to deal with them in the ſame Manner, as their *Originals* would have been dealt with.

Now the general Practice of Mankind has agreed in this, that, in ſome Caſes, one Man may become a *Surety* for another, and that, if the *Principal* fail in the Performance of his juſt Obligation, the *Surety* (ſo far as he ſtands bound for him) is concerned in Juſtice to anſwer, and make good ſuch Obligations. [r] Nay, the Law of Nations makes no Scruple of putting *Hoſtages* in War to Death, whoſe Lives were ſtaked down, as a Pledge for the *Fidelity* of their Countrymen, though the Breaches of Faith, for which they ſuffer, be neither their own Act, nor ſo much as done with their Knowledge or Conſent. Theſe Inſtances make it plain, that both in *pecuniary* and *capital* Caſes, 'tis no uncommon Thing for one Perſon to be reſponſible for another; only to make it in like Manner equitable, there ſeem to be three Conditions neceſſary. 1. That the Party, thus bearing the Puniſhment of others, do it by his own *Conſent*. 2. That he have a *Right* thus to diſpoſe of himſelf. And, 3. That the Ends of Puniſhment be as fully anſwered, by ſuch a *Tranſfer* of it, as they could have been by inflicting it upon the *Principals* themſelves. Suppoſe full Conſent, and the Party ſuffering cannot receive Wrong; ſuppoſe the Ends of penal Laws as effectually ſerved by ſuch an Expedient, and the Publick receives no Wrong. Now, that our bleſſed Saviour did *voluntarily* ſubmit to the Puniſhment of our Sins, and ſuffered, merely becauſe he choſe to ſuffer, is evident from hence, that, being Lord of the Univerſe, he had no ſuperior Authority to command, or Power to compel him; and therefore, *when he cometh into the World,* [s] *he ſaith, Sacrifice and Offering thou didſt not deſire, but a Body haſt thou prepared me: In Burnt-Offerings and Sacrifices for Sin thou haſt had no Pleaſure; then ſaid I, lo, I come, in the Volume of thy Book it is written of me, I delight to do thy Will, O my God, yea thy Law is within my Heart.* That he was entirely *free*, and Maſter of himſelf, ſo as to be able to diſpoſe of his Life, and all his Actions, juſt as he pleaſed, is manifeſt from his own Declaration; [t] *No Man taketh my Life from me, but I lay it down of myſelf; I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again; this Command I received of my Father.* That his Father was conſenting to this Commutation of Puniſhment, and willing to accept the Satisfaction for our Sins from his Hands, is plain from all thoſe Paſſages, where it is ſaid, that *he gave his only begotten Son that we might not periſh*; [u] that *he ſent him to be a Propitiation for our Sins*; and [x] *made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him, &c.* And laſtly, that by ſuch Commutation the End and Intereſt of God's Government is preſerved, the Horror of Sin diſplayed, and the Laws of Righteouſneſs become more ſacred and inviolable, is manifeſt both from the Severity of the Puniſhment, and the Excellency of the Perſon ſuſtaining it. [y] For how could God expreſs his Hatred and Indignation againſt Sin more *ſenſibly*, than, *firſt*, by threatening it with eternal Torments, *then*, by not pardoning it without Satisfaction

[p] 2 Cor. v. 19. [q] *Stayno*e's Salvation by *Jeſus Chriſt*. [r] *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures.
[s] Heb. x. 6, 7. [t] John x. 18. [u] 1 John iv. 10. [x] 2 Cor. v. 21. [y] *Stanhope*, ibid.

tisfaction to his Juſtice, and *afterwards*, when Goodneſs and Compaſſion moved him to remit it, accepting no leſs a *Compenſation*, than the Sufferings, and Agonies, and Death of his own Son? How could he receive ſo full a Satisfaction for the Affronts done to his Honour, and our Obnoxiouſneſs to the Severity of his Laws, as by a Reparation ſo ample, and a Ranſom ſo ineſtimably precious? And what could *conſtrain* us to our Duty with ſuch an holy and irreſiſtible Violence, as that Mixture of Gratitude, and godly Zeal, that Fear, that Indignation, that Sorrow to *Repentance not to be repented of*, which the Contemplation of a ſuffering Saviour, ſo dearly purchaſing the Pardon of Sin, when ſtanding only in the Place of Sinners, under every View, ſuggeſts?

To ſum up all then, [z] if our bleſſed Saviour might become *Surety* for the Diſcharge of that Debt, which, by our Violation of the Divine Laws, was *originally* ours; if, upon our Inability to pay this Debt, ſo as to obtain our *Acquittance*, he was willing and fully impowered to lay down his Life, in order to our Relief and Diſcharge; and if God, the great Ruler of the World, might in Juſtice accept the Offering of ſuch a Life, for ſo gracious and merciful a Purpoſe, eſpecially when the wiſe Ends of his Government were ſerved and promoted thereby, (all which we have ſufficiently proved) then does this great and popular Objection againſt the Juſtice of Chriſt's ſuffering in our Stead, and for our Sake, vaniſh and come to nothing.

Another Objection.

"BUT though it be granted, that Chriſt had Power over his own Life, that he "was willing to lay it down for us, and that God for wiſe Ends was ready to accept "it; yet, ſince the Sins of Mankind are innumerable, and the Death which our "Saviour underwent, was but the Death of *One*; ſince the Death, which we de"ſerved for our Sins, was *eternal*, and that, which our Saviour underwent, was "but *tranſient* and *temporal*; there is ſtill a Defect in the *Propitiation*, even tho' "we admit of the *Vicarioufneſs* of it. Chriſt did not ſuffer the *ſame in Kind* that "ſinful Men were liable to; and therefore the Sacrifice, which he offered, was not "*adequate*."

Anſwered.

He did not ſuffer the ſame indeed, becauſe he could not. The Reproaches of a ſinful Mind, the killing Anguiſh of Deſpair, with ſeveral other Aggravations of Miſery and Sorrow, which go to making up the Sinner's *Hell*, cannot, in the Nature of the Thing, fall upon an innocent and divine Perſon; they are the Reſult of a guilty Conſcience only: But then it ſhould be conſidered, that, in the ſad and doleful Moments of his *Paſſion*, the Saviour of the World had Horrors and Agonies of another Kind, the heavy Weight, though not the Guilt of *univerſal* Sin, the fearful Apprehenſions of a painful and ignominious Death, the buſy Powers of the Prince of Darkneſs, the ſmoaking Wrath and Indignation of Almighty God, and the unrelenting Strokes of his *vindictive* Juſtice all united againſt him, to ſuſtain; while the Divine Nature withdrew, as it were, from his Relief, and, though adding infinite Merit to his Sufferings, would not remove, or abate him one Pain. † But whatever the Ingredients of this bitter Cup were, which God, that mixed them, and himſelf, that drank them, only knew; yet we have abundant Reaſon to think, that it was no ordinary Infliction, which could overwhelm his Soul with ſuch a Flood of Sorrow, diſſolve his Body into a Sweat of Blood, and, at laſt, extort that ſtrange Exclamation from him, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me!* This, and the farther Conſideration of his being [a] *in the Form of God*, [b] *the Brightneſs of his Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon*, [c] *in whom the Fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt bodily*, may make it no inconceivable Strain to imagine, that the infinite Dignity of the Perſon *ſuffering* muſt needs add an immenſe Value to his Sufferings, and by ſo doing make them equal to the Guilt, and more than adequate to the Sufferings of all Mankind. And this will lead us to conſider,

The Extent of Chriſt's Satisfaction.

2. THE Extent of the Atonement and Satisfaction, which Chriſt has made for us. Nothing certainly can be plainer in Scripture, than that the Redemption of the World, in the Divine Intention, is *univerſal*. [d] The Love of God, which was the *impulſive* Cauſe of his ſending his Son into the World, is equally inclined to all Mankind: [e] *With him there is no Reſpect of Perſons*; *for is he* (ſays the Apoſtle, aſſigning the Reaſon for that Aſſertion) *the God of the* Jews *only, and not of the Gentiles?* No, *there is no Difference of* Jew *and* Greek; *for there is the ſame Lord of all, who is rich*, in Mercy and Bounty, *unto all that call upon him.* The Undertakings and Performances of our Saviour Chriſt are repreſented, in general, as bearing Proportion

[z] *Staynoe*'s Salvation by Chriſt alone. † *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. IV. [a] Phil. ii. 6.
[b] Heb. i. 3. [c] Col. ii. 9. [d] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. III. [e] Rom. ii. 11.—iii. 22.—x. 12.

tion to the Tranſgreſſion of our firſt Parent *Adam*; this the Apoſtle proſecutes at large, and then cloſes his Diſcourſe in theſe Words; [f] *As therefore, by the Offence of one Man, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; ſo by the Righteouſneſs of one, the free Gift came upon all Men to Juſtification of Life.* Declarations in Scripture every where meet us, that [g] *God ſent his Son into the World, not to condemn the World, but that the World by him might be ſaved*; that the Son accordingly, deſirous that [h] *all ſhould be ſaved*, gave himſelf *a Ranſom for the* [i] *whole World*, and [k] *died for all, that they who live, might not live to themſelves, but to him that died for them*: And to exclude all Limitation, that he even died for ſuch as periſh, for ſuch [l] *as denied him*, for ſuch as were *in the Way to Deſtruction*, and for ſuch as [m] *trampled him under Foot, and counted the Blood of the Covenant an unholy Thing, and did Deſpite to the Spirit of Grace.*

The Opinion of ſome Calviniſts.

So boundleſs are the Expreſſions, wherein the intended Benefit of Chriſt's Propitiation is exhibited in Scripture; nor is there the leaſt Intimation of any *Reſtriction* or particular Deſignation of it for the Sake of the *Elect* only; and yet there have not been wanting ſome, who have endeavoured to reduce what is of ſo general and univerſal Extent, to a very narrow Compaſs; [n] by aſſerting, "That thoſe, whom, from "all Eternity, God in his gracious Purpoſe had ſeparated from the reſt of Mankind, "and pre-ordained for Salvation, are the only Perſons, for whom Chriſt died; for "whom the Remiſſion of Sins, and other Graces, requiſite to entitle them to the Be- "nefits of his Paſſion, are reſerved; while the reſt of Mankind that are not thus *elected*, "reap no Advantage by his Death, and, at the Time of its Oblation, were entirely "ſecluded from the divine Purpoſe and Conſideration." Whatever Texts in Scripture they therefore find of a more extenſive Signification, they uſually refer to an Univerſality of *Kinds*, not of *Particulars*, pretending that Chriſt did not die for *all* in general, and for every one in particular, but only for *ſome* of all People, Nations, and Languages, in Contra-poſition to the *Narrowneſs* of the Law of *Moſes*, which was confined to the *Iſraelites* only.

Anſwer'd.

THE Doctrine of *Predeſtination*, as it relates to the *Election* of ſome, and *Preterition* of others, [o] has been largely conſidered already, the Weight of each Argument ſtated, and on what Side the Merit of the Controverſy lies, in ſome Meaſure determined; and therefore we need only add, that though there are ſome Expreſſions in Scripture, relating to this Matter, of a ſeemingly *wide* Signification, which are to be confined to a *narrower* Compaſs; yet there are an infinite Number of others, which ſet forth the Deſign of Chriſt's Death in ſuch a Manner, as cannot poſſibly admit of any *Reſtriction*. Thus, when we read, that [p] *in* Adam *all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive*; *that* [q] *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the Intent that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life*; that [r] *Chriſt was made a little lower than the Angels, that, by the Grace of God, he might taſte Death for every Man*; and ſo [s] *became a Propitiation, not for our Sins only, but for the Sins of the whole World*: It is impoſſible, but that theſe and ſuch like Words, taken in their eaſy and uſual Senſe, muſt, to any ſober and impartial Readers, ſignify the whole *Community* of Mankind, comprehending Perſons of all Sorts and Qualities, good and bad, Believers and Unbelievers alike.

That Chriſt died for all.

AND indeed, if we once reflect on what has been ſaid before, *viz.* that our bleſſed Saviour was the common *Proxy* and Repreſentative of all Mankind, and that his Death had in it all the Properties of a true *Propitiatory* Sacrifice, we cannot but conclude, that, as Sacrifices of this Kind were offered for the Sins of *all* the People, his Death was commenſurate to the Number of the Perſons he repreſented; and therefore, when the Baptiſt ſaith, [t] *Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the Sins of the World*, he not only ſpeaks in Alluſion to the Lambs, daily offered up for the Sins of the whole *Jewiſh* Nation, but plainly enough intimates, that, as they were offered up to expiate the Sins of the whole Nation, ſo was the Lamb of God offered to expiate the Sins of the whole World in general. And, that our High-Prieſt, in making this Oblation, had no private Reſpect to any particular Number of Perſons, but intended it *equally* for the Benefit of all, is evident from this obvious Reaſon, † that he offered the ſame Sacrifice, ſuffered one and the ſame Death, and ſhed the ſame Blood for all, for whom he died; and conſequently, that if this Sacrifice was offered for all, it was offered *equally* for all, becauſe it is the ſame Oblation,

[f] Rom. v. 18. [g] John iii. 17. [h] 1 Tim. ii. 4. [i] Ibid. ver. 6. [k] 2 Cor. v. 15. [l] 2 Pet. ii. 1. [m] Heb. x. 29. [n] Les Oeuvres poſth. de *M. Claude*. [o] Vid. *p.* 151, *&c.* [p] 1 Cor. xv. 22. [q] John iii. 16. [r] Heb. ii. 9. [s] 1 John ii. 2. [t] John i. 29. † *Whitby*, of the Extent of Chriſt's Redemption.

the ſame Body crucified, and the ſame Blood ſhed; and, as they cannot be diſtributed into Parts, that one may have one Share of them, another a ſecond, and another a third, but whoſoever has an Intereſt in them, has a Title to the whole Benefit procured by them; ſo the Scriptures, which ſay expreſsly, that *Chriſt died for all*, afford not the leaſt Intimation, that he ſuffered more, or ſhed more of his Blood for one than for another.

Upon what Conditions.

BUT though *Chriſt* died equally for all, yet he did not die *abſolutely* and *unconditionately* for any: Faith, and Repentance, and Obedience to the Laws of the Goſpel, are (as we have ſeen) the expreſs Conditions upon which the Bleſſings of *Chriſt*'s ſalutary Paſſion are ſuſpended, and therefore he did not, he could not, die, but with Intention to confer theſe Bleſſings only upon true Believers, true Penitents, and ſuch as would obey his righteous Laws; it being impoſſible, in the Nature of the Thing, that he ſhould die to ſave the *Unbeliever*, i. e. the Perſon who will not own him as a *Saviour*, of whom it is ſaid, that [x] *he ſhall not ſee Life*, but is *condemned already*; or to reconcile God to the *Impenitent*, i. e. to thoſe who ſtill continue in their Sins, and their Rebellions againſt God, of whom it is ſaid, [y] *that they ſhall ſurely periſh*, and that [z] *he will come in a Flame to take Vengeance of all, that obey not his Goſpel.* And therefore, when we ſay, that *Chriſt died for all*, we do not mean, that he hath purchaſed *actual* Pardon and Reconciliation for all; but only, that he put all Men in a *Capacity* of being pardoned and juſtified, and ſo of being reconciled to God, upon their turning to him, and believing in his Son. And in this Senſe it is, that we underſtand that *Article* of our *Creed*, concerning *Forgiveneſs of Sins*, wherein we profeſs to believe, not that Sin is already pardoned by the Death of *Chriſt*, (for there is no Foundation for ſuch a Belief) but only that *Chriſt* has, by the Merits of his Croſs, opened a Way for Pardon and Reconciliation, and made them poſſible and attainable by Faith and Repentance.

A two-fold Reconciliation.

FOR the *full Completion* of the Pardon of Sin there is therefore, properly ſpeaking, a two-fold *Reconciliation*, or, if you pleaſe, a two-fold Degree of it, one on Chriſt's Part, and the other on ours. The *firſt* is previous to our Repentance, and indeed wholly *preventive* of any Thing we can do; the *ſecond* follows it, and is grounded upon it. That, which is previous to Repentance, conſiſts in a bare *Remiſſibility* of Sin, and is purely the Work of our Redeemer; that, which follows it, conſiſts in the full and *actual* Remiſſion of Sin, wherein we ourſelves are *active*, and muſt come in for our Part. The *firſt* of theſe is wholly abſolute and unconditionate, (there being nothing required of us to make Sin pardonable to us;) the *ſecond* is ſuſpended upon Conditions, till the Performance of which, Sin, though *pardonable*, is not however *actually* pardoned. Nor is this Diſtinction deſtitute of Foundation in Scripture: For, when St *John* ſays, [b] *if any Man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous; and he is a Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but for the Sins of the whole World*; the Univerſality of the Character ſhews it plainly to be meant of the *firſt* Reconciliation, reſulting immediately from the Death and Satisfaction of Chriſt: And, when he ſays, in another Place, [c] *if we walk in the Light, as he is in the Light, we have Fellowſhip one with another, and the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt, his Son, cleanſes us from all Sin*; the *Conditionality* of the Character ſhews it to be meant of the *ſecond* Reconciliation, reſulting from our own Performances: And from hence it follows, that *the Forgiveneſs of Sins* does not conſiſt in *actual* Pardon and Juſtification, but only in laying the Foundation of it; in procuring for us, not the *Poſſeſſion*, but the *Capacity* and Poſſibility of it, which is then reduced to *Act*, and made compleat, when we put the *Conditions*, whereon it is ſuſpended, in Execution, and comply with thoſe Terms, upon which it is purchaſed by our Saviour's Blood, and offered to us in his Goſpel.

TO illuſtrate this by a plain Similitude. [d] Suppoſe a Prince, whoſe Subjects had rebelled againſt him, and ſo lay under the Sentence of Condemnation, through the Interceſſion of his beloved Son, ſhould vouchſafe Mercy to as many of them, as ſhould profeſs Sorrow for their Guilt, aſk Pardon in his Son's Name, and promiſe to be obedient Subjects for the future; would this procure an actual Pardon to any of them, till they had performed theſe Conditions? Or would it ever do it for them, who wilfully refuſed, or even ſcorned and neglected to perform them? The Caſe is the ſame in the Matter now before us. Chriſt by his Death obtained of his Father a new

[x] John iii. 18, 36. [y] Luke xiii. 3, 5. [z] 2 Theſſ. i, 8. [a] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. IV. [b] 1 John, ii. 1. [c] Ibid. i. 7. [d] *Whitby*, on the Extent of *Chriſt*'s Redemption.

new *Covenant*, in which he promiſes to pardon, and to be reconciled to all, upon their Faith and Repentance, and to make them Partakers of Salvation, upon their Perſeverance in Well-doing: But he has not procured an *actual* Pardon, Reconciliation, or Salvation to any, who have not performed theſe *Conditions*, nor can they lay any juſt Claim to them, by Virtue of his dying for them, ſo long as they continue in their Impenitence or Unbelief.

An Objection anſwered.

IN this Senſe, and under theſe Conditions, we ſay, that Chriſt's Death and Satisfaction is univerſal; but then, if it ſhould be aſked, how it comes to paſs, that a *general* Deſign has only a particular Effect, or (in Scripture-Terms) for what Reaſon it is, that ſo *many are called*, and ſo *few are choſen*; our bleſſed Saviour has ſtated the whole Proceſs, both on God's Side and Man's, with Relation to this Event, in a very lively Similitude. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a King*, ſays he, *which made a Marriage for his Son, and ſent forth his Servants, ſaying, Behold I have prepared my Dinner, my Oxen and my Fatlings are killed, and all Things are ready, come unto the Marriage: But they made light of it, and went their Ways, one to his Farm, another to his Merchandize, &c. Again he ſent forth other Servants, ſaying, Go ye into the Highways, and, as many as ye ſhall find, bid to the Marriage*: Which the Servants accordingly did, and gathering together *all, as many as they could, both bad and good, the Wedding was furniſhed with Gueſts.* Thoſe that undertake to explain this Parable, tell us, that, by the *King* here, we are to underſtand God the Father; that the *Marriage made for his Son* is the Salvation of the World; that the *Gueſts* invited, and occaſionally brought in, are the whole Race of Mankind, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and that his *killing his Oxen and Fatlings*, and making Preparation for Dinner, anſwer, in the Application, to his ſending his Son in our Fleſh, to die for our Sins, and make all proper Proviſion for our eternal Happineſs: And, upon the Foot of this Interpretation, we may obſerve farther, that the *Multitude* of the Gueſts denotes the Deſign of our Redemption to have been of univerſal Benefit to Mankind; that the *different Qualities* of the Gueſts ſignify God's having no Reſpect to Perſons, in his Invitation of Mankind to the Means of Salvation; that his earneſt and repeated *Invitations* ſhew his ſincere Deſires, that all, who are called, and have heard the good Tidings of the Goſpel, ſhould partake of its Salvation; and that the *Excuſes*, which the Gueſts alledge for their Refuſal of the King's Invitation, diſcover wherein the true Cauſe of the Ineffectualneſs of Man's Redemption lies; *viz.* not in any Want of Mercy in God, or of Virtue in *Chriſt*'s Paſſion; not in any ſecret Purpoſe of the Divine Mind, or fatal *Decree*, predetermining it ſhould be ſo; but in the Depravity of the Man's own Heart and Affections, his Love of Riches, and Indulgence of ſenſual Delights, which occaſion it to be ſo: [m] *I have bought a Piece of Ground, and I muſt needs go and ſee it; I have bought five Yoke of Oxen, and I go to prove them; I have married a Wife, and therefore cannot come.*

The Nature of God's Decrees.

[n] WE readily acknowledge indeed, that the Counſels of Almighty God are a vaſt and dark *Deep*, and think it unbecoming poor feeble Mortals too buſily to intrude into them, or to pronounce any Thing *peremptorily* concerning them: But ſtill, there are ſome plain Principles ſo obvious to Man's Reaſon, that he cannot but admit of them. That *the Judge of all the Earth* cannot but do Right, and he, whoſe Truth is *like the ſtrong Mountains*, cannot falſify or prevaricate, are Things univerſally allowed; and, though the Juſtice and Truth in God may proceed upon *Meaſures*, not underſtood by us, yet, ſince *true* and *falſe*, *juſt* and *unjuſt*, are not *arbitrary* and alterable Things, we have no Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that Juſtice and Veracity in God are contrary to what we eſteem juſt and true among Men; and may therefore be allowed to conclude, that whatever the Decrees of God are, they cannot but be ſuch, as conſiſt very well with the Temper of his Covenants, with his Invitations, his Promiſes, his Threatenings, his vehement and affectionate Expoſtulations, his laying the Sinner's Ruin and Rejection of Salvation entirely at his own Door, ſo frequently, ſo manifeſtly recorded in Scripture.

As ſome explain them, deſtructive of Piety and Juſtice.

HOW far the ſacred Attributes of God are concerned in this Queſtion, we had Occaſion [o] to take Notice before, and ſhall now only obſerve, what Influence it muſt needs have upon our Piety and Virtue. [p] *I will*, ſays St *Paul*, *that Men ſhould pray in every Place, lifting up pure Hands, without Wrath or Doubting*; [q] but how can any Man obſerve this Precept? How can any Man pray with Calmneſs and Confidence

[l] *Bragge* on the Parables, and *Stanhope*'s Sermons. [m] Luke xiv. 18, *&c.* [n] *Stanhope*, ibid. [o] See page 154, *&c.* [p] 1 Tim. ii. 8. [q] *Whitby*, on the Extent of *Chriſt*'s Redemption.

dence of Mind, who is not assured, that Christ is his Saviour, or that God, for Christ's Sake, is disposed to grant his Request? *Give Thanks always*, says the same Apostle, *for all Things unto God, and the Father, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ*; but how can we perform this Duty? How can any Man give Thanks unto God, in the Name of *Jesus*, or heartily resent his great Love and Kindness in sending his Son into the World, who knows not that this Kindness was ever designed for him? *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart*, is a Duty required both of *Jew* and *Gentile*; but how can any Man do this, who is persuaded, that God, who is the Creator of Souls, has excluded from his Care the greatest Part of them; and *his* perhaps among the rest? How can any Man apply himself chearfully to serve that God, whose favourable Inclination towards him, and whose Readiness to accept of his Service, he doubts of? 'Tis partly the *Benefits* we have received, and partly the *Advantages* we hope to receive from a *Superior*, that are the prevailing Motives of our Love and Service: If therefore God never intended any Benefit for the greatest Part of Mankind; if, through Want of an Interest in Christ, they are for ever debarred from reaping any Advantage by him; the Sense of this must necessarily *damp* their Affections, and *relax* the Sinews of their Obedience. Nor can it well be said, for what Reason we are so frequently called upon in Scripture, to imitate the Goodness and Compassion of our God, [r] *to be merciful, as our Father is merciful*; to [s] *love our Enemies, and do them good, that we may be Children of our heavenly Father*; *to abound in Love*, and [t] *to be tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's Sake, has forgiven us*: Why we should be bound, I say, to this extensive Mercy and Charity by God's Example, and enjoined to exercise it, that we may *be like unto him*, is a Thing unaccountable, if so be the Bowels of the Divine Love and Compassion are confined to a *few*, and all Christ's Sufferings and Performances were only intended for the Benefit of a *small Remnant* of Mankind: Whereas, if God be truly willing to have Mercy upon all, and if he delivered up his Son for the Benefit and Salvation of all, our Love and Mercy (if we would *be Followers of him, as dear Children*) must, according to the Terms wherein it is enjoined, be truly *general*, and comprehend all.

The Difference between the two Doctrines.

" But admitting the Redemption of Mankind, in God's Intention, to be *uni-*
" *versal*; yet since, in Event, it proves but *partial*, where is the mighty Difference,
" whether we are saved by God's *Pre-election*, or by our own Performance of the
" Conditions of the Gospel, so long as the Persons, that are saved, are the same, both
" in Number and Quality?" This is the last Objection, we think ourselves concerned to take Notice of upon this Subject; and, for a Solution, we may ask those that make it,——Is it the same Thing, to say, that Salvation was, by God's gracious Purpose, intended even for those, that perish, so that, without being deaf to the Calls of Grace, and the Motives of the Gospel, and without acting in plain Contradiction to the Reason, and Conscience, and natural Desires of Mankind, they could not have missed of it; and to say, that no Salvation was ever designed, or Grace afforded them to rescue them from Perdition? Is it the same Thing, to say, that the greatest Part of the World cannot be saved, because the *Saviour* of Mankind died not for them, and God never intended their Salvation; and to say, that *therefore* they cannot be saved, because they would not come to that *Jesus*, who died for them, that, through the Merits of his Death, they might have Life; nor obey that God, who, out of his tender Affection to them, *sent his Son into the World, that the World by him might be saved?* Is it the same Thing, to say, that Men are not saved, because they want sufficient Means, on God's Part, to render their Salvation possible; and to say, that *therefore* they are not saved, because, when they have Salvation freely tendered to them, and Means and Motives sufficient to engage them in the Pursuit of it, they wilfully despise, and wickedly neglect this *great Salvation?*

Is it the same Thing, to represent *the God of Love*, as an Hater of the greatest Part of Mankind; as one, who has determined, before he made them, to with-hold his Compassions from them; and to represent him, as extending his rich Goodness and Mercy to all the Souls that he has made? Is it the same Thing, to represent *the God of Truth*, as full of Guile and Dissimulation, pretending one Thing, and designing another; as to represent him truly declaring, *that he would have all Men to be saved*, and sincerely promising Salvation, upon such Terms, as are both reasonable for him to require, and possible for them to perform? And lastly, is it the same Thing

[r] Eph. v. 20. [s] Luke vi. 36. [t] Matth. v. 44, 45. [u] Eph. iv. 32.

Thing, to advance a Doctrine, which visibly destroys all the Acts of Piety and Virtue, of Prayer and Thanksgiving, of Fear and Love, and Obedience towards God; as to assert *one*, which manifestly encourages, and lays the greatest Obligation on Men to the Performance of these Duties? If not, then, tho' the Persons *eventually* saved will be the same, the Doctrine, which is clogged with so many Incongruities, can never be the same with that, which stands entirely free from them. And so we proceed,

Christ's Intercession.

II. To the other Part of *Christ's Sacerdotal* Office, *viz.* his *Intercession*, which is an Act subsequent upon his having offered himself a Sacrifice for our Sins. For, as the High-Priest, under the Law, after he had offered the Sacrifice, without, upon the Altar, went into the *Holy of Holies* with the Blood of it, and there sprinkled it before the *Mercy-Seat*, in order to make Intercession for the People; so *Christ*, our *High-Priest* (as the Apostle * draws the Similitude) *is entered within the Veil into the Holy Place (which is Heaven itself) with his own Blood, there to appear in the Presence of God; there* [x] *to sit at the Right-hand of God, making Intercession for us for ever.* *In the Presence of God* he appears, not as a *Supplicant* upon his Knees, *offering up Tears and strong Cries*, as in the Days of his Flesh; but as an *Advocate* pleading with Authority for what has been the Purchase of his Blood: And therefore he is represented as Sitting (a [y] Posture which denotes Dominion and Sovereignty) [z] *on the Right-hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.* Upon this Account his Intercession may not improperly be defined, "† A solemn Address to God the Father in our Behalf, wherein, by presenting to him his own sacrificed Body, and "by continuing and perpetuating the Presentation of it, he obtains of him Power "and Authority to grant unto us the Pardon of our Sins, the Acceptance of our "Prayers, the Supply of our Wants, the Assistance of Grace, and the Collation of "all the other Blessings and Benefits, which are made over to us in that Covenant, "which he hath ratified by his Blood;" *I say*, obtains Power and Authority of God to grant these Blessings to us: For tho' it be certainly true, that [a] *every good and perfect Gift cometh down from above, even from the Father of Lights*, yet it is no less certain, that they come not down to us from the Father *immediately*, but are all derived to us thro' the Hands of his Son, who, by his continual Intercession, obtains continual Power and Authority to derive and confer them on us. For as the High-Priest, [b] after he had presented the Blood of the Sacrifice in the *Holy of Holies*, was authorized *to bless the People*; even so our blessed *Saviour*, by presenting his *meritorious* Sacrifice in Heaven, and in Virtue thereof interceding for us with the Father, is continually authorized by him effectually *to bless us*, i. e. to confer on us the Blessings of the *New Covenant*, upon such Conditions as are therein proposed; for which Reason he is said [c] *to be able to save those to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever lives to make Intercession for us.*

God's Blessings come by Christ's Intercession.

THAT, by his Intercession, *Christ* has obtained of God the Power of bestowing on us all the Blessings of the *New Covenant*, is plainly enough intimated by all those Passages in Scripture, wherein we are said [d] *to have Access to the Father through him*; [e] *by him to have Access to the Divine Grace*; [f] *in him to have Boldness with Confidence*; *for in him, and by him, and through him* (as the Apostles testify) are all the Graces and Favours of God conferred on us. Our Supplications are accepted, because he is the [g] *Angel of the Covenant, who, at the Golden Altar, before the Throne, offers up the Prayers of the Saints*, incensed with the Merits of his Sacrifice. Our Sins are forgiven us, because he [h] *has the Keys of Hell and Death*, i. e. the Power to bind or loose, to pardon or condemn. The Gift of God's Spirit is imparted to us, because (as St *Peter* tells the *Jews*) [i] *Jesus, being raised up, and exalted at the Right-hand of God, has received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Ghost:* And, lastly, Eternal Life is consigned to us, because (as he himself assures the Church of *Laodicea*) [k] *to him that overcomes, will I grant to sit with me on my Throne, even as I have overcome, and am sat down with my Father on his Throne.* By all which it is abundantly evident, that tho' the Blessings of the New Covenant do *originally* come from God the Father, yet are they *mediately* derived to us through God the Son; and that whatever God bestows upon us, he bestows by the Hand of *Jesus*, whom, upon his

* Heb. vi. 19, 20. [x] Rom. viii. 26. [y] Ipsum Verbum *sedere* Regni significat potestatem. S. Hier. Com. ad Eph. c. i. v. 19. [z] Heb. viii. 1. † *Scott's* Mediator. [a] James i. 17. [b] See 1 Chron. xxiii. 13. [c] Heb. vii. 25. [d] Eph. ii. 18. [e] Rom. v. 2. [f] Eph. iii. 12. [g] Rev. viii. 3. [h] Ibid. i. 18. [i] Acts ii. 32, 33. [k] Rev. iii. 21.

first Presentation of his Sacrifice in Heaven, and continual Intercession with it, he constituted, and continues the general *Distributer* of all his Graces and Favours to Mankind.

The Wisdom and Goodness of God herein.

[l] How much this Method of God's communicating his Favours to Mankind, through our *Saviour*'s Intercession, tends to excite in us a profound *Awe* and Reverence of his Divine *Majesty*, upon this Consideration, that we are not allowed to have Access to him, even by our Prayers and Supplications, without the Interposition of a *Mediator*, who is greater than the greatest of all the Kings on Earth, or Angels in Heaven: How much it tends to give us a strong *Conviction* of God's Hatred and Abhorrence of our Sins; since, notwithstanding the Kindness and Benevolence of his Nature, upon their Account he keeps us at so great a Distance, that, without some powerful Intercession, he will not be prevailed with so much as to hear our Prayers, or to have any kind of Communion with us: How much it tends to secure us from *presuming* upon God's Mercy, while we continue in our Sins, since our very Repentance, which is the best Thing we can do to make him propitious to us, is insufficient without *Christ*'s Intercession, and yet *Christ* is resolved never to intercede for those, that are *impenitent*: On the other Hand, how much it tends to encourage us, if we will but repent and amend, to draw near unto God with Chearfulness and Freedom, upon this Consideration, that the highest Favourite he has in Heaven or Earth is our Advocate; one, who not only is infinitely concerned for us, as being a-kin to us by Nature, and having a compassionate Sense of our Infirmities, but who employs, likewise, in our Behalf, all the Favour and Interest he has with God, as he is the Son, of his Essence, and the Object of his Love: And, lastly, how much it tends to assure us, if we will but persevere in Goodness, of God's gracious Intentions to perform all his Promises, since we have not only his Word to depend on, but the Suretiship likewise of a *Mediator*, in whose Hands he has actually deposited all the Blessings he has promised us, and made him *Executor in Trust* for the Performance of his *Bequests* to the *Heirs of Promise*: How much this Dispensation of God's Favours, I say, through the Intercession of our Saviour, tends to create in us reverential Thoughts of God, a dreadful Sense of Sin, a Sense of the Danger of Impenitence, Freedom in our Addresses to God, and Assurance in his gracious Promises; consequently, how much it contributes to our Reformation and Amendment, and thereby to the Illustration of the Riches of God's Mercy to Mankind, the Arguments, but just hinted at, will be sufficient to convince us.

The Benefits of Christ's Intercession.

For a Conclusion then, let us always bear in Mind, [m] of what mighty Advantage it is, to have a perpetual Patron and Advocate at the Right-hand of God, to plead our Cause, and sollicit our Concernment; so good a Friend in the Court of Heaven, in such high Power and Favour with the Great King of the World: Of what singular Comfort it is, in every trying Circumstance, in every pensive Hour, in the Distress of Fortune, in the Decays of Age, in the Languishings of Sickness, in the Agonies of Death, that [n] *we have not an High-Priest, who cannot be touched with a Sense of our Infirmities, but was in all Points tempted as we are*: Of what Life and Vigour it is in our Prayers, that they are offered up by so powerful and prevalent an Hand; and of what Encouragement in all our spiritual Conflicts, that he, who hath all Power both in Heaven and Earth, is on our Side, the *Captain of our Salvation*, and who has the Succours, we want, under his Direction and Command: [o] *Seeing then we have a Great High-Priest, that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us* (as the Apostle exhorts us) *hold fast our Profession; and let us come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help us in the Time of Need.*

Christ's Kingdom.

III. THE third and last Branch of Christ's *Mediatorial* Office, is that of his being a *King*. That the Messiah was, all along, down from the Time of *David*, foretold and expected under the Character of a *King*, is evident from so many Passages in the Old Testament, that it would be almost endless to recite them. The Truth is, when we read such pompous Descriptions as these, [p] *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee; desire of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for thy Possession; thou shalt bruise them with a Rod of*

[l] *Scott*'s Mediator. [m] *Tillotson*'s Sermons, Vol. III. [n] Heb. iv. 15. [o] Ibid. *ver.* 14, 16.
[p] Psal. ii. 7, &c.

of Iron, and break them in Pieces like a Potter's Veſſel: For [a] *unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government ſhall be upon his Shoulders, and his Name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the Increaſe of his Government and Peace there ſhall be no End; upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with Judgment, and with Juſtice, from henceforth even for ever:* Such magnificent Expreſſions as theſe, I ſay, are by the Enemies of Chriſtianity made a popular Objection, (which we ſhall have Occaſion to ſatisfy hereafter) that our *Jeſus* could not be the promiſed Meſſiah, becauſe the Figure, in which he appeared, was ſo different to the Pomp and Grandeur, wherein the Prophets have deſcribed the Glories of his Kingdom.

[t] THAT our bleſſed Saviour, in the New Teſtament, is affirmed likewiſe to be a King, in a Manner ſuperior to any other, is plain from the good Tidings, which the Angel brings at his Conception, [u] *he ſhall be great, and ſhall be called the Son of the Higheſt, and the Lord God ſhall give unto him the Throne of his Father David, and he ſhall reign over the Houſe of Judah for ever, and of his Kingdom there ſhall be no End*; is plain from the Confeſſion of *Nathaniel*, * *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Iſrael*; plain from the Acclamations of the People, [x] *Bleſſed is the King of Iſrael, that cometh in the Name of the Lord*; from his own Declaration, [y] *all Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth*; and from the Teſtimony of his Apoſtle, telling us, [z] *that he muſt reign, till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet*: For † *worthy is the Lamb, that was ſlain* (ſay the Angels in the Revelation) *to receive Power, and Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Bleſſing, for ever and ever, Amen.*

THE better therefore to underſtand the Nature and Conſtitution of Chriſt's Kingdom, it will be neceſſary to obſerve, [a] that, as he is the Creator of the World, he has *one* Dominion, and as the Redeemer of it, *another*: As *Creator*, his Regality is eſſential to his Nature; as *Redeemer*, 'tis annexed to his Office: The *one* is in common with the other Perſons in the *Godhead*, and what he had from all Eternity; the *other* is peculiarly aſſigned him, and what he entered upon, when he undertook his Mediatorſhip; ſo that the one he holds by Right of his eternal *Generation*, the other, as a Reward of his great Performances in our Fleſh; [b] *becauſe he humbled himſelf* (ſays the Apoſtle) *and became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Croſs*, therefore has *God highly* † *exalted him, and gave him a Name, which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhould bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth; and that every Tongue ſhould confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father*; [c] *who raiſed him from the Dead, and ſet him at his own Right-Hand, in heavenly Places, far above all Principalities, and Powers, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name, that is named, not only in this World, but that alſo which is to come, and hath put all Things under his Feet, and hath given him to be Head over all Things to the Church.* Not but that Chriſt, as he is the Son of God, *co-equal* and *co-eſſential* with him, had all along a Communion in the ſame *Might* and *Dominion*, which admits of no Increaſe; and, from Eternity, was infinitely above all *other Principalities and Powers* whatever; but then, as, to effect our Salvation, he humbled himſelf, and became *the Son of Man*, in

The Nature of it.

[a] Iſa. ix. 6. [t] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III. [u] Luke i. 32, 33. * John i. 49. [x] Ibid. xii. 13. [y] Matth. xxviii. 18. [z] 1 Cor. xv. 25. † Rev. v. 12. [a] Les Oeuvres poſth. de M. Claude, Tom. iii. [b] Phil. ii. 8, &c.

† Moſt of the *Ancients*, who underſtand this Text of a proper *Exaltation*, have interpreted it of *Chriſt's human*, and not of his *Divine* Nature; but if to *exalt* will ſignify to *manifeſt, or diſplay to a greater Degree*, in which Senſe it frequently occurs in Scripture, (Exod. xv. 2. 2 Sam. xxii. 47. Pſal. xxi. 13, &c.) then may we apply it to his Divine Nature, as the *Humiliation*, here ſpoken of, ſeems properly to direct us. The abſolute *eſſential* Dignity of our Lord indeed, in Reſpect of which he was ever *equal* with God, will admit of no Advancement, or Exaltation; it was always the ſame; but his *Relative* Dignity towards us, founded in the Obligation, we have received from him, in that amazing and aſtoniſhing Inſtance of Condeſcenſion and Goodneſs, his becoming Man, and dying for us; this may be *exalted*, i. e. proclaimed aloud, and made more publick: And therefore, when *God the Son* had humbled himſelf to this Degree, and, by an unparallelled Work of Mercy, had redeemed Mankind, and thereby acquired a *new* and *ſpecial* Title to be their *Lord* and *Sovereign*; it pleaſed *God the Father*, in the moſt ſolemn and pompous Manner, to proclaim the high Dignity of his Son; to re-inforce his rightful Claim of Homage; and to command Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men, to pay him all Honour, Reverence, and Adoration, ſuitable to the Dignity of ſo Great, ſo Good, ſo Divine a Perſon, as the Son of God. And thus we may underſtand the Words, *Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him*, i. e. on Account of the great Work of Redemption, ſo full of Love and Goodneſs, ſo aſtoniſhing, and ſo endearing, God hath remarkably proclaimed his Dignity, and ſet forth his Glory, commanding all Men hereupon to acknowledge him their *God and Lord*; their *Lord* always, but now more *eſpecially*, by a *new* and diſtinct Claim; as their *Saviour*, and *Deliverer*, and only *Redeemer*. *Waterland's* Sermons at Lady *Moyer's* Lectures.

[c] Eph. i. 20, &c.

in this Senſe he was capable of being *advanced*; and accordingly God is ſaid to *ſet him at his Right-Hand*, as the Kings of the *Eaſt* were wont to place the Perſon, they appointed to preſide over their Dominions.

[e] THOUGH therefore the *eſſential* Kingdom of Chriſt is co-eternal with himſelf, and inſeparable from his Being; yet his *Mediatorial* Kingdom is not ſo. A Time there was, when it had no Exiſtence, and a Time will come, when it ſhall be *diſſolved*: The Time, when Chriſt *entered* upon it was, at the Commencement of the Covenant of Grace; the Time, when he was ſolemnly *inaugurated* to it, was at his Aſcenſion into Heaven; and the Time, when he ſhall deliver it *up to God, even the Father*, ſhall be at the *End*, or Conſummation of all Things. This is the *Kingdom*, which falls under our preſent Conſideration, and how well our bleſſed Saviour is known to adminiſter it, will beſt appear by enquiring into his *Regal* Acts.

Chriſt's Regal Acts.

To conquer his Enemies.

[f] I. THAT there are two great Powers in the Univerſe, contending againſt each other, under their reſpective Heads and Leaders, whereof *Jeſus Chriſt* is the one, and the other the *Devil*, or *Satan*; and that theſe two *Chiefs* have two ſeparate Kingdoms, the one repreſented under the Notion of a Kingdom of *Light*, and the other under that of a Kingdom of *Darkneſs*, is manifeſtly the Apoſtle's Meaning, when he [g] *gives Thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, and hath delivered us from the Power of Darkneſs, and tranſlated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son*: And that between theſe two Kingdoms there is a perpetual and an unwearied Oppoſition, is the received Interpretation of that Paſſage in the Revelation; [h] *and there was War in Heaven*; Michael *and his Angels fought againſt the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his Angels, and prevailed not, neither was their Place any more found in Heaven. And the great Dragon was caſt out, that old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole World; he was caſt out into the Earth, and his Angels were caſt out with him.*

WHAT Number of Spirits the Devil drew into his Party and Intereſt, is a Matter unknown to us, ſince the Scripture has not thought fit to reveal it; but our own Obſervation will give us too ſad a View of the Extent of his Kingdom among Mankind, where he gradually enlarged his Empire, 'till, at length, the whole Earth was covered with Ignorance and Darkneſs; and eſpecially at the Time of our Saviour's Coming, the Generality of Mankind was ſo blinded with him, that they had almoſt loſt all true Notions of God, and were ſo far ſunk into Idolatry, that, in many Places, they worſhipped the Devil himſelf as God, [i] *being dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins* (as the Apoſtle repreſents them) *they walked according to the Courſe of this World, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, and the Spirit, that worketh in the Children of Diſobedience.* But now when our Saviour came into the World, he *erected* his Kingdom among Mankind, by the Propagation of his Goſpel enlarged his Dominions over the moſt diſtant Regions of the World, and, wherever his Religion came, there put a Period to all idolatrous Worſhip, and utterly deſtroyed the Power and Empire of the Devil. While he was on Earth, *him* he ſubdued in all his Temptations and perſonal Conflicts with him; *Sin* he took away, the *Guilt* of it by the Laver of his Blood, the *Puniſhment* of it by his ſuffering in our Stead, and the *Dominion* of it by the Efficacy of his Grace; and *Death* he has vanquiſhed by dying himſelf, riſing again, and opening the Way to eternal Life: [k] *For this Purpoſe the Son of Man was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the Works of the Devil*; and [l] *having ſpoiled Principalities and Powers, he made a Shew of them openly. triumphing over them on the Croſs,* [m] *leading Captivity captive*, as he aſcended up to Heaven; and when he ſhall return from thence, [n] *O Death! he will be thy Plagues; O Grave! he will be thy Deſtruction*; for *he will ranſom* his Subjects *from the Power of the Grave*, and when each Repoſitory of the Dead ſhall be opened, and all the Sons of Men return to Life again, then ſhall [o] *Death be* totally *ſwallowed up in Victory.*

To appoint proper Miniſters.

2. AFTER the Erection of his Kingdom, Chriſt's next *Regal* Act is, to appoint proper Miniſters, by whom he is to rule it. For being himſelf about to leave the Earth, and to aſcend into Heaven, it was neceſſary that he ſhould *ſubſtitute* ſome, to ſupply his Room, that the Kingdom, which he had gained from the Prince of Darkneſs, might be continued in good Order, and ſecured from the Danger of relapſing into the Enemy's Hand. [p] The firſt Miniſter of this Kind is the *Holy Ghoſt*,

[e] *Scott's* Mediator. [f] *King's* Critical Hiſtory of the Apoſtles Creed. [g] Col. i. 12, 13. [h] Rev. xii. 7, &c. [i] Eph. ii. 12. [k] 1 John iii. 8. [l] Col. ii. 15. [m] Eph. iv. 8. [n] Hoſ. xiii. 14. [o] 1 Cor. xv. 54. [p] *Scott*, ibid.

Ghoſt, the third Perſon in the ever-bleſſed Trinity, whom, upon his Acceſſion to his heavenly Kingdom, he ſent down to preſide, in his Abſence, as his *Vicegerent* in his Kingdom here below; to furniſh his Apoſtles with ſuch *miraculous Gifts*, as were neceſſary for the firſt Propagation of his Goſpel, and all ſucceeding Chriſtians with ſuch *Graces*, as are conducive to the *Illumination* of their Minds, and the *Sanctification* of their Wills and Affections. Next under him are *Angels* of different Kinds and Orders, who, by the Appointment of Chriſt, are to attend the Affairs of his Kingdom; *good* Angels to guard and protect his Subjects, not only againſt outward Dangers, but againſt the Rage likewiſe and Fury of evil Spirits; to ſupport and comfort them under ſore Calamities, and difficult Undertakings; to further and aſſiſt them in their religious Offices; and, when Life is done, to conduct their ſeparate Souls into the Manſions of Bliſs: And *evil* Angels, to try and exerciſe the Virtues of his Subjects; to chaſten and correct their Faults and Miſcarriages, and to execute his Vengeance, in the other World, on ſuch, as will not ſubmit to his Government in this. Next to theſe are the *Kings* and Governors of the World, who being ordered by Chriſt to be [q] *nurſing Fathers* to his Church, in *Analogy* to that Name, are to *protect* and defend it in the Profeſſion and Exerciſe of the true Religion; to *ſecure* its Peace and good Order by wholeſome Laws; to *chaſten* and correct its irregular Members; and to make proper proviſion for the Decency of its Worſhip, and the Maintenance of its Miniſters: And, laſt of all, are theſe *ſpiritual* and eccleſiaſtical *Miniſters*, whoſe appointed Office it is, to *preach* the Goſpel of Chriſt, to *adminiſter* his Holy Sacraments, to *offer up* the publick Prayers and Interceſſions of Chriſtian Congregations; and, when raiſed to be *Rulers* in the Church, to *confirm* ſuch as have been inſtructed in Religion, to *ordain* fit Perſons to eccleſiaſtical Offices, to *make Laws* for the Preſervation of Peace and good Order, and to *execute* that *ſpiritual* Juriſdiction, which Chriſt has eſtabliſhed *for Edification, and not for Deſtruction*.

3. AFTER the Appointment of proper Miniſters, Chriſt's next *Regal* Act is, to preſcribe Laws for the Government of his Kingdom; and this he did in thoſe *Sermons* and Diſcourſes, which are recorded in the Goſpel, [r] wherein he performed the Part of a *Legiſlator*, as well as a *Teacher*; and by his own Authority, as he was a *King*, ſtamp'd thoſe Doctrines, which he taught and delivered as a *Prophet*, into Laws; Laws, that are of a ſpiritual Nature, and extend their Obligation to the *Wills* and *Affections* of his Subjects; that reſtrain our *Thoughts* and *Deſires*, as well as our Words and Actions, and give Direction to our inward Intentions, as well as our outward Performances: Laws that not only forbid the Commiſſion of evil Actions, but even blame, and account criminal the very Affection and Inclination to them, making [s] *Hatred* to be *Murther*; [t] *Covetouſneſs*, *Robbery*; and [u] *the inordinate luſting after a Woman*, *Adultery*: Laws laſtly, that are bound upon us by ſuch *Sanctions*, as no earthly Prince can give to his Ordinances, everlaſting Happineſs, or everlaſting Miſery, according as our Obedience or Diſobedience ſhall appear, at the great Day of Examination. *To preſcribe Laws.*

4. AFTER the Preſcription of proper Laws, Chriſt's next *Regal* Act is, to protect and defend his Kingdom againſt the outrageous Attempts of its numerous Enemies. For this End, *the Father*, as the Apoſtle tells us, *has put all Things in Subjection under him, and given him to be Head over all Things to his Church*, that, having the *univerſal* Government of all Events in his Hand, he might, by his over-ruling Providence, order and direct them to the Intereſt and Advantage of his Church: And accordingly now that he is in Heaven, the Defence and Preſervation of his Church is the great Buſineſs which he intends upon Earth. There he now ſits *looking down* from his Throne with a watchful Eye, to obſerve all the Motions, and trace out all the dark Deſigns of its Enemies; and from thence he ſtretches forth his *Almighty* Arm to guard and defend it againſt them, to over-rule their Malice, and make their wicked Machinations redound to its greater Proſperity. Nor is it for his Church in general, but for all the faithful and obedient Subjects of it, that he exerciſes ſuch a vigilant Providence. They are the dear *Purchaſe* of his Blood, and muſt therefore be ſuppoſed to deſerve his Care: They are the *Jewels* of his Kingdom, and are therefore kept, in his Treaſury, under the ſtrongeſt and moſt inviolable Security: They are the *living Members* of his Body, and, as he feels their Pains with the moſt *To protect his Subjects.*

[q] Iſa. xlix. 23.
[r] *Scott's* Mediator.
[s] 1 John iii. 15.
[t] Mark vii. 22.
[u] Matth. v. 28.

tender *Sympathy*, his Providence is as much concerned for their Defence, § as his *Eye-lid* is to defend the *Apple* of his own Eye. Sometimes indeed he corrects them with his own Hand, and permits them to be oppreſſed and afflicted by others; but ſtill he does this with a moſt gracious Intention, either to excite and exerciſe their Graces, or to cure or prevent ſome Diſeaſe in their Minds, or to wean them from the Love of this vain World, and fit and prepare them for a bleſſed Eternity; and, whatever Evils happen to them in the Courſe of his Providence, ſtill he takes Care to extract Good out of them, and to contrive and order the whole Scene of Affairs ſo that, in the Iſſue, * *all Things may work together for Good to them, that love God, and are the called according to his Purpoſe.*

To puniſh and reward.

5. AFTER the Defence and Protection of his Kingdom, one Act more of Chriſt's *Regal* Authority is, to puniſh his wicked and rebellious, and to reward his faithful and obedient Subjects. For, as he *mediates* for his Father, in ruling and governing us, he muſt be the *Miniſter* of his Father's Providence; and conſequently, whatever divine Puniſhments are inflicted upon Offenders, are to be looked upon as the Strokes of his Hands. [y] *I gave her Space to repent of her Fornications*, (ſays he of *Jezebel*, and her Followers) *and ſhe repented not; behold, I will caſt her into a Bed*, i. e. into a bed-rid and irrecoverable Condition, *and them that commit Adultery with her into great Tribulation, and I will kill her Children with Death; and all the Churches ſhall know, that I am he, which ſearcheth the Reins and Hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to his Works.* And though, for wiſe and gracious Ends, he oftentimes ſpares bad Men in this Life, and ſometimes ſhines upon them a continued Day of Proſperity, without any Cloud or Interruption; yet he always overtakes them with the fearful Storms of his Vengeance, in the Life to come. For no ſooner are their Souls departed from their Bodies, but they are immediately *conſigned*, by his Warrant, into the Hands of evil Angels, by them carried into ſome *diſmal* Abode, and there made to ſuffer all the Torments and Agonies, that the Wrath and Malice of Devils, together with their own awakened Conſciences, and furious and unſatisfied Affections, are able to inflict. On the contrary *to him that overcometh*, ſays our Saviour, *will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the Midſt of the Paradiſe of God*, i. e. I will admit him to a Participation of the bleſſed Immortality of Heaven. For whenever any faithful and obedient Souls depart from their Bodies, he preſently ſends forth his *Angelick* Meſſengers, to conduct them ſafe to the immortal Regions, and there to lodge them in ſome one of thoſe bliſsful *Manſions in his Father's Houſe*, which he went before to *prepare for them*, where, free from a vexatious and tumultuous World, they live in a continued Fruition of their utmoſt Wiſhes; all their Happineſs is eternal, and all their Eternity nothing elſe, but one continued Act of Love, and Praiſe, and Joy, and Triumph; where there are no Sighs or Tears, no Intermixtures of Sorrow or Miſery, but every Heart is full of *Joy*, and every Joy is *Quinteſſence*, and every Moment crowned with ſome new and freſh *Enjoyment*.

THESE are ſome of the *Regal* Acts, which Chriſt has already performed, and which he continues conſtantly to perform, in the Government of his *mediatorial* Kingdom; but others there are of a more extraordinary Nature, which, *in the Fulneſs of Time*, he is ſtill to perform, before he ſurrenders up this Kingdom, and theſe are reducible to three Heads; 1. The Enlargement of his Empire. 2. The Reſurrection of the Dead. And, 3. The Judgment of the World, at the laſt Day.

The Enlargement of Chriſt's Kingdom,

1. IF we conſult the antient Propheſies concerning the vaſt Extent of our Saviour's Kingdom, that [z] *the Stone cut out without Hands* (by which all agree the Kingdom of Chriſt is ſignified) *ſhould become a great Mountain, and fill the whole Earth, and that it ſhould break in Pieces and conſume all other Kingdoms*; that [a] *the Lord ſhould be King all over the Earth*; that [b] *he ſhould have Dominion from Sea to Sea, and from the River to the End of the Earth*; that *all Kings ſhould fall down before him, and all Nations ſerve him*; and [c] *that all the Ends of the Earth ſhould remember, and turn to the Lord, and all the Kindreds of the Nations worſhip before him, becauſe the Kingdom ſhall be the Lord's, and he ſhall govern the Nations*: If we conſider theſe, and ſeveral other Propheſies of the like Import, I ſay, we ſhall find, that there a are great many of them, which, as yet, were never accompliſhed; and thereupon muſt conclude, that there is a Time to come, before the *Conſummation of all Things*, wherein our Saviour will, once more, diſplay the *glorious Banner* of

§ Zech. ii. 8. * Rom. viii. 28. x *Scott's* Mediator. y Rev. ii. 21, &c.
z Dan. ii. 34, 35, 44, 45. a Mich. v. 4. b Pſal. lxxii. 8. c Ibid. *ver.* 11.

of his Croſs, and like a mighty Man of War, march on *conquering, and to conquer*, till he has either *confounded*, or *converted* his Enemies, and finally compleated his Victory over all the Powers of Earth.

By the Converſion of the Gentiles

I AM not inſenſible, that ſome Expoſitors are of Opinion, that the *Prophetick* Expreſſions of this Nature have Reference only to Chriſt's coming in the Fleſh; and the Progreſs, which his Goſpel afterwards made, and even to this Day, is ſtill making, in the Converſion of the World; [d] but, upon a diligent comparing of Things, we ſhall find, that they muſt of Neceſſity have a more *extenſive* Meaning, if we intend, that the Interpretation ſhould anſwer, either the Height and Greatneſs of the *Words*, or the Weight and Dignity of the *Matter* ſpoken of. Many indeed of the *Heathen* World were converted in the Days of the Apoſtles, but that Converſion was not general: Thoſe who were then called, were but the Firſt-fruits of that compleat Calling of *Pagans* to Chriſtianity, which is to be a little before the Converſion of the *Jews*; [e] *for I would not, Brethren,* ſays the Apoſtle to the *Gentiles, that ye ſhould be ignorant of this Myſtery, that Blindneſs in part is happened to Iſrael, until the Fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in, and ſo all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved.* *The Blindneſs of the Jews,* and *the Salvation of the Gentiles,* the Apoſtle here calls a *Myſtery*, and in this he intimates, that the Perſons, he wrote to, did not comprehend the Deſign of God in this Matter; and therefore he unfolds this Secret of Providence, by acquainting them, that God took Occaſion, from the Obduration of the *Jews*, to communicate the Goſpel to the *Gentiles*, in order to convert them to the Faith; and ſo, by calling of them, to provoke the *Jews* afterwards to accept of the Goſpel, that they, in like Manner, might be ſaved. But then, whether this be ſpoken of a *general* Converſion, towards the End of the World, or only of the *great* Numbers converted by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, at the firſt Publication of the Goſpel, (as ſome are apt to imagine) comes now to be conſidered.

AND, in order to a right underſtanding of this Matter, we muſt obſerve, that the Scripture acquaints us with a two-fold Calling, or Converſion of the *Gentiles*, [f] the one *partial*, and the other *total*; the *former* of theſe was, when the *Jews* were rejected, *viz.* in the Time of our Saviour and his Apoſtles, and when the *Gentiles* were called in to ſupply their Room; the *latter*, which is here named *the Fulneſs of the Gentiles*, denotes a full Body of them, which is to come in, ſome time or other, before the Concluſion of the World. This is ſet forth in the Parable [g] *of the great Supper*, where the *Jews* were the Gueſts that were *bidden*, but, upon their Refuſal, the Servants were commanded to go *into the Streets, and the Lanes of the City, and to bring in the Poor, the Maimed, the Halt, and the Blind:* Theſe were the *Gentiles*, who, in the Apoſtles Times, and ever ſince, have been converted to the Chriſtian Faith. But after this is done, it is ſaid, *there is ſtill Room, viz.* for more Converts to Chriſtianity; and therefore the Servants are bid again to go out *into the Highways, and Hedges*, and *to compel them to come in.* Here is a plain Diſtinction between the former and latter Converſion of the *Gentiles:* After the *firſt* Invitation and Entertainment, *there was more Room*, which intimates at leaſt, that there was a *ſecond* Calling; and (what makes very much to our preſent Purpoſe) this ſecond Company is *compelled to come in* to the Supper of the Lord, *that his Houſe may be filled*; that the Church may be compleated, and made entire, which it could not be, without the Converſion of the *Gentiles* at laſt.

and Jews.

THAT, ſoon after the Converſion of the *Gentiles*, the *Jews*, who (notwithſtanding their frequent Diſperſions over the Face of the Earth) have ſtill remained a diſtinct and ſeparate People, ſhall be converted likewiſe to Chriſtianity, and ſo become *one Fold under one Shepherd and Biſhop of their Souls*, is plain from all thoſe Paſſages, which aſſure them of God's remembering the Covenant made with their Forefathers; which promiſe them an happy *Reſtoration* and Eſtabliſhment in their own Land; and foretel a glorious and flouriſhing State of Religion, that will then ſucceed among them. [h] *When they are in the Land of their Enemies, I will not caſt them away, neither will I abhor them, to deſtroy them utterly, and to break my Covenant with them; for I am the Lord their God:* [i] *There ſhall come* therefore *out of Zion a Deliverer, and ſhall turn away Ungodlineſs from Jacob*; for [k] *the Lord ſhall ſet his Hand a ſecond Time to recover the Remnant of his People, and ſhall aſſemble the Outcaſts of Iſrael, and gather together the Diſperſed of Judah, from the four Corners of the Earth:* [l] *In that Day*

[d] *Edwards's* Survey of Religion, Vol. II.
[e] Rom. xi. 25, 26.
[f] *Edwards*, ibid.
[g] Luke xiv. 16, &c.
[h] Lev. xxvi. 44, 45.
[i] Iſa. lix. 20.
[k] Iſa. xi. 11, 12.
[l] Ibid. *ver.* 10.

Day there ſhall be a Root of Jeſſe, which ſhall ſtand for an Enſign to the People; to it ſhall the Gentiles ſeek, and his Reſt ſhall be glorious; for [m] *if the Fall of the Jews* (as the Apoſtle argues) *be the Riches of the World, and the Diminiſhing them be the Riches of the Gentiles, how much more their Fulneſs?*

[n] 'TIS not to be denied indeed, but that ſome of the Texts, uſually cited out of the Old Teſtament to prove the *general* Converſion of the *Jews*, are to be underſtood of the *temporal* Deliverance of that People from Captivity; and that others of them relate to their *Converſion*, in our Saviour's Time, when Multitudes of them renounced their own Religion, and acknowledged *Jeſus* to be the true *Meſſiah*: All this cannot be denied; and yet any unprejudiced Perſon may take Notice of other Places, both in the Old and New Teſtament, which point at the *national* Converſion of the *Jews*, before the Concluſion of the World; [o] nor can he forbear obſerving, that ſome of thoſe Texts, which foretel their Return from *Babylon* to their own Land, and others, which ſpeak of their turning from *Judaiſm* to Chriſtianity, at the firſt Propagation of the Goſpel, are alſo to be underſtood of this *Univerſal* Recovery of them, at the Time of this Enlargement of Chriſt's Kingdom: It being no uncommon Thing, in the *prophetical* Writings of the Bible, to have a *two-fold* hiſtorical Meaning in the ſame Paſſage, one *primary*, and chiefly intended; the other *ſecondary*, and included.

How this will be effected.

[p] THUS, by the Acceſſion of both *Jew* and *Gentile*, the whole World will be *Chriſtendom*, and all the Kingdoms of the Earth become the *Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt*: And how this great Event will be brought about (by comparing the ſeveral Propheſies together) we may be allowed to conjecture——That, when, in the *Revolution* of Ages, the Time appointed for this mighty Work ſhall come, [q] the Scene will probably open with ſome ſuch miraculous *Effuſion* of the Holy Ghoſt, as was at the firſt Beginning of Chriſtianity, but far more general and extenſive: The *Miſſionaries*, and ſuch as are employed in the Converſion of *Infidel-Countries*, ſhall then perhaps be endowed with the ſame Powers, that were beſtowed upon the Apoſtles and firſt Chriſtians, the Gift of Tongues, of curing Diſeaſes, working Miracles, and ſpeaking the Word of God with all Boldneſs: Chriſt will then open unto them a *Door of Utterance*, will give them the ſame Zeal and Fervency of Love, the ſame Patience and Perſeverance in Labour, the ſame Innocence and Exemplarineſs of Life (which was ſo conſpicuous in the *primitive* Ages) to recommend his Religion; and, as he has the Hearts of Princes in his Hand, and the Iſſues of Providence at his Command, by the kindly Operations of his Spirit, and an happy Conjunction of *national* Affairs, he will diſpoſe them to a favourable Reception of that Doctrine, which, beſides its *intrinſick* Worth, has the Advantage of ſo good a Recommendation: By theſe, and ſundry other Means in the Secrets of the Divine Counſel, [r] *the Gentiles ſhall come to his Light, and Kings* (in the Phraſe of the Prophet) *to the Brightneſs of his Riſing: He ſhall lift up his Eyes round about, and ſee; all they gather themſelves together, and come unto him; his Sons ſhall come from far, and his Daughters ſhall be nurſed at his Side.*

WE may be allowed to conjecture farther, that this wonderful Converſion of the *Gentiles* ſhall raiſe the *Inquiſitiveneſs* of the *Jews*, and (as the Apoſtle expreſſes it) [s] *provoke them to Jealouſy*. They ſhall begin (what they have long neglected) to examine into the Merits of a Religion, which has made ſo great a Revolution in the World; and, laying aſide their Prejudice againſt it, (without [t] the preaching of *Enoch* and *Elias*, and without the [u] perſonal Appearance of Chriſt in the Clouds) ſhall happily receive Conviction from the Labours of holy Men, animated by a Spirit of godly Zeal, and unfeignedly endeavouring to promote the Welfare of their immortal Souls: And being once convinced of the Error and Wickedneſs of their *Infidelity*, *with one Heart and Mind* they ſhall return to the Lord, and with penitent Tears waſh off the Guilt of the Blood of their Saviour; for this is the Senſe of the Propheſy, where Chriſt himſelf is introduced as ſpeaking, [x] *I will pour upon the Houſe of David, and upon the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, a Spirit of Grace, and of Supplication; and they ſhall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and mourn, as one mourneth for his only*

[m] Rom. xi. 12. [n] *Edwards's* Survey of Religion, Vol. II. [o] *Scott's* Mediator. [p] Iſa. lx. 3, 4. [q] Rom. xi. 11. [r] It was the Opinion of *Tertullian*, *Chryſoſtome*, *Theodoret*, and ſeveral other Fathers, (in which they are followed by the Doctors of the *Roman* Church) that the Calling of the *Jews*, before Chriſt's coming to Judgment, ſhall be chiefly effected by the Preaching of *Enoch* and *Elias*. [s] It is the Opinion of ſome, that, in order to the *Jews* Converſion, Chriſt will make a viſible Appearance, in a bright and glorious Manner, ſeated upon the Clouds; but the Texts on which this Opinion is founded, relate rather to his coming to Judgment. [t] Zech. xii. 10.

only Son, i. e. they ſhall heartily bewail the execrable Wickedneſs of their Forefathers, who put the bleſſed *Jeſus* to death, and as ſincerely grieve, that they themſelves *crucified* him by their Sins.

THE *Jews*, being thus converted by the Power of Chriſt, ſhall return into the Holy Land, and be repoſſeſſed of their *native* Country, where (as the Prophet expreſſes it) *they ſhall dwell in a peaceable Habitation, and in ſure Dwellings, and in quiet Reſting-places*; while the reſt of the Chriſtian World (for the World ſhall be all then Chriſtian) ſhall enjoy an univerſal Peace, and a Concurrence of all temporal Bleſſings, in this happy State: [a] *They ſhall come to Sion with Songs, and everlaſting Joy upon their Heads; they ſhall obtain Joy and Gladneſs, and Sorrow and Sighing ſhall flee away.* * All *angry* and miſchievous Paſſions, that now ſet the World in a Flame, ſhall then be *extinguiſhed*, and a *quiet* and peaceable Temper interfere, not only among rational Creatures, but even the moſt ſavage Brutes; for [x] *the Wolf ſhall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard lie down with the Kid, and the Calf, and the young Lion, and the Fatling together, and a little Child ſhall lead them*, &c. All Antipathies ſhall then ceaſe, and they ſhall be reſtored to that Harmleſſneſs and Innocence they had at the firſt Creation. In this happy Period of Time, *Righteouſneſs*, as well as Peace, ſhall abound, and Virtue and Godlineſs become the Habit of every Mind. Religion ſhall then be reſtored to its ancient Purity, and Piety and Goodneſs be received as the prevailing *Faſhion*. All Lying and Falſhood, all Guile and Diſſimulation ſhall then diſappear, and the true Faith, the ſincere Sanctity, the generous and unaffected Virtue, which Chriſtianity teaches and preſcribes, ſhall be the univerſal *Livery* and Cognizance of the Chriſtian World. Thus fraught with every Bleſſing, both ſpiritual and temporal, with Peace and Righteouſneſs, with Joy and Triumph, external Proſperity, and internal Sanctity, ſhall the latter End of the Meſſiah's Reign be: And (what will conſummate his Subjects Bliſs) this happy State of Things ſhall, ſome Way or other, (though we cannot define the preciſe Manner of it) be enlivened and enlightened by his own Divine Preſence; for ſo we read in the *Apocalyptick* Viſion, that, [y] upon the *New Jeruſalem*'s coming *down from Heaven, a great Voice was heard, ſaying, Behold the Tabernacle of God is with Men, and he will dwell with them, and they ſhall be his People, and God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God.* *The Happineſs of this State.*

WHEN this proſperous State of Chriſt's Kingdom will commence, is neither ſo eaſy, nor ſo ſafe a Matter to determine, ſince thoſe, that have attempted the Computation, have hitherto miſcarried, and, perhaps, have given ill-minded Men an Occaſion to diſbelieve all the other Propheſies in the *Apocalypſe*; becauſe the Period of *this*, which was ſtated with ſo much Confidence, is *eventually* found to be untrue. In the general, we know that the Reſtoration of Chriſt's Kingdom will begin when the ſeventh and laſt Angel ſoundeth his Trumpet, for then ſhall [z] *the Kingdoms of the World become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Chriſt*; but when this laſt Angel ſhall perform that Office, we are utterly ignorant; only we may ſurmiſe, that if the *Exaltation* of Chriſt's Kingdom is to enſue upon the Deſtruction of the four general *Monarchies*, (as we have Grounds from the Prophet *Daniel* [a] to believe it will) then is the fourth Monarchy, *i. e.* the *Roman*, which is now tranſlated to the *Germans*, and become but a *mere Name* and Title, ſo wearing off, that we have room to ſuppoſe the Time of Chriſt's enlarging his Kingdom, *i. e.* of making a more illuſtrious Manifeſtation of Chriſtianity, and a more viſible and glorious Diſplay of its Power and Virtue, than was ever yet in the World before, is at a nearer Diſtance, than what the preſent Face of Affairs may ſeem to promiſe. For who knows, [b] but that Impiety and Irreligion are now making their laſt Efforts, before that *glorious Day* arrives; that an univerſal Profaneneſs may uſher in an univerſal Holineſs and Purity; and the *When it ſhall begin.*

[a] Iſa. xxxv. 10. * Vid. *Burnet*'s Theory, Vol. II. and *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. II. [x] Iſa. xi. 6. I am very ſenſible, that theſe Words are, by moſt Commentators, underſtood of that inward Change, which ſhall be made in Men's Minds and Hearts, by the powerful Influence of the Goſpel: But I ſee not much Foundation for ſuch an Interpretation; nor is there any Reaſon to fly to a *metaphorical* Senſe of a Text, when it appears that there is a *literal* one. The Prophet here gives us an Account of the peaceable Kingdom of Chriſt, which ſhould happen in the Cloſe of the World; and (among other Things) he tells us, that this is a Part of it, *viz.* That there ſhall be a Change in the very Nature and Qualities of *brute* Animals; that the Wolf, the Leopard, the Lion, the Bear, the Serpent, the Adder, Creatures remarkable for their Fierceneſs, ſhould become as tame as Lambs, Kids, or Calves; ſhould *lie down*, and *dwell*, and *feed* together; neither prey upon one another, nor do any Hurt to Men. Nothing could be ſaid more plainly, to expreſs the great Bleſſing and Privilege of theſe laſt Days, *when the Earth ſhall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea*; which, being the very next Words, do manifeſtly ſhew, what Period of Time they relate to. *Edwards*, ibid. [y] Rev. xxi. 3. [z] Ibid. xi. 15. [a] Dan. ii. [b] *Edwards*, ibid.

Diviſions and Contentions in Churches and States may be Forerunners of a general Quiet and Repoſe.

That it is not yet paſt.

THAT this happy Period is not paſt, we may ſatisfy ourſelves, by conſidering, that, from the Birth of Chriſtianity to this preſent Age, there never yet were a *thouſand Years*, which deſerve the Name, or anſwer the Character of this *pure* and *pacifick* State. The firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, as they were the moſt *pure*, ſo were they the leaſt *peaceable*. Being continually, more or leſs, under the Perſecution of *Heathen* Emperors, they were ſo far from being the *Reign* and *Empire* of Chriſt, and his Saints *over the Nations*, that Chriſtians were then, every where, in Subjection and Slavery, a poor helpleſs People, thruſt into Priſons, or thrown to the Lions, at the Pleaſure of their Princes or Rulers. When the Empire, indeed, (much about the IVth Century) became *Chriſtian*, under *Conſtantine the Great*, there was, for a Time, Peace and Proſperity in the Church, and a good Degree of Purity and Piety; but that Peace was ſoon diſturbed, and that Piety ſoon corrupted. The growing Pride and Ambition of *Eccleſiaſticks*, and their Eaſineſs to admit, and introduce ſuperſtitious Practices, deſtroyed the Purity of the Church; and, as to the Peace of it, their Conteſts, about Opinions and Doctrines, tore Chriſtians themſelves into Pieces, and, ſoon after, an Inundation of *barbarous* People fell into Chriſtendom, and put it all into Flames and Confuſion. After this Eruption of the *Northern* Nations, *Mahometaniſm* roſe in the *Eaſt*, and Swarms of *Saracens*, like Armies of Locuſts, invaded, conquered, and planted their Religion in ſeveral Parts of the *Roman* Empire, and of the Chriſtian World. In following Ages they over-ran the *Eaſtern* Empire, and the *Greek* Church; and, to this very Day, hold that miſerable People in ſad Slavery and Subjection. Thus Providence ſeems to have ordered Affairs, that the Chriſtian World ſhould never enjoy a perfect *Reſt*, ſhould never be without a *Woe* upon it, leſt it ſhould fancy itſelf already in thoſe happy Days of Peace and Proſperity, which are reſerved for future Times.

But, when begun, will laſt a thouſand Years.

FROM this ſhort Account of the State of Chriſtendom, we may learn, that this happy *Term* of Chriſt's Reign, when *Satan* ſhall be impriſoned, and Virtue and Innocence on the Throne, is not yet begun, tho' we cannot determine when it will; but, from a *ſure Word of Prophecy*, we may inform ourſelves, that, whenever it ſhall begin, its Duration ſhall be a *thouſand Years*: For, '*I ſaw an Angel come down from Heaven*, ſays St *John*, *having the Key of the bottomleſs Pit, and a great Chain in his Hand, and he laid hold on the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thouſand Years, and caſt him into the bottomleſs Pit, and ſhut him up, and ſet a Seal upon him, that he ſhould not deceive the Nations any more, till the thouſand Years ſhould be fulfilled. I ſaw the Souls of them, that were beheaded for the Witneſs of Jeſus, and for the Word of God——and they lived, and reigned with Chriſt a thouſand Years. Bleſſed and holy is he, that hath Part in the firſt Reſurrection; on ſuch the ſecond Death hath no Power; but they ſhall be Prieſts of God, and of Chriſt, and ſhall reign with him a thouſand Years.*' [f] In all which, and ſeveral other Places, that might be produced, no Reaſon can be given, why a preciſe and *determinate* Number of Years ſhould be ſo often mentioned, unleſs that the Holy Spirit's Deſign was, to inſtruct us, that this happy and glorious Scene was to continue a *thouſand Years*.

The Doctrine of the Millennium.

[g] I AM very ſenſible, what Uſe learned Men, in ſeveral Ages of the Church, have made of the foregoing Paſſage, to eſtabliſh the Doctrine of a *Millennium*, or *Perſonal* Reign of Chriſt and his Saints upon Earth, for the Space of a *thouſand Years*, ſome Time or other before the Concluſion of the World. 1. Here, ſay they, is Mention of the *firſt* Reſurrection, antecedent to the *general* Reſurrection of the Dead. 2. This Reſurrection is proper to thoſe, that were *ſlain for the Teſtimony of Jeſus*, and were not *Worſhippers of the Beaſt*. 3. And that this Reſurrection is not *metaphorical*, but a proper Reſurrection, we are told, that *the Souls, i.e.* the Perſons

[f] 'Tis, nevertheleſs, the Opinion of many learned and pious Men, that this Period of Chriſt's Reign is expired; the Cauſe of which I apprehend to be this:——That, being prejudiced againſt the Doctrine of the old *Millenarians*, and looking upon it (and that juſtly) as a groundleſs and ſcandalous Opinion, they were willing to reſolve the *thouſand Years* into ſome paſt Time, rather than into any that is to come, and thereby utterly quaſh that fond Conceit of Chriſt's *Perſonal Reign* upon Earth. This was an ill Method they took, but their great Diſlike of the other Opinion occaſioned it, and, in ſome Meaſure, pleads their Excuſe: Whereas, had they rejected what is amiſs in the Doctrine of the *Millenaries*, and retained what is true in the general, *viz.* That there ſhall be a future State of the Chriſtian Church, more glorious than what has hitherto befallen it, they had taken the right Courſe, and aſſerted a *Truth*, that is founded in the ſacred Scriptures. *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. II. [d] *Burnet*'s Theory, Vol. II. [e] Rev. xx. 1, &c. [f] *Edwards*, ibid. [g] *Whitby*'s Treatiſe of the true *Millennium*.

ſons of them, *that were ſlain*, live again. 4. Since therefore they are to *reign with Chriſt a Thouſand Years*, their Reign, they infer, muſt be upon the *Earth*, becauſe the whole Scene (as appears by the Context) is laid there: From which Poſitions they raiſe this Doctrine, — "That, after ſix thouſand Years in this World are com-
"pleated, all the *Saints* (ſome ſay, only *Martyrs*) ſhall ariſe, their Bodies come out
"of their Graves, or wherever elſe they were, and their Souls come down from
"Heaven to re-inform them; that Chriſt alſo ſhould deſcend from thence, and keep
"a *Jubilee* with them, reigning in inconceivable Splendor, and ſubjecting all other
"Kingdoms to his Empire; that, in this State, the Righteous enjoying an Abund-
"ance of good Things of this World, ſhall, in order to fit and prepare them for
"the *Beatific* Viſion, ſpend their Time in Devotion and Contemplation, till a thou-
"ſand Years be run out; and then (after ſome Space of Time) all the reſt of Man-
"kind ſhall riſe from the Dead, and proceed to Judgment."

IT cannot be denied, indeed, but that this Doctrine has its Antiquity, and (as an ancient Father acquaints us) *was once the general Opinion of all Orthodox Chriſtians*; and yet, upon a cloſe Enquiry, it ſeems not ſo very conſiſtent with what the Scriptures affirm concerning our Saviour, [k] *that the Heavens muſt receive him, until the Times of the Reſtitution of all Things*; nor does it at all comport with the received Notions of the happy State of Souls departed. For how can it rationally be ſuppoſed, that [l] *thoſe Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*, which are now *with Chriſt*, and, [m] *being abſent from the Body, are preſent with the Lord*, ſhould ever leave thoſe bleſſed *Manſions*, and quit that happy State, to live on Earth a Thouſand Years? That they, who are already *entered* into Reſt, and enjoy all the Delight and Satisfaction, which *Paradiſe* itſelf affords, ſhould relinquiſh that Station, in order to enjoy Peace and Plenty upon Earth? Can they expect to be more righteous and holy, to have more divine and heavenly Speculations, or a more full Fruition of their Lord on Earth, than they enjoyed in Paradiſe? If not, who can ſuppoſe, that God ſhould thus degrade them, after ſo long Enjoyment of theſe happy Regions, or that they themſelves ſhould voluntarily quit thoſe bleſſed Abodes for any *temporal* Enjoyments whatever; much leſs to *fight* and wage War, as they neceſſarily muſt, when [n] *Gog and Magog gather them to Battle, and compaſs the Camp of the Saints and the beloved City*. [o] And if theſe Things ſeem not conſiſtent with the State of happy Souls in general, much leſs will they comport with theſe eſpecial Privileges, and high Prerogatives, ſuppoſed by ſome Fathers to belong to the Souls of *Martyrs*, *viz.* that they inſtantly receive their *Crowns*, and are admitted to a fuller *Viſion*, and a more intimate Enjoyment of God in Heaven; for the higher their Advancement is, the greater muſt their Degradation be, when they return again to live in this ſublunary World. If this intermediate Space, between their Reſurrection and full Fruition of Heaven, be thought neceſſary, [p] *that, by Degrees, they may enlarge their Capacities, and fit and accuſtom themſelves to receive God*, [q] it ſounds not ſo well, that the Martyrs ſhould want Capacity to enjoy the *Beatifick Viſion*, without employing their Contemplations and Devotions upon Earth a *thouſand Years*; nor can it be imagined, how coming down from thoſe Celeſtial Regions to this dull Earth can be a Way to elevate the Soul to Heaven; or putting on a corruptible Body, a Body needing Plenty of earthly Things, and finding Pleaſure in the Fruition of them, can be any tolerable Expedient to quicken and invigorate her heavenly Flights and Aſpirations.

In ſome Senſe confuted.

SINCE

[k] The *Original* of the *Millennary* Opinion is commonly imputed to *Cerinthus*, and its *Refinement* to *Papias*, who is mentioned by *Irenæus*, as having received it from St *John*, but without any juſt Grounds. If we would be exact in its *Pedigree*, we may trace it up to the *Jews*, long before Chriſt's Time; for it was an ancient Tradition and Perſuaſion amongſt them, that the *Meſſias* ſhould reign a Thouſand Years on Earth in all Pomp and Grandeur. [*Vid. Talm. Babyl. in Cap. Helec; R. Eliezer in Midraſh Tillim; and Lightfoot in Harm. Rev.* xx.] "The Opinion of Chriſt's "*Perſonal* Reign, in the Affluence of all ſenſual and worldly Delights, was an old *Jewiſh* Error, ſays St *Jerom*, and "hence the *Chriſtians*, converted from *Judaiſm*, borrowed and retained the Notion:" And, indeed, it was retained a conſiderable while in the Church, and, for the firſt three hundred Years after the Apoſtles, was almoſt univerſally believed. At length the Credit of *Papias*, who was thought to be the firſt Broacher of it, was called in Queſtion; and, as he was a Man of weak Judgment and ſmall Learning, *Euſebius* tells us, that he reported many ſtrange and fabulous Things, and not rightly underſtood the Apoſtles Arguings. St *Jerom* and St *Auguſtin* were the firſt, who wrote againſt this *Millennary* Reign, which was ſoon after condemned by the Fathers of the *Greek* and *Latin* Church, and has ever ſince been looked upon as an *heterodox* Opinion; till about a Century ago, ſome Anabaptiſts revived it, and, ſince that Time, ſeveral learned Men, both in our own and foreign Churches, have taken great Pains to maintain it.

[l] *Juſtin Martyr*, Dialog. cum. Tryph. [k] Acts iii. 21. [l] Heb. xii. 23. [m] 2 Cor. v. 8, Phil. i. 27. [n] Rev. xx. 8, 9. [o] *Whitby's* Treatiſe of the true *Millennium*. [p] *Burnet's* Theory, Vol. II. [q] *Whitby*, ibid.

SINCE therefore the Doctrine of Christ's *Personal* Reign upon Earth is loaded with so many Inconsistencies, there is a Necessity for understanding that Passage in the *Revelation* in a figurative *Sense*; and, if we reduce it to a literal Meaning, it will denote no more than this—— "That though Christians, in preceding Ages, "were cruelly and inhumanly treated by their merciless Persecutors; though Christ's "Kingdom, in those Times, laboured under great and unspeakable Miseries; yet, "upon the Entrance of the joyful *Millennium*, (for there shall be, on Earth, such a "*Millennium*, though not of that Nature, which either *ancient* or *modern Chiliasts* "assert) all those troublesome and afflictive Things shall cease; the Faithful shall be "put into the Possession of an undisturbed Repose and Serenity; the Christian "Church, after its sore Troubles and Mortifications, shall *revive*; shall, as it were, "*rise out of its Grave*; and (as our excellent *Hammond* paraphrases on the Place) "there shall be such an *universal* Profession of Christianity, as if all the departed "good Christians were alive again, and come upon the Stage of this World once "more:" For it is no uncommon Thing in Scripture, to represent the Restoration of the Church, and her Return from a low afflicted State, under the Metaphor of a *Resurrection from the Dead*; for so, speaking of the *Jewish* Nation, [x] *I will open your Eyes*, says God, *and cause you to come out of your Graves, and bring you into the Land of* Israel.

THE other two *Regal* Acts, which Christ has still to perform, are the *Resurrection of the Dead*, and the *Judgment of the World*; but of these we shall have Occasion hereafter to treat at large, and shall only take Notice at present, [t] that, when our blessed Lord shall have finished this last and most glorious Act of Royalty, *viz. judging the World*, and hath finally condemned to everlasting Fire the irreclaimable Enemies of God, and crowned all his faithful Servants with eternal Glory and Beatitude; then will the whole Business of his *mediatorial* Kingdom be at an End; then will the *Covenant*, of which he was the *Mediator*, be compleatly executed, and, consequently, his Mediation cease, as being of no farther Use, and having no farther Part to act. For, as our *beatifick* Vision will supersede the Necessity of his *Prophetick* Office, to *teach* and *instruct* us; and, as our Perfection and entire Fuition will supersede the Necessity of his *Priestly* Office, to *offer* and *intercede* for us; so the Security of our Possession of *both* will supersede the Necessity of his *Kingly* Office, to *protect* and *defend* us; and therefore when our Affairs are once reduced to this happy Issue, his *Kingly* Office, as well as all other Parts of his *Mediatorship*, shall for ever cease; [u] *Then cometh the End, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall put down all Rule, and all Authority, and all Power; for he must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet, &c. and when all Things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him, which did put all Things under him, that God may be all in all.*

The surrendering up his Kingdom.

IN the mean Time, * that God might govern us in a Way more accommodated to this degenerate State of our Nature; that he might more effectually prevent the Danger of Idolatry, more powerfully encourage our Obedience, oblige us to himself by a stronger Tie of Gratitude, and give us a more ample Assurance of that inestimable Reward, which he hath provided for us, his Wisdom and Goodness is very remarkable, in constituting his eternal Son to be our *King*, and his *Vicegerent* here on Earth; so that, of all other People, Christians have the greatest Reason to take up the Words of the Psalmist, and say, [x] *The Lord is King, the Earth may be glad thereof, yea the Multitude of the Isles may be glad thereof; for Righteousness and Judgment are the Habitation of his Seat.* Of all others, Christians have the greatest Reason to bear up under Adversities of what Kind soever, those especially, which they suffer for his Name's Sake, being assured, that our *Jesus*, our Saviour, is in Heaven; not only a merciful *High-Priest*, sensible of our Wants, and compassionate of our Infirmities, but a *King* likewise, invested with *all Power, and all Authority*, and, consequently, both able and willing *to save to the uttermost* those, that by Faith implore his Assistance, and, *holding fast their Profession*, flee to his *Throne*, in any pressing Juncture, that they may [y] *obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help them in the Time of Need.*

SECT.

[t] *Edwards's* Survey, Vol. II. [u] Ezek. xxxvii. 13, 14. [1] *Scott's* Mediator. [u] 1 Cor. xv. 24, &c. * *Scott*, ibid. [x] Psal. xcvii. 1, 2. [y] Heb. iv. 16.

SECT. III.

Of the Sacraments of the New Covenant.

THE Word *Sacrament*, though not to be met with in the holy Scriptures, became of early Uſe in the Chriſtian Church; and, being taken, moſt probably, from among the *Romans*, [a] is generally ſuppoſed to denote theſe *three* Things, 1. A *military* Oath, which Soldiers took, in order to aſſure their Officers of their Courage and Fidelity. 2. A *Badge*, or *Token*, whereby Soldiers were diſtinguiſhed, according to the Commanders they ſerved under. And, 3. A *Pledge*, or *Pawn*, depoſited by the Party *impleaded*, in order to oblige him to anſwer the *Plaintiff*, upon the Peril of forfeiting ſo much Money. And, in all theſe Senſes, ſome have thought the Word very proper, to denote thoſe ſacred *Ceremonies*, which are uſed in the Chriſtian Service; ſince by them (as by a ſolemn *Oath*) we engage ourſelves to become the *faithful Soldiers and Servants of Chriſt, the Captain of our Salvation, unto our Lives End*; by them (as by a viſible *Badge*) are diſtinguiſhed from all Societies of Men, that are not *Chriſtian*; and by them (as by an holy *Pledge*) are aſſured of God's Grace, and all the other Benefits of the *Covenant*, which Chriſt has purchaſed for us with his Blood, whenever we ſue to him for the Performance of his Promiſes. *The Meaning of the Word* Sacrament.

IT cannot be denied, indeed, but that the Word *Sacrament*, as it is uſually tranſlated from the *Greek* Μυσ]ήριον, is, [b] by the *Latin* Fathers, ſet to ſignify almoſt any Thing, that carries with it an *hidden* Meaning, or ſome ſacred Repreſentations; and from this lax Signification of the Word, thoſe, who multiply the Number of Sacraments, have taken Occaſion to infer——that becauſe *Confirmation*, by the laying on of the Hands of the Biſhop, implies the *conveying* of Grace, to enable us to perform our *baptiſmal* Vow; becauſe *holy Orders*, by the ſame Ceremony, import the *conferring* of the Holy Ghoſt; *Matrimony* repreſents the *myſtical* Union between Chriſt and his Church; *Penance* is a *Sign* and Help to Repentance; and *Extreme Unction* ſignifies and *ſeals* the Remiſſion of Sins; they are therefore all to be reckoned in the Number of *Sacraments:* Whereas the ſame Fathers, when they expreſs themſelves with more Caution upon this Subject, confine the proper Sacraments to the definitive Number of *Two* only; [c] for, *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, ſays St *Auſtin*, *has united Chriſtians together by Sacraments, few in Number, eaſy of Obſervance, and excellent in Signification*, Baptiſm *and the* Lord's Supper. *The Number of them.*

AND, indeed, if we conſider the Nature of a Sacrament, as it is deſcribed to be *an* outward and viſible Sign, *which Chriſt inſtituted to exhibit and aſſure us of thoſe Graces and Benefits, which he, by his* meritorious *Blood-ſhedding, has procured for us*, we ſhall ſoon perceive, that the other *ſupernumerary* Rites or Offices are, in a great Meaſure, deſtitute of the *Character*, which are required in a Sacrament. [d] *Confirmation*, we own, is an *Apoſtolick* Inſtitution, all along continued in the Church, and of ſingular Uſe to ſuch as were baptized in their *Infancy*; but yet we cannot allow it to be a proper Sacrament, becauſe it was neither of Chriſt's own Appointment, nor has it any *outward* and *viſible* Sign, to which an *inward* and *ſpiritual* Grace may be ſuppoſed to be annexed. *Ordination* indeed, or the calling and ſeparating proper Perſons for the Work of the *Miniſtry*, is an Inſtitution of Chriſt, and, in the ſame Manner, continued by us, as he and his Apoſtles ſettled it in the Church; but in this we ſee nothing adequate to a Sacrament. The laying on of Hands is only a *Geſture* in Prayer, which denotes the Deſignation of the Perſon ſo pray'd over, and the *Grace*, which is therein conferred, is only the Bleſſing of God upon a particular Employ, not common to all Chriſtians, (as we preſume all *Sacramental Graces* ſhould be) nor, conſequently, any Part of that *federal* Bleſſing, which our Saviour has purchaſed for us. *Marriage*, we grant, is an honourable Eſtate, inſtituted by God in *Paradiſe*, and capable to ſignify the *myſtical Union between Chriſt and his Church*; yet, wanting an *outward Sign*, to which, by Chriſt's Promiſe, a Bleſſing is annexed, *What are not* Sacraments.

[a] *Newcombe*'s Sermons. [b] Thus we read of the Sacrament of the *Croſs*, in St *Auſtin*; the Sacrament of *Martyrdom*, in St *Jerom*; the Sacrament of *Virginity*, in *Leo*; and the Sacrament of *Prayer*, of *Weeping*, of *Faſting*, in St *Hilary*; for, *Signa*, (ſays St *Auſtin*) *cum ad res divinas adhibentur, Sacramenta vocantur*, Lib. iii. c. 6. de Doct. Chriſt. [c] Dominus noſter leni jugo ſuo nos ſubdidit, & ſarcinæ levi; unde Sacramentis, numero pauciſſimis, obſervatione facillimis, ſignificatione præſtantiſſimis, ſocietatem novi populi colligavit, ſicut eſt *Baptiſmus* Trinitatis nomine conſecratus, *Communicatio corporis & ſanguinis* ipſius, & ſiquid aliud in Scripturis canonicis commendatur. *Epiſt. ad Jan.* 118. [d] *Burnet*, on the Articles.

and being not *generally neceſſary to Salvation*, (ſince thoſe, who affirm it to be a *Sacrament*, inhibit ſome Sort of Perſons the Uſe of it, and account ſuch as make *Vows* againſt it, more *holy* than other Chriſtians) it cannot come under the Denomination of a Sacrament. To be humble and contrite under the Senſe of our Offences; to make Confeſſion of them to *God*; in Caſe of Injury, to *Men*; and ſometimes, in Caſe of Doubt or Trouble of Conſcience, to a *Miniſter* likewiſe; and to have open and ſcandalous Offenders [e] *rebuked before all, that others may fear* the like Chaſtiſement, and reform, is what we own and practiſe, as neceſſary Parts of Chriſtian Diſcipline; but, ſince in all this there is no *Sign* eſtabliſhed by Chriſt, to which Divine Grace belongs, we dare not pronounce ſuch *Penance ſacramental*; nor can we believe, but that a *contrite* Sinner, who has made a proper Acknowledgment of his Sins, and, by the Aſſiſtance of Grace, reformed his Life, may receive an *effectual* Pardon from God, whatever becomes of the Doctrine of *Auricular Confeſſion*. [f] *To call for the Elders of the Church*, in Caſe *any was ſick, and to let them pray over them, anointing them with Oil in the Name of the Lord*, we acknowledge, was a Practice in the Days of the Apoſtles, and proper enough at that Time, when a *miraculous* Power of healing all Diſeaſes attended the *Apoſtolick* Function; but ſince this *Anointing* was not of Chriſt's Inſtitution, nor had any Relation to the Good of the Soul; ſince the Apoſtles made Uſe of it, not as a *Sacramental* Conveyance of any Benefit, but only as a *Symbol*, accompanying a miraculous Power peculiar to their Age; we have ſufficient Reaſon for rejecting *Extreme Unction*, and for accounting the *Euchariſt* (as the *Ancients* always accounted it) the only *Viaticum* of Chriſtians in their laſt Paſſage.

The two Sacraments.

THE two Ordinances then, wherein the Characters of a true and proper Sacrament meet, are *Baptiſm* and the *Lord's Supper*; the *one*, the Sacrament of *Initiation*, to receive us into Chriſt's Church, and entitle us to the Privileges of it; and the *other*, the Sacrament of *Confirmation*, to keep and preſerve us in it, and to convey to us the Benefits, to which we are entitled: And 'tis no ſmall Prejudice againſt enlarging the Number of them, [g] that, till the XIIth Century, they were never reckoned *ſeven*, nor till the XVth, was their Number eſtabliſhed by any *Council*; and it ſeems no improbable Conjecture, that the Thing, which gave Occaſion to the *Innovation*, was that myſtical Expreſſion of the [h] *ſeven Spirits of God* in the *Revelation*, from whence there aroſe a Conceit of the *ſevenfold* Operation of the Spirit, whereof *to aſſert ſeven Sacraments* might be fancied a good *Illuſtration*.

Their Original.

WHENCE the true Sacraments of the Chriſtian Religion had their *Original*, it will be no hard Matter to perceive, if we do but conſider, that, as our bleſſed Saviour was himſelf a *Jew*, and born under the *Jewiſh* Oeconomy, 'tis reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he ſhould *imitate* the Uſages of his Countrymen, and *adopt* many of the Rites and Ceremonies into Chriſtianity, the more eaſily to induce them to embrace his Doctrine and Diſcipline. That the *Jews* never received any Perſon into their Covenant, as a Proſelyte, *i. e.* one, who had come over from *Pagan* Idolatry to their Religion, without a Baptiſm, [i] is manifeſt from the Teſtimony of ſuch, as are beſt converſant in their Writings: That Prieſts and *Levites*, entering upon their Office, were to be ſanctified by waſhing with Water, and new-born Children, and ſuch as had contracted any *legal* Defilement, were to be purified by the ſame Ceremony, [k] we ſee plainly preſcribed by their Law: And that it was uſual for Perſons, who were conſcious to themſelves of having tranſgreſſed God's Laws, upon the Invitation of any one commiſſioned by God to Repentance and Amendment of Life, to be waſhed by him, in Teſtimony of their ſtedfaſt Purpoſe ſo to do, and in Hopes of regaining the Favour of God, appears very probable from the Undertaking [l] of *John the Baptiſt*, which ſeems to have been no *novel* and uncommon Thing. This Practice then of *Waſhing*, in ſo many Caſes, and to ſo many Purpoſes, cuſtomary among God's People,

[e] 1 Tim. v. 20. [f] James v. 14. [g] *Peter Lombard*, a Writer of that Age, is the firſt that reckons *ſeven* of them, and the Council of *Trent* was the firſt that confirmed that Number; for ſo their Decree is, [*Seſſ.* vii. *Can.* 1.] *If any one ſhall ſay, that the Sacraments are more or fewer than ſeven, or that any one of theſe ſeven is not truly and properly a Sacrament, let him be* Anathema. [h] Rev. i. 4. and iv. 5. [i] That the *Gentiles*, converted to *Judaiſm*, were baptized, after they were healed of their Wound in Circumciſion, is manifeſt from what the learned *Buxtorf* ſays in his *Synagoge*: From the Writings of *Scaliger*, *(de Emend. Temporibus)* *Ludovicus Capellus*, *Thorndike*, *Lightfoot*, and others, who were well ſkilled in the *Hebrew* Cuſtoms, it is evident, that the *Jews* uſed Baptiſm, or Waſhing, in initiating both the Native *Jews*, and the Heathen *Proſelytes* into their Congregation; and that the Chriſtian Baptiſm was borrowed from the like Uſage among the *Jews*, the learned *Selden* particularly proves, in his Treatiſe *De Synedriis*, Lib. I. c. 3. [k] Exod. xxix. 4. Numb. viii. 6. Lev. xv. 8, 16, 18, 27, *&c.* [l] John i. 25, 33.

People, [n] our bleſſed Saviour (who never favoured *Innovations*) was pleaſed to aſſume, and impoſe upon the Diſciples and Followers of this Religion: And, in like Manner, that the Sacrament of the *Lord's-Supper* had its Riſe from the *Poſtcœnium*, uſed by the *Jews*, in the *Cloſe* of their Paſſover, is evident from ſeveral *chief* Circumſtances, wherein they agree. For as, when the *Paſchal* Lamb was eaten, it was uſual for the Company to riſe and waſh their Feet, in order to ſit down to a freſh *Collation*, or ſecond Courſe; whereupon the Maſter of the Family takes *unleavened Bread*, and bleſſes it, and breaks it, and gives to every one a Piece; after which, he takes a *Cup*, and bleſſes it, and ſo drinks to one of the Company, that he may ſend it round; and in Concluſion all ſing ſome *Pſalms*, which they call the great *Hallel*: So, in the Inſtitution of the *Euchariſt*, we find our bleſſed Saviour, after eating the *Paſchal* Lamb, riſing from Supper, waſhing his Diſciples Feet, and then beginning a new Entertainment; breaking Bread, and diſtributing it; ſending the Cup of Wine round the Company, and in the Concluſion *ſinging an Hymn*: Which Actions ſo nearly reſemble the Cuſtoms of the *Jews*, that there is no Queſtion to be made, but that our Saviour borrowed this Ordinance likewiſe from them; only improving to *ſpiritual* Purpoſes, and exalting the Effects and Virtue of it, far above what it was in its Original.

The Reaſonableneſs of them.

Now one of the Purpoſes, for which Sacraments were inſtituted, [o] was to be *outward and viſible Signs* of our Entrance into *Covenant* with God, and of renewing that Covenant with him. For if Covenants between Man and Man be made with all the *Formality* of Witneſſes, of Hands and Seals, and Delivery in ſolemn and expreſs Words; if Men know themſelves too well to truſt one another without this Solemnity, it may well be expected, that, when God is pleaſed to permit them to enter into Covenant with himſelf, he ſhould not receive them under leſs Obligations of Caution and Security for their Integrity, than Men are wont to uſe among one another; ſince every Breach of Covenant with him is infinitely more affronting and ſinful, than any Breach of Covenant with Man can be. And as theſe outward Signs ſerve to raiſe our Attention, and fix our Minds, and to put us in Remembrance, that Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men are Witneſſes againſt us, if we prove treacherous and unfaithful in this Covenant; ſo they are as *Tokens* and *Pledges* to us of God's Love and Favour, and give us *ſenſible* and *viſible* Aſſurances of that Grace, which is *inviſible* and *ſpiritual*. 'Tis not a little in the Nature and Temper of Man, to be better pleaſed and contented with ſomething preſent and in Hand, though of ſmall Value, and inſignificant in itſelf, as a *Token* and *Pledge* of what is made over to him, than with the greateſt Promiſes and Proteſtations, without any Thing as *Earneſt* to confirm them. Now what is *inward* and *inviſible* is *abſent* as to Senſe, and what is *future*, ſtands in need of ſomething *preſent*, to repreſent it to us; and therefore God, who was pleaſed to bind himſelf by an *Oath*, that he might be wanting in nothing, which might help our Infirmities, and aſſiſt our Faith, has been pleaſed, for our farther Comfort and Truſt in him, to appoint *viſible Signs* and *Pledges* of that which is *inviſible*; and to give ſuch Aſſurance to our very Senſes, as they are capable of, that all the Promiſes of his ſpiritual Bleſſings ſhall as certainly be *fulfilled* to us, as the outward Signs and Pledges, which he hath appointed, are duly *received* by us.

Their Effects.

NOR are theſe Sacraments only Signs and Tokens of ſpiritual Bleſſings, which God will confer on us; but they are appointed as *Means* likewiſe and *Inſtruments* of Grace and Salvation to us, that, as the Body partakes in the *moral* Actions of Virtue or Vice, ſo it might concur in the *religious* Acts ordained for our Sanctification; that the *Soul*, even in this Caſe, where it is more immediately concerned, might not be wholly *independent* on the Body; but, ſince *both* muſt be happy or miſerable in the *next* World, both might be aſſiſtant in the Way and Means of Salvation in *this*. In a Word, that Sacraments are not mere *Ceremonies*, only to maintain Order and Unity in the Church of Chriſt, but *Means* inſtituted for the Conveyance of Grace and ſpiritual Benediction to well-diſpoſed Receivers, is evident from the Teſtimony of the Scriptures, which attribute ſuch Effects to them, as are the immediate Iſſues of the Graces, they are ſet to ſignify, [p] *the Waſhing of Sin by Baptiſm*, and [q] *the Communion of the Body and Blood of Chriſt*, by *the Lord's Supper*.

WE are not however to imagine, that the *Sacraments* work *phyſically*, or neceſſarily and infallibly confer Grace; 'tis in our own Diſpoſition, that their Efficacy lies; and

[n] Acts xxii. 16.
[o] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, Vol. II.
[p] 1 Cor. x. 16.
[q] *Burnet*, on the Articles.

and [r] to pretend that they operate any other Way, is, in effect, to introduce the Doctrine and Practice of *Charms* into the Chriſtian Religion, to diſſolve all Obligations to Piety and Devotion, to Holineſs of Life, and Purity of Temper, when the being in a *paſſive*, and perhaps *inſenſible* State, while the Sacraments are applied, is thought a Diſpoſition ſufficient to give them Virtue. 'Tis our Comfort and Conſolation indeed, that the Efficacy of theſe Ordinances depends not upon the *Intention* or *Worthineſs* of the Perſon, that adminiſters them; but then we are to remember, that neither does it depend upon the *bare Application* of them. They operate in a *moral* Way; are intended to raiſe and quicken our Affections, not ſupply our Defects; and therefore become the Means and Inſtruments of Grace only to the *worthy* Receiver; for the *Baptiſm* 'which *ſaveth us*, ſays St *Peter*, *is the Anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God*; and they, *who communicate in* the other *Sacrament unworthily*, ' ſays St *Paul*, *not diſcerning the Lord's Body, purchaſe to themſelves Damnation.*

Of BAPTISM.

The Inſtitution of Baptiſm.

HOW well ſoever the *Jews* might be accuſtomed to the Rite of *Baptiſm*, [u] yet the Inſtitution of it, as it is a *federal* Act of the Chriſtian Religion, muſt be taken from the *Commiſſion*, which our Saviour gave his Diſciples; * *go ye and teach*, or make Diſciples to me of *all Nations*, (for ſo the Original is to be rendered) *baptiſing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*; where he authoriſes his Diſciples to adminiſter this Sacrament, and conſequently obliges all Perſons to make uſe of it. This he repeats again; [x] *go ye into all the World, and preach the Goſpel to every Creature*; *he that believeth, and is baptiſed, ſhall be ſaved*; where he enjoins this Sacrament as a *Condition* of Salvation, and lets all Men know, that, unleſs they make open Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith, and join themſelves to the Church by this Ordinance, they exclude themſelves from Life and Happineſs: [y] *Except a Man be born of Water*, ſays he again, *and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*; where he makes the ordinary and appointed Way of entering into the *Evangelical* at leaſt, if not the *Celeſtial* State, to be Baptiſm, made effectual by the *Spirit of Regeneration.*

The Difference between John's *Baptiſm and* Chriſt's.

AND here, in our Way, we may perceive the Difference (though [z] ſome are unwilling to perceive any) between the Baptiſm of *John*, and that of our Saviour's Inſtitution. The Stipulation of *John*'s Baptiſm was *Repentance*, but Chriſt's, the *Belief* of the whole Chriſtian Religion: In *John*'s, a Profeſſion was made in the Belief of a *Meſſias* ſoon to appear; in Chriſt's, a Declaration, that *Jeſus was the Meſſias*: Thoſe [a] who were baptiſed unto *John*'s Baptiſm, received no *Effuſion* of the Holy Ghoſt, nor any *Inſtruction* in the great Myſtery of Chriſtianity, the *Doctrine of the Trinity*; whereas thoſe, that were baptiſed into Chriſt's, were vouchſafed both. In a Word, the Baptiſm of *John* was *preparative* to that of Chriſt; a Dawning, as it were, and imperfect Beginning to the other; even as he, who adminiſtered it, was like the *Morning-Star* before the *Sun of Righteouſneſs.*

The Quakers *Notion confuted.*

UPON this Inſtitution and Commiſſion given by Chriſt, the Apoſtles, we find, went up and down preaching and baptiſing: And ſo far were they from conſidering Baptiſm only as a *carnal Rite*, or low *Element*, above which an higher Diſpenſation of the *Spirit* was to raiſe them; that, even when St *Peter* ſaw the Holy Ghoſt had deſcended upon *Cornelius* and his Friends, he nevertheleſs thought proper to baptiſe them: [b] *Can any Man forbid Water*, ſaith he, *that theſe ſhould not be baptiſed, which have received the Holy Ghoſt, as well as we?* Where he plainly teaches us, that the Baptiſm of *Water* is not to be excluded by the Baptiſm of the *Spirit*, for when this *latter* had fallen upon *Cornelius* and his Friends, why was the other to be ſuperadded, but that, in the Apoſtle's Eſteem, it was an Ordinance of ſacred Inſtitution, and

[r] Sacraments are to be conſidered as the publick Acts of the Church: And though the Effect of them, as to him that receives them, depends upon his Temper, his Preparation and Application, yet it cannot be imagined, that the Virtue of thoſe *federal* Acts, to which Chriſtians are admitted in them, the Validity of them, or the Bleſſings that follow them, can depend on the ſecret State or Temper of him that officiates. *Burnet*, on the Articles. [s] 1 Pet. iii. 21. [t] 1 Cor. xi. 29. [u] *Burnet*, ibid. * Matth. xxviii. 19. [x] Mark xvi. 15, 16. [y] John iii. 5. [z] *Calvin*, and ſeveral others of his Sentiments. [a] *Vid.* Acts xix. 2, &c. [b] Ibid. x. 47.

and not to be ſuperſeded upon the Account of any *Gifts* or *Illuminations* whatever? [c] It muſt therefore be a ſad Perverſion of the Senſe of the Words, to ſay, becauſe the Baptiſt declares, [d] *I indeed baptiſe you with Water unto Repentance, but he that cometh after me, ſhall baptiſe you with the Holy Ghoſt and with Fire*, that therefore there is no need of *Water-Baptiſm* under the Goſpel, ſince the only Baptiſm of Chriſt's Inſtitution is that of the *Spirit*. The Words are no more than a plain *Prediction* of a miraculous Event, which was literally fulfilled on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, when the Holy Ghoſt deſcended upon the Apoſtles in the Shape of fiery Tongues. To this Event they [e] are expreſsly applied; as indeed to apply them to any other would put us under ſome Difficulty to interpret what can be meant by *baptiſing with Fire*: And though they may give ſome Grounds for diſtinguiſhing between *Spiritual* and *Water-Baptiſm*, yet they afford none at all for ſeparating them. They teach us indeed, that, after Chriſt's coming, the Gifts and Graces of God's holy Spirit ſhould attend the *Ordinance* of Baptiſm; but that theſe Gifts ſhould vacate the Ordinance itſelf, of this they give us no Manner of Intimation; and the Man muſt be extremely partial to his own Opinion, who can read, [f] in the Book of the *Acts*, no leſs than fourteen or fifteen Times of the Adminiſtering of Baptiſm, and find it therein diſtinctly ſet down, who were the Perſons, in what Manner, and with what Matter, they were baptiſed; and yet continue his Perſuaſion, that *external* Baptiſm, thus founded on the Precepts of *Chriſt*, confirmed by the Example of the Apoſtles, and eſtabliſhed by the conſtant and univerſal Practice of the Church ever ſince, is no *Evangelical* Ordinance, nor of any Significancy under the *ſpiritual* Diſpenſation of the Goſpel.

BUT enough has been ſaid to ſhew this Sacrament to be a Divine Ordinance: The next Things we are to conſider are, 1. The *Perſons*, by whom: 2. The *Perſons*, to whom: And, 3. The *Manner*, in which it is to be adminiſtered: And ſo proceed, 4. To enquire into the *Privileges* and Benefits, which we receive thereby, and the *Duties* we promiſe to perform.

The Perſons by whom Baptiſm is to be adminiſtered.

THAT the eleven *Apoſtles* were the Perſons, to whom our bleſſed Saviour gave the original Commiſſion of Baptiſing, is plain from the Account we have of it in Scripture. [g] *Then the eleven Diſciples went away into Galilee, unto the Mountain where Jeſus had appointed them: And Jeſus came, and ſpake unto them, ſaying, all Power is given unto me in Heaven and Earth; go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptiſing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; teaching them to obſerve all Things, whatever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the End of the World.* That the Apoſtles gave Commiſſion *to Biſhops, Preſbyters*, and *Deacons*, (for *Philip*, who was but a Deacon, [h] we read, baptiſed the *Eunuch*, and much more may we ſuppoſe it of the two ſuperior Orders) is evident from the Hiſtory, which records their Tranſactions: [i] That the Biſhops, as their immediate Succeſſors, were inveſted with the ſame Authority, and, in the following Ages of the Church, communicated the like Power of Baptiſing to Perſons admitted to the like Offices; and, in ſhort, that the Chriſtian Miniſtry was, all along from the Apoſtles Time, conveyed in *Epiſcopal* Hands only, we ſhall hereafter have an Occaſion to evince, both from the Conſent of all Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, and the conſtant and uninterrupted Practice of the univerſal Church of *Chriſt*, in all Ages and Places, for one thouſand five hundred Years together, from the Apoſtles Days. What we are chiefly concerned in at preſent is to know, "Whether any *Perſons*, but ſuch "as are *Epiſcopally* ordained, have a *Right* to adminiſter Baptiſm in the Chriſtian "Church; and, in caſe of any uſurped and unauthorized Adminiſtrations, whether "they are of any *Efficacy* to entitle the Receivers to the ſame Benefits, which re"gular Adminiſtrations do, or are not rather *null* in themſelves, and of no Signifi"cancy at all." Theſe are Queſtions, that, of late, have been revived and agitated with more *Heat*, than *Perſpicuity*; but to give them the beſt Reſolution that we can, we ſhall firſt produce the Strength of the Arguments on both Sides, and then conſider to which of them it is, that the Evidence of Truth ſeems moſt to incline.

[c] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [d] Matth. iii. 11. [e] Acts i. 5. [f] *Vid.* Acts ii. 14. viii. 12, 13, 16, 36, 38. xviii. 8. xix. 5. xxii. 16. and 1 Cor. i. 13, 14, 15, 16. [g] Matth xxviii. 16, 18, &c. [h] Acts viii. 38. [i] *Laurence*'s Lay-Baptiſm invalid.

Arguments against Lay-Baptism, from Scripture and Reason.

I. THOSE, who deny the Validity of Lay-Baptism, make the Divine Authority of the *Administrator* (consisting, *they say*, in Episcopal Ordination) one of the *essential* Parts of the Sacrament itself, and no more to be omitted, than either the *Matter*, or *Form* of the Administration; because every essential Part of a Divine Institution is of equal Obligation and Necessity: And hereupon they argue—That since *God*, under the *Mosaick* Dispensation, made the Divine Authority of the *Administrator* an essential Part of his positive Institutions, so as not to accept the Performance of them from any Hands, but such, as were appointed to the Office, as is evident in the Case of *Corah* and his Company; since *Christ* himself, notwithstanding his many personal Excellencies and Perfections, would not leave his private Station of Life, wherein he continued above thirty Years, to take upon him so great an Office, until he received his *Commission* and *Inauguration* thereunto by the Hands of *John the Baptist*; since, in the very Words of the *Institution* of Baptism, our *Lord* commissioned *none else*, but his eleven Apostles, and their Successors and Substitutes, to baptise all Persons capable of Baptism, even unto the End of the World; since the very *Form* of Administration, in the Name of the *Father*, and by the Authority of the *Trinity*, requires, and supposes the Divine Authority of him, that administers; since the *Benefits* of Baptism are so great and supernatural, that none can be presumed capable of conveying them, but such as are authorized by him who appointed it; and, lastly, since, in Reality, it is *Christ himself*, who baptises us by the Ministry of those, whom he has delegated to that Office, which nevertheless he cannot be said to do, if he does by *one*, whom he never sent: Since all these Premisses are true, *say they*, and not to be denied without manifest Inconsistences and Contradictions, it must necessarily follow, that the Divine Authority of the *Administrator* of Baptism is an essential Part of that holy Institution, and constantly to be observed, wherever the Institution takes place; and from hence they infer, that whoever is destitute of such *Authority*, has no Right to administer *about holy Things*; and consequently, that all his Offices of this Kind are of no more *Force* or Validity, than if a bold *pragmatical* Person should pretend to administer the great Affairs of the Kingdom, without any Commission or Designation from his Prince. For[1] when every other Office of Trust and Power, whether in a *civil* or *military* Capacity, is conveyed unto Men by some *Form* of Admission, and solemn Investiture; it is scarce to be supposed, *say they*, that the great and weighty Offices of sending up the Prayers of the People, of blessing the Congregation, of administering the Word and Sacraments, absolving the Penitent, ejecting the Criminal, and of working together with God for the Salvation of Souls, should be left to the Direction of every one, that has Pride and Presumption enough to assume them.

From the Practice of the Primitive *Church.*

FROM the Sense of the Scriptures, they proceed to the Practice of the Primitive Church; and, to this Purpose, they produce the *Apostolick Constitutions*, (as they are called) ([m] "prohibiting all Laymen to perform any sacerdotal Office,) as the Sacri-" fice of the Eucharist, or Baptism, or Imposition of Hands, *&c.* For no Man taketh " this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God; which Call is, by the lay-" ing on of the *Bishop*'s Hands; but he, that taketh it to himself without Com-" mission, shall sustain the Punishment of *Uzzias*." In extraordinary Cases of great Necessity, and where a publick Minister could not be procured, they deny not indeed, but that *Laymen* were sometimes permitted to baptise; but then they affirm, "that it was always done in Subordination to a *legal* Power, by Persons living in Communion with the Church, and having the Consent and Approbation of their Bishop for so doing; otherwise the Act was declared null and invalid, and the Party, on whom the unwarrantable Baptism passed, whenever he became a *Convert* to the Church, was certainly re-baptised. About the Middle of the *third Century*, there arose a Dispute in the Church, concerning the Validity of Baptism, administered by such

[1] Vid. *Laurence*'s, Lay-Baptism invalid, and *Brett*'s Sermons against Lay-Baptism. * 'Tis in the very Nature of a Commission, to be exclusive of all others, but those, to whom it is given; for 'tis well known, that when a Prince gives a Commission to any one of his Subjects for the Execution of some great Office, it is with a Design to appropriate that Office to that particular Subject, that none may act in it, but he, and those, whom he shall appoint. *Laurence*, ibid. [l] *Cumber*, on the Ordination-Office. [m] Vid. *Const. Apost.* Lib. ii. c. 27. Lib. iii. 16, *&c.* [n] "Thus the Council of *Eliberis* [*Anno* 305. *Can.* xxxviii.] declares, that any Christian, who is "neither *penitent*, (*i. e.* under Penance) nor a *Bigamist*, may baptise, in Case of Necessity, those who are on a Jour-"ney, being at a great Distance from the Church, upon Condition, that he present them to the Bishop, if they survive, to "be perfected by the Imposition of Hands." But here it is to be observed, that this Canon is plainly to be restrained to such, as were in Communion with, and lived in Subjection to their Bishops; and therefore, supposing this ancient Council had been a *General* one, (which certainly it was not) yet the *Lay-Baptisers* among us, who act in Opposition to *Episcopacy*, can receive no Authority from this Canon. *Laurence*, ibid.

ſuch as were then *Hereticks* and *Schiſmaticks*, wherein St *Cyprian*, with the reſt of the *African*, and not a few of the *Eaſtern* Biſhops, maintained, "That Catholick "Biſhops were obliged to condemn all ſuch Baptiſms, and to account them null "and void; conſequently, they were not immediately to *confirm*, but firſt to "baptiſe ſuch, whenever they came over to the Catholick, and only ſalutary "Communion." But allowing, that, in Caſes of *Neceſſity*, Laymen may be tolerated to baptiſe, and that the Baptiſm of Hereticks and Schiſmaticks, returning to the Communion of the *Catholick* Church, might be confirmed by the Impoſition of the Biſhop's Hands, becauſe theſe, even in the Time of their Defection, always acknowledged Epiſcopal Authority; yet when Perſons, *ſay they*, purely in Oppoſition to ſuch Authority, and in Countries abounding with regular Miniſters, where no Plea of *Neceſſity* can be urged, ſet themſelves up to adminiſter this ſacred Ordinance, that ſuch Adminiſtration is of no Effect, we have the Opinion of [o] St *Baſil*, Biſhop of *Cæſarea*, that *thoſe, whom a Laick baptiſes, are to be re-baptiſed*; the Teſtimony of [p] St *Chryſoſtom*, Archbiſhop of *Conſtantinople*, *that Baptiſm can no more be adminiſtered by a Laick, than the Euchariſt*; and the Canonical Injunction of one, who lived very near the Days of the Apoſtles, the glorious Martyr and Biſhop of *Antioch*, St *Ignatius*; [q] "Let the Sacrament, *ſays he*, be judged firm and effectual, which is "diſpenſed by the Biſhop, or him, to whom the Biſhop has committed it. It is "not lawful, without the Biſhop, to baptiſe, or celebrate the other Offices, but "what he approves, according to the good Pleaſure of God, that is firm and ſafe."

The Practice and Doctrine of our own.

FROM the Cuſtoms and Opinions of the ancient Church, they paſs to the Doctrine and Practice of our own; and hereupon they argue —— That ſince, in her 23d *Article* of Religion, ſhe affirms, That *it is not lawful* (whereby ſhe means ſinful, and contrary to the very Inſtitution of Sacraments) *for any Man to take upon him the Office of adminiſtering them, before he be lawfully called and ſent* to execute the ſame; ſince, in the *Preface* of her Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining, and Conſecrating of *Biſhops*, *Prieſts*, and *Deacons*, ſhe manifeſtly confines this *lawful Calling and Sending* to Epiſcopal Ordination; ſince, in her 26th Article, when ſhe teaches, That *the Miniſter*, diſpenſing the Sacraments, *does it in Chriſt's Name, and by his Commiſſion and Authority*, ſhe plainly calls this *Epiſcopal Ordination Chriſt's Commiſſion and Authority*; ſince ſhe will not admit any *Diſſenting Teachers*, deſirous to join in her Communion, into the Number of her lawful Miniſters, until they be divinely authoriſed by the Impoſition of *Epiſcopal* Hands, thereby ſignifying her Senſe of the *Invalidity* of their former Miniſtrations; ſince, laſtly, ſhe requires every one (without any Exception for Caſes of Neceſſity) to be baptiſed by [r] *a lawful Miniſter*, and has provided *no* Office of Confirmation for thoſe, who have received Baptiſm from Lay-Baptiſers; but, on the contrary, [s] a very proper one, for their Admiſſion into her Communion, *viz. the Miniſtration of Baptiſm to ſuch as are of riper Years, and able to anſwer for themſelves*: Since theſe, *they ſay*, are the Doctrines and Declarations of *our* Church, the Divine Authority of the *Adminiſtrator* of Chriſtian Sacraments is, in her Opinion, an eſſential Part of their Inſtitution, and thoſe that pretend to diſpenſe them, wanting ſuch Authority, are both unqualified for the Office themſelves, and unable to confer upon others thoſe great and ſupernatural Bleſſings, which God has annexed to the *regular* Performance of it. For *if the Effect be ſpiritual*, (as our learned [t] *Taylor* expreſſes it) *the Agent muſt be ſo too*.

The Conſequences of each Opinion.

FROM the Doctrine and Practice of our Church, they come at laſt to enquire into the Conſequences of each Opinion; and hereupon they obſerve —— That to allow the Validity of *Lay-Baptiſm*, is, in Effect, to deſtroy the whole *Miniſtry* of the Chriſtian Prieſthood, and to open a Door of Licentiouſneſs to all Intruders into that ſacred Office. For, if the Baptiſms of the *Laity* be thought valid, then may their Adminiſtration of the Lord's Supper, and much more their Teaching, and Preaching to ſuch Congregations, as they can gather to themſelves, be thought ſo too; and if this be the Conſequence, then farewel all Rule, Order, and Authority in the Chriſtian Church; the Diſtinction of Perſons is at an End; and Chriſt's ſetting therein *ſome*

[o] Epiſt. 1. ad Amphiloch. c. 1. [p] De Sacerdot. Lib. iii. [q] Epiſt. ad Smyrn. [r] Vid. Rubricks in the Miniſtration of *private* Baptiſm. [s] *Hicks*'s Letter to Mr *Laurence*. The Occaſion of making this Office, in the Preface before the Common Prayer, is declared to be *the Growth of Anabaptiſm*; but there are many other Caſes, in which it is equally uſeful, and ought to be applied, as in the Caſe of thoſe adult Perſons, who had the Misfortune to be baptiſed, but not *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*; or, if in their Names, yet not in their Names as a *real*, but *nominal* Trinity, as I ſuppoſe the *Bedelliſts*, who were a numerous Sect at the Reſtoration in ſome Parts of this Kingdom, did; and the *Socinians* now do. *Ibid.* [t] Ductor Dubitantium.

ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtors and Teachers, for the Work of the Miniſtry, and the perfecting of the Saints, is become a fruitleſs Deſign. 'Tis in vain to preach to ſuch, as diſſent from our Communion, the Danger of *Schiſm*, or cauſeleſs Separation, when, by allowing the *Validity* of their *uncommiſſioned* Teachers Miniſtrations, we give them an Argument to confound all that we can ſay for their Conviction: Nay, it will be in vain to ſay, that ſuch Lay-Adminiſtrations muſt be confirmed by the Biſhop, before they can be valid Sacraments. For if it be demanded, by what Authority the Biſhop requires ſuch Adminiſtrations to be confirmed, and he cannot produce ſufficient *Teſtimonials* from the Scripture to this Purpoſe, (as 'tis much to be feared he cannot) his pretending to the Thing will be a Jeſt, and the *Separatiſts* conclude themſelves as much in the Church, as the *Biſhop* himſelf, while they adminiſter, and receive as good Sacraments as he, and he cannot prove their Lay-Adminiſtrations neceſſary to be confirmed or rectified by the Impoſition of his Hands. But now, on the contrary, to maintain, "That, in the Sa-"craments of the Chriſtian Church, the Divine Authority of the Adminiſtrator is "an eſſential Part; that the Prieſt is as much the Repreſentative of God the Giver, "as the outward Elements are of the Graces given; and that conſequently, theſe "*latter* are no Chriſtian Sacraments, when ſeparate from God's authorized Repre-"ſentative, the Prieſt:" This is the moſt probable Way to make Men tender of the *Unity* of the Church, and cautious how they ſeparate from her; when, how far ſoever a vain Curioſity may prompt them to follow *Lay-Teachers*, the Conſideration of their being deſtitute of Chriſtian Sacraments will be a powerful Means to deter them from withdrawing from the Communion of the *Chriſtian Prieſthood*.

Arguments for Lay-Baptiſm *from* Scripture.

THOSE, on the other Hand, who maintain the *Validity* of Lay-Baptiſm, place all the Weight of their Argument, not on the *Quality* of the *Adminiſtrator*, but on the *Matter* and *Form* of the *Adminiſtration*: They ſuppoſe, that if the Party be baptiſed with Water, and in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, it deſtroys not the *Efficacy* of the Sacrament, though the *Perſon* officiating be a mere *Lay-Man*; and, for the Proof of this, they ſuppoſe a ſtrict Analogy between *Chriſtian* Baptiſm and *Jewiſh* Circumciſion, and thereupon they argue —— That, ſince the *original* Commiſſion, given the *Jews* to circumciſe, did not excuſe the *Laity* from the Right of Circumciſing, or appropriate it to any diſtinct Order of Men; ſince Chriſt, in the Words of the Inſtitution, does not, in expreſs Terms, confine Baptiſm to the Adminiſtration of his *Apoſtles* and their Succeſſors, ſo as that none can diſpenſe true Baptiſm, but they, and ſuch only, as they ſhall authorize; ſince the Divine Authority of diſpenſing *Orders*, and, together with them, a Power of adminiſtering Sacraments, is ſtill in Diſpute, whether it be veſted in the Epiſcopate only, or not equally in the *Preſbytery*, which makes the Foundation of Baptiſm precarious; ſince the *Neceſſity* of Baptiſm is ſo great, that there is no obtaining Salvation without it, and any Expedient may be made uſe of, rather than ſuffer a Perſon to go *unbaptized*; ſince God *deſires Mercy rather than Sacrifice*, and will not permit a *Defect* in ſome ſmall Circumſtance to *cancel* an Action, when the great *Eſſentials* of his Inſtitutions are obſerved; ſince *what ought not to be done, may be valid, when done*, and every *Uſurpation* in the Adminiſtrator may not deſtroy the *Effect* of his Adminiſtrations, [u] as is evident in the Caſe of *Caiaphas*, the ſacrilegious and uſurping High-Prieſt, * whoſe Authority our Saviour nevertheleſs owned, and whoſe Oblations the People nevertheleſs relied on: Since theſe Things are ſo, *ſay they*, we ſee no Reaſon, why the *Character* of the Perſon officiating ſhould be eſſential to this Sacrament, or why the Baptiſms of our *Anti-Epiſcopal Diſſenters*, and of ſome *foreign Churches*, who are deſtitute of Epiſcopal Ordination, ſhould not be eſteemed good and valid; for, are not all Chriſtians, in the Apoſtle's Opinion, [x] *an holy Prieſthood, to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jeſus Chriſt*? And may not our Saviour's Words concerning the Man, who caſt out Devils in his Name, and yet did not follow him, in ſome Meaſure, be applicable in this Caſe, [y] *forbid him not; for he that is not againſt us, is for us.*

The Practice of the Primitive *Church.*

FROM the Senſe of the Scripture, they proceed to the *Practice* of the *Primitive* Church; and herein, though they grant, that, in *ordinary Caſes*, *Laymen* were always debarred from meddling with the Adminiſtration of Baptiſm, [z] yet, that in Caſes of *extraordinary* Exigence, and where no publick Miniſter could be procured, they were

[t] Eph. iv. 11, 12. [u] *Burnet*, on the Articles. * John xviii. 22, 23. [x] 1 Pet. ii. 9.
[y] Luke ix. 50. [z] *Bingham*'s Hiſtory of Lay-Baptiſm.

were permitted to do it, is evident, *ſay they*, from the Teſtimony of *Tertullian* [a], St *Jerom*, St *Auſtin* [b], and ſeveral other ancient Fathers; the Determination of the Council of *Eliberis* in the *Weſt*, and of the Church of *Alexandria* in the *Eaſt*; all agreeing [d] in this Poſition, "That, in Time of Neceſſity, when a Biſhop, a Preſ-"byter, or other Miniſter could not be found, and a Man deſired Baptiſm, who "was in Danger of Death, in that Caſe, Laymen were uſed to give them that Sa-"crament, which they themſelves had received, rather than that he ſhould die "without it." The Baptiſms of ſuch *Hereticks*, as denied the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, (wherein the very Form of the Ordinance conſiſted) they own indeed, were accounted *null*; but whoſoever preſerved the Form entire, and baptiſed into the Faith of this holy *Myſtery*, their Baptiſms were always accounted *valid*, even tho' they *ſeparated* from the Communion of the Church, and held Principles of a dangerous Nature in other Reſpects. Nay, [e] even jocular and ludicrous Baptiſms, when adminiſtered in their proper Form, though unauthorized and irregular in the Adminiſtrator, were accounted effectual to the Perſons baptiſed, and accordingly ratified by Epiſcopal Hands; if the Credit of ſome very ancient Hiſtorians may be relied on. "For 'tis the Name of the *Trinity*, [f] ſays *Optatus*, and not the Work of the *Agent*, "that ſanctifies the Myſtery, and Miniſters of Baptiſm are *Labourers* only, not "*Lords* of the Action."

FROM the Practice of the Primitive Church, they proceed to that of our own; and here they alledge, that in the old Liturgy, in the Time of King *Edward*, and Queen *Elizabeth*, the *Rubrick of primitive Baptiſm* running in theſe Words, "Firſt "let them, that be preſent, call upon God for his Grace, and ſay the Lord's "Prayer, if the Time will ſuffer: And then one of them ſhall name the Child, "and dip him into the Water, or pour Water upon him, ſaying theſe Words, *I "baptiſe thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*;" that the Rubrick, I ſay, running in ſuch general Terms, gave Toleration to Laymen to baptiſe Children privately, without a publick Miniſter: And though, after the Conference at *Hampton-Court*, this Office was reſtrained to the *Miniſter of the Pariſh*, or ſome other *lawful Miniſter*, to preſerve better Order and Regularity; yet, that Baptiſm, even when adminiſtered by *illegal* and *unauthorized* Perſons, ſuch as diſſent from our Communion, and ſet themſelves up in Oppoſition to *Epiſcopacy*, is not abſolutely *null* and void, and as ſuch to be repeated by a *lawful* Miniſter, in order to obtain Salvation, is evident from the Practice of our Church, which not only holds Communion with Churches abroad, deſtitute of *Epiſcopal* Ordination, but even receives *ſchiſmatical* Converts (on whom the true Form of Baptiſm has paſt, notwithſtanding the Default of the Adminiſtrator) into her Boſom, without any Thoughts of Rebaptization: For, "though the Defect of the Baptiſer, [g] ſays our "learned *Hooker*, may make the Sacrament without Fruit, as well, in ſome Caſes, "to him that receiveth, as to him that giveth it; yet no Diſability of either Part "can ſo far make it fruſtrate and without Effect, as to deprive it of the very "Nature of true Baptiſm, having all Things elſe, which the Ordinance of Chriſt "requireth."

The Practice of our own.

AND indeed, if the *Being* and Efficacy of a Sacrament depended upon Man, ſo that none, but a *Prieſt*, every Way qualified without Exception, might be allowed to baptiſe, [h] how dreadful would the Conſequence be? How many foreign reformed Churches, which have no *Epiſcopal* Ordination, would be effectually *unchurched*, as

The Conſequences of the contrary Opinion.

[a] De Bapt. c. 17. [b] Cont. Lucif. 4. [c] Apud Gratian. de Conſecrat. Diſt. 4. c. 2. [d] Can. 38. [e] Whilſt *Alexander*, Biſhop of *Alexandria*, on a certain Day, being the Feſtival of *Peter the Martyr*, after the ſolemn Service of the Church was over, was entertaining himſelf with a Proſpect towards the Sea, he chanced to eſpy a Company of Boys at Play, whereof *Athanaſius* acted the Biſhop, others Prieſts, and ſo proceeded to baptize ſeveral Children, who repreſented *Catechumens* and *Competents* in Form. *Alexander*, obſerving them for ſome Time, ſent at laſt for the Boys to be brought before him, and underſtanding, from their own Relation, that this ludicrous Baptiſm of theirs was performed according to the Rites and Orders of the Church, was of Opinion, with other Biſhops preſent with him, that the Children, ſo chriſtened, were not to be re-baptiſed; whereupon he confirmed them with Chriſm, and Impoſition of Hands. This Story is related by *Socrates*, [Lib. i. c. 15. *Sozomen*, [Lib. ii. c. 17.] and *Ruffinus*, [Lib. i. c. 14.] who ſays, he had it from the Mouth of thoſe, who converſed with *Athanaſius* himſelf: Of later Years, it is confirmed by *Whitgift*, *Abbot*, *Cotelerius*, *Page*, and many other learned Men, that might be named; though Dr *Cave*, in his *Hiſtoria Literaria*, *Du Pin*, in his Notes on *Athanaſius*, in his *Nouvelle Bibliotheque*, and the learned *Benedictin*, in the Life printed before *Athanaſius*'s Works, in ſome Mens Opinion, are thought to have exploded it. *Vid. Bingham*'s Hiſtory, and *Hickes*'s Letter to Mr. *Laurence*. [f] His Words are theſe: *Non dixit (nempe Jeſus) Apoſtolis, vos facite, alii non faciant. Quiſquis in Nomine Patris, Filii, & Spiritus Sancti baptizaverit, Apoſtolorum munus implevit. —— Ergo Nomen eſt quod ſanctificat, non Opus*, &c. Cont. Parmen. Lib. v. [g] Eccleſ. Polit. Lib. v. [h] *Abbot*, Prælect. 2. de Bapt.

being deſtitute of a Chriſtian Miniſtry, and conſequently, of Chriſtian Baptiſm? How great a Part of faithful and pious Chriſtians would, in this Caſe, want the *Seal* of their Chriſtianity? Or, who could be certain, that himſelf was baptiſed, in every Reſpect, as he ought to be? One, who was never *ordained*, may take upon him the Perſon of a Prieſt; one, who was never *baptiſed*, may be admitted to holy Orders: Or, if he was baptiſed and ordained, he may be *conſecrated* by a Biſhop, that was no *lawful* Biſhop, nor had any Authority to give the Power of *Impoſition of Hands* to others: In all which Caſes, how great muſt the Doubt and Perplexity be, which will attend the Generality of Chriſtians, if the Being and Efficacy of this Sacrament depend upon the Perſon that adminiſters it: And therefore to conclude with an Illuſtration of this Matter, taken from the Example of Preaching; "He that "ſpeaketh the Words of the Scripture, (ſays [l] a learned Divine of our Church) and "expoundeth them, may be ſaid to *preach*, though he be not thereunto called; "which likewiſe holds good in the Adminiſtration of the Sacraments. For, as the "Word of God is the Word of God, by whomſoever it is preached, Miniſter, or "no Miniſter; ſo the Sacrament of Baptiſm is *true* Baptiſm, by whomſoever it be "celebrated; the *Uſurper* of the Office hath to anſwer for his *Intruſion*, but the "Sacrament is not thereby *defiled*."

The Determination of the whole.

IF this may be thought a good Deciſion of the Controverſy, (as indeed in ſuch a Silence of Scripture, and Contrariety of Opinions on both Sides, it will be no eaſy Matter to find out a better) then will the Reſult be, that, though every one, who uſurps the Office of Baptiſing, which belongs not to him, is a great *Tranſgreſſor* in the Sight of God, and all his Acts are *vain*, as to what concerns *himſelf*; (for they ſhall never be accounted to him as an acceptable Service, worthy of a Reward, but rather expoſe him to Divine Wrath and Puniſhment) yet are they not therefore utterly *null* and *void*, in Reſpect of the *Receiver* alſo; he ſhall not be ſo far a Sufferer as to become *no* Chriſtian by Reaſon of the other's Default; though it will be thought no Breach of Charity, I hope, to place him in the ſame Rank and Capacity with thoſe ancient *Schiſmaticks* and *Hereticks*, [k] whoſe Baptiſm, if done in due Form, intitled them to ſome Privileges, but not all, that might have been expected from it in the Church; made them *Members* indeed of *Chriſt*'s viſible Body, but did not convey to them *internal* and inviſible Grace, particularly, [l] the Grace of *Unity*, and *Charity*, which compleats all other Graces, and which Men of their Diſpoſitions were not ſuppoſed qualified to give, nor they, who deſired Baptiſm at their Hands, qualified to receive, till they returned, with Repentance, to the Boſom of the Church, and had the Defect of their Baptiſm ſupplied by (the only Method made Uſe of in the Primitive Church) *the Impoſition of the Biſhop's Hands*.

The Perſons to whom *Baptiſm is to be adminiſtered.*

[m] AT the firſt Preaching of the Goſpel, the main Body of Chriſtians conſiſted of thoſe, who had, by the Apoſtles Preaching, been converted from the *Jewiſh*, or from the *Gentile* Religion, to the *Chriſtian*; and theſe were conſequently baptiſed into the Name of *Chriſt*, after they were come to *riper Years*; but afterwards, when the Chriſtian Religion had ſpread itſelf over whole Countries and Nations, the Church conſiſted chiefly of ſuch, as were born of Chriſtian *Parents*, and educated, from the Beginning, in the Chriſtian Religion, and theſe were generally, even in the *Primitive* Times, admitted into the Church by Baptiſm *in their Infancy*: But becauſe the Baptiſing of Infants, which our Church defends, has been a Diſpute of ſome Continuance, and, of late eſpecially, on both Sides, managed with a great deal of Art and Dexterity; it may not be improper, firſt, to ſtate the Arguments, which oppoſe this Practice, in a fair Light, and then, endeavour to give them a ſatisfactory Solution.

Arguments againſt Infant-Baptiſm.

THOSE, who reject the Baptiſm of Infants, are earneſt to maintain, "That "there is no ſuch *Analogy* between Circumciſion in the *Jewiſh*, and Baptiſm in the "*Chriſtian* Church, as to draw a Parallel between them; [n] and that the Cuſtom of "baptiſing *Proſelytes*, and, together with them, their Wives and Children, into "the Communion of the *Jews*, has no Manner of Relation to us, nor ſhould be "any Rule for our Procedure. The only Direction of our Behaviour in this Particular, *ſay they*, is the Inſtitution of *Chriſt*, but in it we find no Mention made of "*little Children*, nor in any other Portion of Scripture; on the contrary, all thoſe "*Paſſages*, wherein Baptiſm is commanded, do immediately relate to *adult* Perſons, "ſince

[l] *Whitgift*'s Defence of the Anſwer to the Admonit. Tract. 9.
[l] *Bingham*, ibid.
[m] *Clarke*'s Practical Eſſays.
[n] Vid. *Gale*'s Reflections on *Wall*'s Hiſtory of Infant-Baptiſm, and *Stennett*'s Anſwer to *Ruſſen*, *paſſim*.
[k] *Bingham*'s Hiſtory of Lay-Baptiſm.

" ſince they only can be ſuppoſed capable of that *Repentance*, and *Faith*, and *In-*
" *ſtruction*, which are the neceſſary *Qualifications* for the Reception of this Ordi-
" nance. Inſtances of Baptiſms, indeed, there are ſeveral in the Hiſtory of the
" Apoſtles, but no one can be produced, from whence it may clearly be gathered,
" that *Infants* were the Subject of that *Sacrament*; and if we deſcend to the Senſe
" and Practice of the *ancient* Church, tho' it could be proved, that the Doctrine of
" *Pædo-baptiſm* was univerſally maintained, yet even would not *that* be of Autho-
" rity enough to bear down the plain Inſtitution of *Chriſt*: Whereas, on the con-
" trary, it is manifeſt, that this Doctrine is ſo far from pretending to *Antiquity*, that,
" in the earlieſt Times, there are ſeveral *Authors* who make no Mention of it, ſome
" that utterly reject it; nor was it ever aſſerted by any *Council*, till that of *Carthage*,
" which was almoſt 400 Years after *Chriſt*. It is no hard Matter then to conceive,
" how the Practice of *Pædo-baptiſm* came to be introduced, when once the Doctrine
" of the *abſolute Neceſſity* of Baptiſm, in general, began to prevail: For if none but
" the Baptized were to be ſaved, 'tis no Wonder, that *Parents*, led by the *Tender-*
" *neſs* of their Affections, were willing, upon very ſlender Grounds, to be perſuaded
" to a Practice, which might put them out of Pain, in a Matter ſo near to them,
" as the Salvation of their *Childrens Souls*."

THIS is the Subſtance of what the *Antipædo-baptiſts* have to ſay; and (to give them a proper Anſwer) it is to be conſidered, [n] that tho' Baptiſm and Circumciſion do not, in every Particular, come up to a *Parallel*, yet there are two Things, wherein they manifeſtly agree; the *one* is, that both were the Rites of Admiſſion into their reſpective Covenants, and to the Bleſſings and Privileges, which aroſe out of them; and the *other* is, that in them both there was an Obligation laid on the Perſons [o] to the Obſervance of that whole Law, to which they were ſo initiated. Parents had (by the *Jewiſh* Conſtitution) an Authority given them to include their Children under this Obligation; ſo that the Will of the Child was ſo far put in the Power of the Parents, that they could bring them under *federal* Obligations, and thereby procure to them a Share in federal Bleſſings: And hence, very probably, it was, that, when the *Jews* made *Proſelytes*, they conſidered them as having the like Authority over their Children, and therefore, upon their Requeſt, firſt circumciſed, and then baptized them, though they were but *Infants*.

Fully anſwered.

[p] THAT it was a Cuſtom of the *Jews*, before our Saviour's Time, (and as they themſelves affirm, from the Beginning of the Law) to *baptize*, as well as *circumciſe* any *Proſelyte*, that came over to them from other Nations; and in caſe ſuch a Perſon had any *Infant-children* then born to him, that they, at their Father's Deſire, were, in like Manner, circumciſed, and baptized, and admitted as Proſelytes, [q] is manifeſt from the inconteſtable Evidence of their Writers. The Incapacity of the Child, to declare or promiſe for himſelf, was not looked on as a *Bar* againſt his Reception into the Covenant, but the Deſire of his Father to dedicate him to the True God was accounted *available*, and ſufficient to juſtify his Admiſſion: And the Reaſon they give is, becauſe the Things, they were admitted to, were undoubtedly *for their Good*; for, *one may privilege a Perſon*, ſay they, *though he be incapable of knowing it, but one ought not to diſprivilege any one, without his Knowledge and Conſent.*

Proſelytes *baptized in the* Jewiſh *Church*;

NOW this gives great Light for the better underſtanding the Meaning of our Saviour, when he bids his Apoſtles, *Go, and teach all Nations, baptizing them*: For when a Commiſſion is given in ſuch ſhort Words, and there is no expreſs Direction, what they ſhall do with the Infants of thoſe, who become *Proſelytes*; the natural and obvious Interpretation is, that they *muſt do*, in that Matter, as they, and the Church, in which they lived, always uſed to do. [r] Since therefore our bleſſed Saviour took Baptiſm, and appointed it to be the *federal* Admiſſion to his Religion, as Circumciſion had been in the *Moſaick* Diſpenſation; it is reaſonable to believe, that, except where himſelf declared a *Change*, in all other Reſpects, it was to go on, and continue

Which illuſtrates the Words of the Inſtitution.

[n] *Burnet*, on the Articles. [o] Gal. v. 3. [p] *Wall*'s Hiſtory of Infant-Baptiſm. [q] I ſhall here add ſome Authorities to what were mentioned before. *In all Ages, when an* Ethnic *is willing to enter into the Covenant, and gather himſelf under the Wings of the Majeſty of God, and take upon him the Yoke of the Law, he muſt be circumciſed, and baptized, and bring a Sacrifice; or, if it be a Woman, be baptized, and bring a Sacrifice.* Maimonides Iſuri Bia, c. xiii. *When a Proſelyte is received, he muſt be circumciſed, and then, when he is cured,* (of the Wound of Circumciſion) *they baptize him in the Preſence of two wiſe Men, ſaying,* Behold, he is an *Iſraelite* in all Things. Talmud. Babyl. Maſs. Jevamoth, Fol. 47. *If, with a Proſelyte, his Sons and his Daughters be made Proſelytes, that which is done by the Father redounded to their Good.* Gemara Babyl. Chetuboth, c. i. fol. 11. If any one is deſirous of more Authorities of this Nature, he will find Plenty, in *Ainſworth*, on *Gen.* xvii. and *Hammond*, on *Matth.* iii. xix. xxiii. *John* iii. In *Selden, de Jure Nat. & Gent. Lightfoot Hor. Hæbr.* and in the learned Author of the Diſcourſe concerning *Lent*. Pt. II. c. ii. [r] *Burnet*, on the Articles.

continue as before. [t] Had Infants, indeed, never had the Seal of the Covenant applied to them, it had been, not only *expedient*, but *neceſſary*, that our Saviour ſhould have *particularly* named them, and thereby declared his Intentions of enlarging his Mercy and Loving-kindneſs towards them; but Infants being ever included in it, and the Seal of the Promiſe being always applied to them, there could be no Reaſon for giving them a new Title to what they were inſtated in before. On the contrary, had it been *Chriſt*'s Deſign, that Children ſhould no longer be received into the Church, he ſhould, by an expreſs Order, have excluded them; for they having a former *Grant* of being admitted into Covenant, and being in actual Poſſeſſion of the *Sign* and *Seal* of it, there was a Neceſſity of an expreſs and direct Command to deprive them of it; and our Saviour muſt have declared, "That whereas "Children were formerly received into the Covenant by Circumciſion, he now or-"dered the contrary, and would have none admitted into the Church by Baptiſm, "but grown Perſons, capable of underſtanding the Nature and End of it." But ſince we meet with no Declaration of this Kind, and know, that it would have been inconſiſtent with the Mercy of the Goſpel, which was not to *ſtraiten*, but *widen* the *Gates* of the Church, and make it more capacious to receive People of all Nations, Sexes, and Ages, we may ſafely conclude, that if *Infants* were admitted by the *Old* Diſpenſation, they are not to be excluded by the *New*.

Childrens Right to the Covenant.

THAT, in the Church of the *Jews*, [u] Infants were a Part of thoſe, who entered into Covenant with God, is evident from that memorable Paſſage in *Deuteronomy*, where *Moſes* tells the *Iſraelites*, [u] *Ye ſtand this Day, all of you, before the Lord your God, your little Ones, and your Wives, and the Stranger that is in thy Camp, that thou ſhouldſt enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee:* And that, in the Chriſtian Church, Children, in like Manner, are under the Covenant of Grace, is more than intimated in St *Peter*'s Exhortation to ſuch Perſons, as he had converted, that they would receive Baptiſm, in order to make their Children likewiſe capable of it; becauſe * *the Promiſe was made to them, and to their Children, i. e.* the Promiſe of *Remiſſion of Sins, and of receiving the Holy Ghoſt*, (mentioned immediately before) which appertained to the Covenant, belonged both to them and their Children. Now, [x] if the Promiſe and Covenant belonged to theſe *latter*, then is there no Queſtion to be made, but that Baptiſm, which is the *Seal* of the Covenant, and the viſible Confirmation of the Promiſe, belongs to them likewiſe: And, if Infants have a covenanted Right to Baptiſm, we may ſafely infer, that *Chriſt* never intended to debar them of it; and, conſequently, though they are not expreſſly named, yet they are certainly implied, in the Commiſſion of *Baptizing all Nations*. For, [y] ſince the *Univerſal* includes all *Particulars*, and Children make up a very conſiderable Part of all Nations, the Words of the Commiſſion may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to comprize them; nor can we forbear concluding, when we read [z] of whole Families baptized, but that there muſt, of Courſe, be ſeveral Children among them, eſpecially when it is conſidered farther, that Children are no improper *Objects* of Baptiſm.

They are capable of the Ends of Baptiſm.

THEY cannot, indeed, underſtand the *Nature* and *End* of that Inſtitution; but neither were the *Jewiſh* Children, at eight Days old, able to know what the *Purpoſe* of Circumciſion was. They have no *actual* Faith of their own, but the Faith of thoſe, who preſent them in the Congregation, is *imputed*, and themſelves are *ſanctified* by being born of believing Parents. They have no Manner of room for *Repentance*, but then they have *Innocence*, which is a much better Qualification; and tho' they cannot ſtipulate for themſelves, yet have they *Proxies* and *Sureties* (of early Inſtitution, [a] both in the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* Church) to contract in their Names, whoſe Act is looked upon, and accepted by God, as theirs. In the mean Time, that *Infants*, and young Children (tho' inſenſible of what is done for them) may have *Favours* conveyed to them, and are capable of receiving *ſpiritual Advantage* to their Souls, is plain from that Paſſage in the Evangelical Hiſtory, where, when [b] *young Children were brought to Chriſt, he took them up in his Arms, laid his Hands on them, and bleſſed them*;

[t] *Holt*'s Expoſition of the Church-Catechiſm. [u] *Hopkins*'s Doctrine of the two Sacraments. [u] Deut. xxix. 10, &c. * Acts ii. 39. [x] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [y] *Hole*, ibid. [z] The Word בית, which, in this Senſe, is rendered *Houſhold*, without Doubt, is of a very large Signification, and takes in every individual Perſon of the Family, Women as well as Men, Children as well as grown Perſons; and therefore we have Reaſon to believe, that when this Word is uſed, Perſons, not only of both Sexes, but of different Ages, are contained in it, and are to be underſtood by it. *Edwards*, ibid. [a] *Wall*'s Infant-Baptiſm, Introduction, Sect. 34. and P. I. c. 4. P. II. c. 9. [b] Luke xviii. 15.

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them; namely, [c] by praying for a Bleſſing, by pronouncing a Bleſſing, and by actually conferring a Bleſſing on them; and if they are capable of being *bleſſed*, why ſhould they be thought incapable of being *baptiſed*; ſince Baptiſm, in the main, is but a *ſolemn Benediction*, as it inſtates us in the Privileges and Benefits of the Goſpel, ſuch as Adoption and Grace, the Pardon of our Sins, and the Acceptance of our Perſons?

IN ſhort [d], the Covenant of Grace is a *Deed of Gift*, made to us by *Chriſt*, wherein he promiſes to beſtow upon us eternal Life and Happineſs: And, as it would be abſurd to ſay, that a Child's Name ought not to be put into any *Deed* or *Legacy*, until he came of Age to underſtand it; ſo it is equally abſurd, and far more injurious, to exclude our Children from the heavenly *Legacy*, which Chriſt, out of the Riches of his Goodneſs, hath *bequeathed* to them; eſpecially conſidering, [e] that the *Primitive* Church did all along, and [f] every *National* Church, at this Day, in the World does admit their Children into the Chriſtian Covenant by this Ordinance; that [g] many of the moſt ancient Writers plead the Neceſſity of it, in order to the Expiation of *Original* Guilt, and [h] ſpeak of it as a great Sin in Parents, or others, that have Opportunity, to ſuffer any Child under their Care, or any other Perſon, to die unbaptiſed. [i] 'Tis plain, from what we read, that theſe Writers had conſidered the Reaſons, which the *Antipædo-baptiſts* now alledge as *Objections* againſt baptiſing Infants, *that they have no Senſe, no Faith, no actual Sin*, &c. and yet they did not account them of Validity enough, to with-hold their Children from this *ſalutary* Inſtitution; and though, for the more orderly Adminiſtration of this Sacrament, it was enacted, that none ſhould be baptiſed, but at certain Times of the Year; [k] yet they always excepted *Infants*, and *ſick Perſons*, and for this Reaſon [l] many of them allowed *Laymen* to baptiſe, in Caſe of Neceſſity.

The Practice of the Primitive *Church.*

NAY, ſo *univerſal* was the Practice of Infant-Baptiſm, that for the firſt four hundred Years after *Chriſt*, (as [m] a very good Judge has drawn up the Account) there appears but one Man, namely *Tertullian*, who ſeems to diſcountenance it; and that, not upon Account of its being any Way *unlawful*, [n] but merely becauſe he thought it more expedient to have it deferred, till Children had attained to ſome Meaſure of Knowledge. Hereby, however, he confirms us in the Opinion, that this Kind of Baptiſm was the received *Practice* of the Church; (becauſe we find him arguing againſt it, and pretending to give Reaſons for its Delay) and, conſequently, that there is a great deal of Truth in what St *Auſtin* [o] tells us, *viz.* that *he never heard, nor read of any Chriſtian, Catholick, or Sectary, but what always held that Infants are baptiſed for the Forgiveneſs of Sins*; and therefore we need leſs wonder, that we find ſo little Mention of it in ſeveral *ancient Books*, and ſo little Notice taken of it in the *Decrees* of *Councils*, when the Thing was ſo practiſed, and allowed on all Hands, that there was [p] never any *Controverſy* ſtarted about it, but what has ſprung up within theſe *few Years*.

Infant-Baptiſm univerſal.

IT is a wrong Suggeſtion then to ſay, that the Opinion of the *abſolute Neceſſity* of Baptiſm (which never prevailed till after the *Pelagian* Hereſy [q] aroſe) gave *Occaſion* to the Practice of baptiſing Infants, which, from the Beginning, was never intermitted in the Chriſtian Church; but, that it was the *Tenderneſs of the Parents Love*, which conſtrained them to dedicate their Children to God ſo very young, is a true Aſſertion: And well it were, that the like tender Affection would provoke ſome among us to conſider ſeriouſly the Nature of this *ſacred Rite*, and ſo endeavour to overcome the Prejudices, which they unhappily have conceived againſt it. It may ſeem a *mean* Thing, perhaps, for an Infant to be ſprinkled with a *little Water*; but

And for what Reaſon.

[c] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [d] *Hopkins*'s Doctrine of the two Sacraments. [e] Vid. *Wall*'s Hiſtory, P. I. *paſſim*. [f] P. II. c. viii. [g] P. I. *paſſim*. [h] Ibid. c. iv, vi, xv, xviii, &c. [i] Ibid. c. xiv, xv, xix. [k] Ibid. c. xvii. [l] Ibid. c. iv. [m] Ibid. *ad finem*. [n] Ibid. P. I. *paſſim*. [o] Contra Pelag.

[p] About the Year 1130, there aroſe a Sect among the *Waldenſes*, (a Nick-name given to the firſt *Reformers*) which declared againſt the Baptiſm of Infants, as being incapable of Salvation. But the main Body of them rejected that Opinion, and they, who held it, quickly dwindled away, and diſappeared; nor was there any more heard of that Tenet, till the Riſing of the *German Antipædo-baptiſts*, *Anno* 1522. *Wall*, P. II. c. vii.

[q] This Hereſy was not broached till the Year of *Chriſt* 410: And their principal Tenet, relating to Baptiſm, was—— That the Doctrine of *Original* Sin, and Natural Corruption, by which Perſons are ſuppoſed to be born under a Neceſſity of ſinning, did caſt a Reflection on the Honour and Juſtice of God, who gives us our Being; and therefore they ſaid, ——That the Baptiſm of Infants was not for any Sin they had, but to gain them Admittance into the Kingdom of Heaven. For they ſuppoſed that Children, though they were not baptiſed, were to have an eternal and happy Life, not in the Kingdom of Heaven indeed, becauſe our Saviour (*John* iii. 5.) had determined the contrary; but in ſome other Place, though they could not define where: And this engaged their Adverſaries (and among the reſt St *Auſtin*) to carry the *Neceſſity of Baptiſm*, in order to Salvation, to a Degree of *Abſoluteneſs* a little too ſevere. *Wall*'s Hiſtory, P. I. c. xix.

let us look on the Author and Institutor of this Sacrament; remember his Design in it, and then it will no longer appear low and contemptible: For with *Christ*'s Appointments there goes a special *Power* and Virtue; his Institutions and Ordinances are accompanied with a *Blessing*, yea with a Multitude of inestimable Blessings: And therefore why should any of us be such Enemies to those, whom we pretend to love unfeignedly, and so negligent of their Safety, as not speedily to deliver them from the Guilt and Danger of *Original Sin*, rescue them from the Power of the *Prince of this World*, and place them under the Guardianship of God and good Angels? Why so regardless of their true Honour and Interest, as to delay our adopting them into the *Family* of God, in order to have them translated into the Kingdom of his beloved Son? Can the *Christian* be thought so much a *better*, and more gracious Covenant, than that of *Moses*, supposing it to exclude so many Millions of Souls, which this other readily received, nay, peremptorily demanded? And is it not enough, that these are not positively refused, to satisfy us, that though the Ordinance be changed, yet the *Subjects* and *Privileges* of it continue still the same? Why then do any of us undertake to make the Gates yet straiter, to shut up the Mercies, and lessen the Family of God? Why represent the blessed *Jesus* less kind than *Moses*? No, let us rather lose no Moment's Time of impressing on our Offspring the Seals of the new Covenant: Let us make the best Reparation we can, for the Stain and Guilt we conveyed to them, by seeing them immediately washed in that *Fountain, opened* by *Jesus Christ, for Sin, and for Uncleanness*, even the Laver of Regeneration, the Sacrament of *Baptism*. Let us deliver them up to his Care, who is gracious to all Ages, and cannot but embrace, and *adopt* the tender Innocence of those, who are propounded as a Pattern to all, that *enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. And are those, to whom all, who enter in, must be like, not capable of entering in themselves? Never let such a Thought harbour in our Breasts: Only, withal, let it be our constant Business, to *second* and confirm these good Beginnings by timely Instruction, and a virtuous Education. For dreadful will their Condemnation be, whose own Bowels shall rise up against them at the Day of Judgment, and upbraid them with that cruel Fondness, which laid the Foundation of their Vices, and their Torments: But blessed are those pious Souls, who increase the Kingdom of God with every Addition to their own Family, and double every Joy in Heaven to themselves, by those of the Children, whom they have led, or sent before them thither; by a Race of good Men here, and glorified Saints hereafter. And so we proceed to consider,

An Exhortation to Parents.

The Pre-requisites to Baptism.

3. THE *Manner*, in which Baptism was used to be administered. And to this Purpose we must in the first Place observe, [s] that the *two Things*, which were indispensably necessary (we speak now of the Baptism of the *adult*) to prepare them for this Solemnity, and to qualify them to be Partakers of this holy Sacrament, where *Faith* and *Repentance, i. e.* a *Declaration* of their firm Belief of the great Doctrines of the Christian Religion, and of their *Resolution* to live suitably to that Belief.

IN the Times of the Apostles, when the Miracles, wrought by those first Preachers of Christianity, were so *convincing*, and the extraordinary Grace of God, poured down upon Men, so *effectual*, as to convert them to the Faith of *Christ*, as it were in a Moment; a single Declaration of their Faith and Repentance seems to have been accounted sufficient to prepare them to receive Baptism immediately; for [t] so *Philip* baptised the *Eunuch*, and [u] St *Paul* the *Gaoler*, upon the first Indication of their Conversion: But, afterwards, when these mighty Operations of the Spirit grew less common, and Men began to be convinced, more gradually, by the ordinary Means of the Preaching of the Word, it was not thought sufficient, in most Churches, for Men, upon their Conversion, barely to *profess* their Faith and Repentance, but they were obliged to give some *Evidence* of the Sincerity of both, before they were admitted into the Church by Baptism.

IF they had formerly been great and grievous Sinners, they were to evidence their Repentance [*] by *Prayers*, and *Watchings*, and *Fastings*, and *Confessing of Sins*: They were to demonstrate, by the real Change of their whole Course of Life, that they had actually renounced all the Rites and Practices of their former Profession, and would, for the future, conform their Lives to the Rules of the Christian Institution: They were to endeavour *to purge their Consciences* from every *evil Work*, that their Baptism might be, [x] *not the putting away the Filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God*. They, who were willing thus to make Proof of their Repentance,

[s] *Clarke*'s Essay on Baptism. c. xx. [t] Acts viii. 38. [u] Ibid. xvi. 33. [*] Tertul. de Baptis. [x] 1 Pet. iii. 21.

Repentance, and of their ſincere Deſire to be admitted into the Church of God, were *catechiſed* in all the *neceſſary Articles* of the *Chriſtian* Faith, which they were to make publick Profeſſion of at their Baptiſm, and were fully inſtructed in the *moral Precepts* of that Divine Religion, which they were to practiſe the remaining Part of their Lives, and then they were thought prepared for the *Waſhing of Regeneration*, and *the Renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*.

The Manner of Baptiſm.

WHEN the Perſon to be baptiſed was thus prepared, and [y] the Time appointed come, he was brought by the Prieſt to [z] a convenient Place, where there was Plenty of Water, and, [a] being ſtript of his Cloaths, *in the firſt Place*, [b] he renounced the *Devil*, and *all his Works*, the *Pomps* and *Vanities of this wicked World*, and not only all the *ſinful*, but even all the *lawful* Deſires of the Fleſh, ſo far as to keep within the moſt ſtrict Bounds, and the moſt exact Obedience to the Laws of Reaſon and Religion. *After this*, he made Profeſſion of his Faith in one God the Father Almighty, *&c.* in *Jeſus Chriſt* his only Son our Lord, in the *Holy Ghoſt*, *&c.* and in the Catholick Church, *&c.* and *then* was baptiſed in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, being *three Times* immerſed in the Water, as each Perſon in the ever-bleſſed Trinity was named. This being done, [c] he was ſigned on the Forehead with the Sign of the *Croſs*, and then coming out of the Water, and being anointed with Oil, (as the Cuſtom of ſome Churches was) he was cloathed with [d] a white Garment, and ſo admitted to the Communion of the Saints, with this Form of Words pronounced by thoſe that put it on: *Receive this white and immaculate Cloathing; and bring it with thee unſpotted before the Tribunal of Chriſt, and thou ſhalt inherit eternal Life.*

THIS is the Form and Manner, wherein *adult* Perſons, converted to *Chriſtianity*, were baptiſed in the *Primitive* Church: Nor was there any great Difference in the Baptiſm of *Infants*, ſaving, that they had *Sponſors* or *Godfathers*, (for [e] there is no Time or Age of the Church, in which there is any Appearance, that Infants were *uſually* baptiſed without them) who anſwered for them, and made the ſame Renunciation and Profeſſions in their Names, which Perſons of *Maturity* made for themſelves. But here a notable Objection will ariſe: For, [f] "if Immerſion, *ſay ſome*, be the Pri- "mitive Form of adminiſtering this holy Rite, how comes *Sprinkling* to be ſubſtituted "in its Place? When neither the Senſe of the Word, nor the Significance of the Act, "nor the Cuſtom of the Church give Countenance to this Practice, but require the "very contrary, upon what Preſumption can we think a Sacrament *valid*, that deviates "ſo groſsly from its *Original* Form?" Now, in order to a right Reſolution of theſe Queſtions, we muſt be careful to diſtinguiſh between what is *neceſſary* and *eſſential* to Baptiſm, and what is only *accidental* and *circumſtantial* to it. [g] As for the *former*, the *Element* of Water, the *Form* of Words in the Adminiſtration, and, (as ſome think) the *Perſons*, duly qualified and authoriſed thereunto, are made *neceſſary* to the Sacrament by the Command of our Saviour, which Things muſt therefore be conſtantly obſerv'd, and kept in the Adminiſtration of it: But as for the *latter*, viz. the *Quantity* of Water, and the *Manner* of uſing it, whether it be by *dipping* or *ſprinkling*, theſe Things, being under no Command, nor any where determined in holy Scripture, are left *indifferent*.

An Objection againſt Sprinkling.

THAT

[y] The uſual Time was at *Eaſter*, or *Whitſuntide*, the Commemoration of our Saviour's *Paſſion* and *Reſurrection*, and of the *great Effuſion* of the *Holy Ghoſt*; Things principally reſpected in this Sacrament. *Clarke*'s Eſſays. [z] Before the *Chriſtian* Religion was ſo far encouraged, as to have Churches built for its Service, they baptiſed in any River, Fountain, or Pond; [*Tert. de Baptiſmo*, c. 4.] but when they came to have Churches, one Part of the Church, or Place nigh the Church, called the *Baptiſtery*, was employed to this Uſe; wherein was a Ciſtern, Font, or Pond, large enough for ſeveral to go into the Water at once; and this was divided into two Parts by a Partition, one for the Men, and the other for the Women. *Wall*'s Hiſtory of Infant-Baptiſm, Vol. IV.

[a] Though the ancient *Chriſtians* were baptiſed *ſtark naked*, yet great Care was taken to preſerve the Modeſty of any Woman; for, till ſhe was undreſſed, and her Body under Water, none but Women came within Sight of her, and then the Prieſt putting her Head under Water, and uſing the common Form of Baptiſm, went his Way, and left her to the Care of the Women, to take her out of the Water, and cloath her again with the white Garment. *Wall*, ibid. [b] In the Church of *Jeruſalem*, the Form, as we read in St *Cyril*, was, *I renounce thee, O Satan, and all thy Works, all thy Pomps, and all thy Service*; where, *under the Name of the Devil's Works*, as he explains himſelf, *is comprehended all Kind of Sin*. *Wall*, ibid. c. ix. [c] What they intended by this Sign was, to declare, that they would not be aſhamed of the Croſs of *Chriſt*; never be abaſhed at the Flouts of the *Heathens*, who objected to them, that the Perſon, in whom they truſted as their God, had been executed for a *Malefactor*; never to be ſcandalized, if it came to be their Fortune to ſuffer it themſelves: On the contrary, they voluntarily owned it as their Share and Allotment in the World, and were willing to undergo it, whenever God ſhould think fit. *Wall*, ibid. [d] By this was ſignified, that, being now *waſhed from their Sins in the Blood of the Lamb*, they had *put on Chriſt*, *were become Children of Light, and of the Day*, and were reſolved to keep themſelves unſpotted from the World. *Wall*, ibid. [e] Ibid. Part ii. c. 9. [f] See *Stennet*'s Anſwer to *Ruſſen*, and *Gale*'s Reflections on *Wall*'s Hiſtory. [g] *Hole*'s Expoſition, Vol. II.

THAT the Manner of Baptiſing was, by the Ancients, accounted no more, than a mere Circumſtance, no Way eſſential to the Ordinance itſelf, is evident from their uſing either *Immerſion*, or *Effuſion*, as Occaſion required. For [h] though the general and ordinary Way was to baptiſe by *Immerſion*, or *dipping* the Perſon, whether it was Infant, or grown Man or Woman, into the Water; yet, that, in caſe of Sickneſs, Weakneſs, Haſte, Want of Water, or other ſuch extraordinary Occaſions, Baptiſm was performed by *Effuſion* of Water on the Face, and ſuch Baptiſm eſteemed valid, we have the Practice of the Apoſtles and Primitive Chriſtians to evince. For when we read of whole Families baptiſed in their Houſes, particularly [i] of the *Gaoler* and his Houſhold baptiſed at home, and at Midnight too, we can hardly ſuppoſe, that a ſufficient Quantity of Water, and other Conveniencies proper for a decent *Immerſion*, could be procured upon ſo ſudden an Occaſion; nor can we well conceive, how the [k] three thouſand Converts, upon St *Peter*'s Sermon, could be baptiſed in the ſame Day, in the ſame Place, where they were aſſembled, unleſs we have Recourſe to *Aſperſion*. The Quantity of Water, on ſuch Occaſions as theſe, is of no Conſideration; for, "the *Contagion* of Sin (as a very ancient Father [l] expreſſes it, ſpeaking "of *Effuſion*, or *Sprinkling*) is not, in the Sacrament of Salvation, waſhed off in "the ſame Meaſures, that the Dirt and Defilements of the Skin and Body are waſhed "in a common Bath. —— It is after another Way, that the Breaſt of a Believer is "waſhed; after another Faſhion, that the Mind of a Man is by Faith cleanſed: "And therefore, in the Sacrament of Salvation, when Neceſſity compels, the ſhort-"eſt Ways of tranſacting Divine Matters do, by God's gracious Diſpenſation, conſer "the whole Benefit."

NOW, ſince among the ancient Chriſtians, *Profuſion* and *Aſperſion* were uſed in Baptiſm, eſpecially in Caſe of Weakneſs and Indiſpoſition of Body, the *Climate* has the ſame Conſideration with us, that Sickneſs and Infirmity had with them; and ſince the Words Βάπτω and Βαπτίζω do undoubtedly ſignify *ſprinkling*, as well as *dipping*, and are equally applied to either; there is plainly no particular *Deſignation* from God; and the Church, conſequently, is left to her Diſcretion to embrace which Form of Baptiſm ſuits beſt with her Convenience: Only it is the private Wiſh of [m] many good Men: —— As there is Preſumption to believe, *Immerſion* is of more [n] ancient Date, and [o] univerſal Uſage, more ſupported by Scripture-Evidence, more *ſymbolical* of the Things repreſented by Baptiſm, [†] and not prejudicial to human Conſtitutions, (as ſome imagine) that, for the Peace and Tranquillity of the Church, and the Recovery of thoſe, who diſſent from her in this Particular, this Cuſtom were revived and [p] *reſtored to a general Uſe, and Aſperſion only permitted (as it was of old) in the Caſe of Sickneſs, Infirmity, or imminent Danger of Death.* And, with this Wiſh, we go on to conſider,

The Benefits and Privileges of Baptiſm.
1. Pardon.

4. THE *Privileges* and Benefits, we are intitled to *enjoy*, and the *Duties*, we are engaged to *perform*, by Virtue of our Baptiſm: And what I account the firſt Benefit of this Kind is, the *Remiſſion of our Sins* and paſt Offences. For, [q] ſince the Deſign of our Saviour's coming into the World was, by the Merit of his Death and Suffering, to purchaſe Pardon and Remiſſion for all thoſe, who ſhould believe in his Name, and obey his Goſpel; the *Means*, by which this Pardon is applied, and the Seal, by which it is ſecured to all ſuch, as perform theſe Conditions, is *Baptiſm*: And for this Reaſon we find the bleſſed Apoſtles exhorting the firſt Converts to *Chriſtianity* immediately to receive this Sacrament: [r] *And now why tarrieſt thou?* (ſays *Ananias* to St *Paul*) *Ariſe, and be baptiſed, and waſh away thy Sin*; and ſo St *Peter* to the converted *Jews*, [s] *repent, and be baptiſed, every one of you, in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the Remiſſion of Sins, and ye ſhall receive the Holy Ghoſt.* For another

[h] *Wall*'s Hiſtory of Infant-Baptiſm, Vol. II. [i] Acts xvi. 32, 33. [k] Ibid. ii. 41.
[l] *Cyprian.* ad Fidum, Epiſt. 76. [m] Biſhop *Taylor*, in his Rule of Conſcience; Mr. *Rogers*, in his Treatiſe of the Sacraments; Mr. *Walker*, in his Doctrine of Baptiſms; *Towerſon*, in his Explication of the Catechiſm, &c. [n] See *Wall*, ibid. Part ii. c. 9. how the Cuſtom of *Immerſion*, which was certainly firſt in Uſe in all ordinary Caſes, came to be ſuperſeded by that of Effuſion, in *France*, then in *Italy* and *Germany*, and laſt of all in *England*. [o] *If we take the Diviſion of the World, from the three main Points of it, all the Chriſtians in* Aſia, *all in* Africa, *and about one third Part of* Europe *are ſuch, as uſe Immerſion; for none but thoſe Nations, which do now, or did formerly ſubmit to the Authority of the Biſhop of* Rome, *do ordinarily baptiſe their Children by ſprinkling*, as the Hiſtorian makes his Obſervation. *Wall*, ibid. [†] Sir *John Floyer*, in his Book of Cold Baths, has evinced by Reaſons, taken from the Nature of our Bodies, from the Rules of Medicine, from modern Experience, and from ancient Hiſtory, that waſhing or dipping Infants in Cold Water, is, generally ſpeaking, not only ſafe, but very uſeful. *Wall*, ibid. [p] *Whitby*'s Commentary on *Rom.* vi. [q] *Clarke*'s Eſſays.
[r] Acts xxii. 16. [s] Ibid. ii. 38.

another Benefit of our *Chriſtian* Baptiſm, is, 2dly, The *Influence* and *Aſſiſtance* of God's bleſſed Spirit. At the firſt Preaching of the Goſpel, this Influence of the Spirit frequently diſcovered itſelf in thoſe *extraordinary Gifts* of ſpeaking with Tongues, working Miracles, *&c.* as appears in the Hiſtory of the Acts of the Apoſtles: But, theſe by Degrees ceaſing, it afterwards continued to evidence itſelf in the ſtrange, and almoſt *miraculous Change*, which it made in the Minds of Men, from the moſt corrupt and vicious, to the moſt virtuous and heavenly Diſpoſition, almoſt in an Inſtant, upon their being baptized. And when this Effect alſo grew leſs frequent, as the Zeal and Purity of *Chriſtians* declined, it yet continued (and to this very Day ſtill continues) by its *ſecret Power* and Operation, to *renew* and transform Men's Minds, to *inſtruct* them in their Duty, and to *enable* them to perform it; to *purify* their Hearts from vicious Inclinations and Deſires, to *beget* holy Diſpoſitions and Affections in their Souls, to *direct* them in Difficulties, and to *encourage* and eſtabliſh them in all the Courſe of *Chriſtian* Piety: For theſe, we are informed, are its bleſſed Effects, [t] *to be waſhed, to be ſanctified, to be juſtified in the Name of our Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God*; [u] which *Spirit beareth witneſs with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God.* And this ſuggeſts *another* Privilege of Baptiſm; 2. Grace.

3dly, Our *Admiſſion* into the Church and Family of God. St. *Paul*, deſcribing the State of the *Gentiles, at the Time* when they *were without Chriſt*, tells them, that [*] *they were Aliens from the Commonwealth of* Iſrael, *and Strangers from the Covenants of Promiſe, having no Hope, and without God in the World; but now, in Jeſus Chriſt*, ſays he, *ye, who were ſometimes far off, are made nigh by the Blood of Chriſt*, having, in Baptiſm, [x] *received the Adoption of Sons.* [y] Now, Adoption (as it appears by the Laws and Cuſtoms of Countries where it has obtained) is an Act of Favour, whereby the *Maſter* of an Eſtate takes Perſons of *another* Family, and receives them as his natural-born Children. The Perſons thus received, if *Slaves* before, are hereby made *free*, and then, as Freemen, they take the Name, and ſucceed to the Right of the Inheritance of the *Adopter*. And in like Manner, how diſtant ſoever we may be from God, Aliens and Strangers to him, and Slaves and Captives to the Enemy of Souls before our Baptiſm; yet (upon the due Performance of that Ordinance) we commence [z] *Fellow-citizens with the Saints*, and are enrolled in the Number of thoſe whom God hath choſen to be his peculiar and elect People; [a] whom he intends to govern with the ſame Tenderneſs, that an affectionate and merciful Father has for his beloved Son, and for whom he deſigns a more ample Proviſion, than the greateſt Monarchs upon Earth can confer on their *adſcititious* Children; a Proviſion, of which all the *Crowns* and Kingdoms, and Glories of the Earth are but a faint *Shadow* and Repreſentation, and an [b] *Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for them.* For, *if we are Children, then* (according to that happy Climax) *are we Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Chriſt*, to the Intent that *we may be glorified with him.* 3. Adoption. And, 4thly, Glory.

THESE are the Privileges of our *high Calling*, which God, *on his Part*, has conſigned to us in the Ordinance of Baptiſm: But then we are to remember, that there are ſundry *Duties*, which we, *on our Parts*, then engaged to perform. For therein we [c] profeſs our ſincere Belief in the Truth of that *Doctrine*, which God the Father revealed by his bleſſed Son, and confirmed by the miraculous Operation of the Holy Ghoſt; therein we *declare* our humble Acceptance of the Overtures of Mercy and Grace, purchaſed for us by our Saviour's meritorious Performances, and in this Sacrament tendered to us; and therein we *avow* our Reſolution to forſake all wicked Courſes of Life repugnant to the Doctrine and Laws of *Chriſt*, and to conform ourſelves entirely to his Will, living thenceforward in all Piety, Righteouſneſs, and Sobriety, as loyal Subjects, faithful Servants, and dutiful Children to God. In a Word, therein renouncing all erroneous Principles, all vicious Inclinations, and all other Engagements whatever, we devote ourſelves to the Faith and Obedience of *God the Father*, our great and glorious Maker; of *God the Son*, our good and gracious Redeemer; and of *God the Holy Ghoſt*, our bleſſed Guide, Aſſiſtant, Advocate, and Comforter. *The Duties we engage to perform.*

THESE are the Duties, which precede and attend on Baptiſm, eſpecially when the Perſons baptized are of riper Years; and what is ſubſequent hereupon, and incumbent

[t] 1 Cor. vii. 11. [u] Rom. viii. 16. [*] Eph. ii. 12, 13. [x] Gal. iv. 5. [y] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I. [z] Eph. ii. 19. [a] *Clarke*'s Eſſays. [b] 1 Pet. i. 4. [c] *Barrow*, on the Sacraments.

cumbent on all, is to make good the Engagements they contain. [a] *Having then had our Bodies waſhed with pure Water*, let us often review our *Baptiſmal* Vow, and (as the Apoſtle exhorts) *hold faſt the Profeſſion of our Faith without wavering*; remembering always, that *Apoſtacy*, either in Profeſſion or Practice, from God and Goodneſs, adds to our Diſobedience the Charge of *Perfidiouſneſs* and *Ingratitude*; and that, upon the Whole, it [c] *would have been* much *better for us never to have known the Way of Righteouſneſs, than, after we have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered to us.*

Of the Lord's-Supper.

HOW much ſoever the *Supper of our Lord* may be thought to reſemble the *Poſtcœnium*, uſed by the *Jews*, in the Cloſe of the *Paſchal Supper*; yet that it was deſigned for greater and more noble Purpoſes, and to repreſent Things of a more weighty Conſideration, than the *Jews* ever had to commemorate, is manifeſt from the Form of its Inſtitution, which (as [f] the Apoſtles relate it) was, *In the ſame Night in which Chriſt was betrayed, he took Bread, and bleſſed it, and brake it, and gave it to his Diſciples, ſaying, Take, eat, this is my Body, which was given and broken for you; this do in Remembrance of me: And in the ſame Manner alſo he took the Cup, and gave Thanks, and gave it to them, ſaying, Drink ye all of it; for it is my Blood of the* New-Teſtament, *which was ſhed for you, and for many, for the Remiſſion of Sins; this do ye, as oft as you drink it, in Remembrance of me; for as oft as you eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do ſhew the Lord's Death till he come.*

The true Senſe of the Words of the Inſtitution.

BUT, before we proceed to the Conſideration of the *Nature* and *Ends* of this Ordinance, it may not be amiſs to ſettle the right Senſe of the Words of the Inſtitution: And, in order to this, we muſt obſerve,——That when the Scripture treats of *Sacramental* Matters, it is not unuſual to have the *Sign* or Repreſentation of a Thing expreſſed by the Name of the Thing *ſignified*, and to ſpeak of a Thing, not yet done, in the ſame Manner, as if it were already done. Thus God, ſpeaking to *Abraham* of Circumciſion, ſays, [g] *This is my Covenant*, when *Abraham*, as yet, was not actually circumciſed; and even when he was ſo, it is evident from [h] St *Paul*, that Circumciſion was never the *Covenant* itſelf, but only the Evidence and *Seal* of it: And, in like Manner, *Moſes* calls the Paſchal Lamb, [i] *the Lord's Paſſover*, even before God, paſſing over the *Iſraelites*, had ſmitten the *Egyptians*, and when, after all, that Lamb could be no more than a bare *Memorial* of this miraculous Event. Upon this Occaſion therefore we need leſs wonder, that we find our Saviour calling the Bread *his Body*, and the Wine *his Blood*, [k] ſince this is a Figure *common* in any Caſe, but extremely *natural*, and in a Manner *neceſſary*, where a Sacrament is the Subject of Diſcourſe. [l] Nor could this Manner of Speech either ſeem harſh or unintelligible to his Diſciples, who had, even then, been eating the *Paſchal Lamb*, which was uſually ſtiled, *the Body of the Paſſover*, and the *unleavened Bread*, which was called, *the Bread of Affliction*, (*i. e.* the Repreſentation and Memorial of that Bread) *which their Fathers did eat in the Land of* Egypt: So that, being accuſtomed to ſuch *Sacramental Phraſes*, they could ſcarce underſtand the like Expreſſion of our Saviour, *this Bread is my Body*, any otherwiſe, than as it was to be the Repreſentation and Memorial of it. [m] The Prohibition of eating Blood was given the *Jews* in ſuch ſevere Terms, as [n] *that God would ſet his Face againſt him, that did it*, and *cut him off from among his People*; and theſe were ſo often repeated in the Books of *Moſes*, that, beſides the natural *Horror* which human Nature has at the Mention of drinking Man's Blood, it was a ſpecial Part of their Religion, to make no Manner of Uſe of it. Yet, after all this, the Diſciples, we find, were not ſtartled at our Saviour's Words, which is a plain Argument, that they underſtood him not in a *literal*, but *figurative* Senſe, and ſuch as was agreeable to the Laws and Cuſtoms of their Country. It was impoſſible, indeed, for them to ſuppoſe, that they did *eat Chriſt*'s Body, or *drink* his Blood, when they ſaw, before their Eyes, his Body whole and untouched, and knew that his Blood was ſtill in his Veins: And therefore ſince the Figure

[a] Heb. x. 22, 23. [c] 2 Pet. ii. 21. [f] *Vid.* Matth. xxvi. 26. compared with Mark xiv. 22, &c. Luke xxii. 19. and 1 Cor. xi. 23, &c. [g] Gen. xvii. 10. [h] Rom. iv. 11. [i] Exod. xii. 11. [k] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II. [l] *Whitby*, on Matth. xxvii. [m] *Burnet*, on the Articles. [n] Lev. vii. 26, 27.

Figure of Eating and Drinking was uſed, [o] among the *Jews*, to denote Wiſdom and Learning, and all *intellectual* Apprehenſions, it was no Wonder, that the Diſciples, accuſtomed to their Maſter's *figurative* Way of Inſtruction, underſtood his Diſcourſe to proceed in that Senſe.

From the Teſtimony of the Fathers.

AND as this, at the firſt Inſtitution of the Sacrament, was the true Senſe of our Saviour's Words, ſo may we happily obſerve farther, that, for above 500 Years afterwards, they were never taken in any other. [p] The Primitive Fathers do indeed (and with great Reaſon) very much *magnify* the wonderful *Myſtery* and Efficacy of this Ordinance; they frequently ſpeak of a great ſupernatural Change made by the Divine Benediction; and tell us, that the *Elements* of Bread and Wine, to every worthy Receiver, become the Body and Blood of *Chriſt*: But then they likewiſe affirm, that the Names of the Things ſignified are given to the Signs; that the Bread and Wine do ſtill remain in their *proper* Nature and Subſtance, and are turn'd into the Subſtance of our Bodies; that the Body of *Chriſt*, in the Sacrament, is not the *natural* Body, but the *Sign* and *Figure* of it; not that Body, which was crucified, not that Blood, which was ſhed upon the Croſs; and that it is impious to underſtand the *Eating of the Fleſh of the Son* of Man, and Drinking his Blood *literally*. To this Purpoſe [q] *Juſtin Martyr* tells us, *that our Blood and Fleſh are nouriſhed* by the Converſion of *that Food*, which we receive in the *Euchariſt*; and [r] *Ireneus* affirms that, *when the Cup, that is mixed, (viz.* of Wine and Water) *and the Bread that is broken, receive the Word of God, they become the Euchariſt of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, of which the Subſtance of our Fleſh is increaſed and conſiſts.* *Tertullian*, arguing againſt *Marcion*, the Heretick, that the Body of our Saviour was not a mere Phantaſm and Appearance, has theſe Words; [s] *The Bread, which our Lord took, and diſtributed to his Diſciples, he made his own Body, ſaying, This is my Body*, i. e. *the Image and Figure of my Body; but it could not have been the Figure of his Body, if there had not been a true and real Body:* And St *Auſtin*, laying down ſome Rules for the right Underſtanding of Scripture, gives us this for one; [t] *If the Speech*, ſays he, *be a Precept, forbidding ſome heinous Crime, or commanding us to do Good, it is not figurative; but, if it ſeem to command any heinous Wickedneſs, or forbid that, which is profitable and beneficial to others, it is figurative: For Inſtance*, except ye eat the Fleſh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you; *this ſeems to command an heinous Wickedneſs, and therefore is a Figure, enjoining us to communicate of the Paſſion of our Lord, and, with Delight, and Advantage, to lay up in our Memory, that his Fleſh was crucified and wounded for us.* [u] So that, according to St *Auſtin*'s beſt Skill of interpreting Scripture, the *literal Eating* of the Fleſh of *Chriſt*, and *Drinking* his Blood, would have been a great Impiety, and therefore the Expreſſion is to be underſtood *figuratively*.

AFTER ſo full a Teſtimony of the fourth Age of the Church, out of the many which ſucceeding Ages afford us, we ſhall but produce two; that of *Theodoret*, who ſays, *that Chriſt honours the Symbols with the Name of his Body and Blood, not changing their Nature, but adding Grace to Nature; for the myſtical Symbols, after the Sanctification, do not depart from their own Nature, but continue their former Subſtance, Figure, and Form, and may be ſeen and handled as before:* To which we ſhall add that of Pope *Gelaſius*, who tells us, *that the Sacraments of the Body and Blood of Chriſt are a divine Thing, ſo that by them we are made Partakers of a divine Nature; and yet the Subſtance of Bread and Wine, which are the Image and Reſemblance of Chriſt's Body and Blood in this Myſtery, does not ceaſe to exiſt.* In ſhort, [x] ſince nothing is more common among the Fathers, than to call the *Elements*, even after their Conſecration, the *Figures*, the *Signs*, the *Symbols*, the *Types*, the *Antitypes*, the *Commemoration*, the *Repreſentation*, the *Myſteries*, and the *Sacraments* of *Chriſt*'s Body and Blood; it is demonſtrable, that they could not think, that they were the *very Subſtance* of his Body and Blood; and therefore it may be a Matter of no vain Curioſity to enquire a little, how this *figurative* Senſe, which, for ſo many Ages, was the only received Interpretation of our Saviour's Words, came, by Degrees,

[o] *Maimonides* obſerves, that whenſoever Eating or Drinking are mentioned in the Book of *Proverbs*, they are to be underſtood of *Wiſdom*, and the *Law*; and, after he has brought ſeveral Places of Scripture to this Purpoſe, he concludes, that becauſe this Acceptation of Eating occurs ſo often, and is ſo manifeſt, as if it were the primary and moſt proper Senſe of the Word, therefore Hunger and Thirſt ſtand for a Privation of Wiſdom and Underſtanding, *More Nevoch.* [p] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [q] Apol. 2. [r] Lib. v. c. 21. [s] Adverſus Marcion. Lib. iv. [t] De Doctrinâ Chriſti. [u] *Tillotſon*, ibid. [x] *Burnet*, on the Articles.

Degrees, to be laid aſide, and the Doctrine of a *real* and *corporal* Preſence introduced into this holy Sacrament.

How the Doctrine of real *and* corporal *Preſence came to be introduced.*

[y] NOW it cannot be denied, but that ſome godly Fathers of the Church, apprehenſive of the *Profanation* of this Sacrament, from the Unworthineſs of thoſe who came to it, and being deſirous to beget a due Reverence for ſo ſacred an Ordinance, and Serioufneſs in the Performance of it, did urge all the *Topicks*, which ſublime *Figures* and *warm* Expreſſions could help them; and, though they took Care to maintain, that *the Subſtance of Bread and Wine, even after Conſecration, did ſtill remain*, yet ſeveral of them ſuppoſed a certain *Union* of the Elements to the Body of *Chriſt*, much like that of his *Human* Nature to the *Divine*. It is to be obſerved farther, that not long after this, the *Goths* and *Vandals* in the *Weſt*, and the *Turks* and *Saracens* in the *Eaſt*, made Havock of all that was *polite* and *learned*; by which Means, the chief Writings of the beſt and firſt Times were loſt; and inſtead of them, many *ſpurious* ones afterwards produced, which, in dark and ignorant Ages, eaſily paſſed for *Genuine*. The *Popes* too, at this Time, were ſuch an infamous Succeſſion of Men, as cannot be parallell'd in all Hiſtory; and their *Clergy* (which were very numerous) entering into Combinations to ſubject the *temporal* Power to the *ſpiritual*, were fond of any Opinion, that would raiſe their *Character*, and render their Perſons ſacred, as the Power of *making a God*, with a few Words, could not fail to do. Add to this, that the Doctrine of *corporal* Preſence in the Euchariſt had never been condemned in any former Ages: For, as none condemn Errors by *Anticipation*, ſo the Promoters of it had this Advantage, that no *formal* Deciſion had been made againſt it, and agreeing (as it did) in outward Sound, with the Words of the Inſtitution, and the Phraſe, generally uſed, of *the Elements being changed into the Body and Blood of Chriſt*, it is leſs Wonder, that it found ſo ready a Reception in Ages of Ignorance, when *Sound* and *Appearance* might paſs for good Arguments.

FROM theſe, and other Cauſes, that might be mentioned, the People were generally brought to believe, that *Chriſt* was in the Sacrament, and that the Elements were his Body and Blood, without troubling themſelves to enquire in what *Manner* this was done; and, in After-Ages, when the Doctrine of *extirpating Hereticks* began to prevail, it is no ſtrange Matter, if this *other* gained Ground, when both the *Prieſts* ſaw their *Intereſt* in promoting it, and all People felt the *Danger* of denying it. Thus the going off from the *Simplicity*, in which *Chriſt* did deliver the Sacrament, and the Church at firſt receive it, into ſome *ſublime* Expreſſions about it, ſet Men at firſt wrong in their Notions, and, when they were once out of the Way, ſome unhappy Incidents of the Ages they lived in carried them ſtill farther and farther from it. Pious and *Rhetorical* Figures, purſued by Men of *heated Imaginations*, and inflamed *Affections*, were followed by Explanations invented by *colder* and more deſigning Men afterwards; and theſe, enforced with the *Anathema*'s of the Church, and the Terrors of Perſecution, were enough, in ſome Places, to ſilence Contradiction; tho' conſidering their many *monſtrous* Abſurdities, their Contradiction to the Evidence of our *Senſes*, and Oppoſition to the received Maxims of *Philoſophy*, and known *Properties* of a Body, together with the long Train of their cruel and idolatrous Conſequences, it is much to be queſtioned, whether, from any diligent and judicious Enquirer, they ever yet gained a ſincere *Aſſent*.

This Sacrament not a Real Propitiatory *Sacrifice.*

FROM this different Interpretation of our Saviour's Words in this Inſtitution, there has proceeded another Controverſy concerning this Sacrament, *viz.* whether it be a *Real, Propitiatory* Sacrifice, or only a *Commemorative* and *Euchariſtical* one. Thoſe, who maintain the Doctrine of *Corporal Preſence*, and even ſome, who reject that Maſs of Contradictions, contend that it is truly *Propitiatory*: But the greater Part of Divines (and with better Reaſon, I conceive) ſeem to be of the contrary Opinion. The Truth is, the Word *Sacrifice* is frequently uſed, in Scripture, to ſignify

[y] *Burnet*, on the Articles. The firſt Controverſy about this Matter was ſtarted in the *Greek* Church, upon Occaſion of a Diſpute concerning the Worſhip of Images, wherein the Council of *Conſtantinople* decreed, That the Sacrament *was the Image of Chriſt's Body and Blood, in which the Subſtance of Bread and Wine remained*: But, in Anſwer to this, the ſecond Council of *Nice* declared peremptorily, That the Sacrament, after Conſecration, is not *the Image and Antitype of Chriſt's Body and Blood, but is properly his Body and Blood.* In the *Latin* or *Roman* Church, *Paſchaſius Radbertus*, Abbot of *Corbey*, in *France*, was the firſt, who wrote, to any Purpoſe, in Defence of the *Reality* of Chriſt's Body and Blood in the *Euchariſt*; but as he had ſeveral Followers, ſo ſome of the moſt learned Men of that Age wrote againſt his Doctrine, as a groſs Innovation. The *tenth* Century was the blackeſt and moſt ignorant of all the Ages of the Church, ſo that we have no Writer in that Time, that gives us any tolerable Account of its Doctrine. About the Middle of the *eleventh* Century, however, *Berengarius*, Archdeacon of *Angiers*, began to oppoſe the Doctrine of *Real Preſence*, but was compelled to recant twice, firſt by Pope *Nicholas*, and then by Pope *Gregory* VII. about twenty Years afterwards. *Tillotſon*, againſt Tranſubſtantiation.

Anno 705.

Anno 787.

Anno 1059.

Anno 1079.

ſignify almoſt any *Act* of religious Worſhip: [z] Our Prayers, [a] our Alms, [b] our Affections, [c] nay, even our Bodies are called by that Name; and, in this extended Senſe, it cannot be denied, but that the *Euchariſt* is a Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving. [d] Nay, as there is an Oblation of Bread and Wine made in it, which, after Conſecration, are conſumed in an Act of Religion, and as there is a *Commemoration*, and *Repreſentation* to God, of the Sacrifice which *Chriſt* offered for us on the Croſs, on theſe Accounts we allow, that it may be called a *Sacrifice*: But, ſtill, though it be a *commemorative*, yet, that it is not a *true*, *real*, and *propitiatory* Sacrifice, we have a full Proof in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, where the Apoſtle, after a long Diſcourſe concerning the Prieſts and Sacrifices under the Law, endeavours to ſhew, that, under the *Evangelical* Diſpenſation, our only Prieſt and Sacrifice (in a ſtrict Senſe of the Words) is *Chriſt*. For, ſpeaking of thoſe of the *Levitical* Order; [e] *they truly*, ſays he, *were many Prieſts*, becauſe *they were not ſuffered to continue by reaſon of Death; but this Man, becauſe he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable Prieſthood:* [f] *He needeth not*, therefore, *as thoſe High-Prieſts, to offer up Sacrifice daily, firſt for his own Sins, and then for the People; for this he did once, when he offered up himſelf:* Whereupon the Apoſtle makes the concluſive Difference between thoſe Prieſts and *Chriſt* to conſiſt in this,——That whereas [g] *every Prieſt ſtands daily miniſtering, and offering ſometimes the ſame Sacrifices, which can never take away Sins; this Man, after he had offered up one Sacrifice for Sins, for ever ſat down at the Right-Hand of God:* So that, according to the full Tenor of the Apoſtle's Diſcourſe, ſtrictly ſpeaking, we have but one Prieſt, and one Sacrifice, under the Goſpel; and therefore how largely ſoever theſe Words may, in ſome Places, be taken, yet, according to the true Idea of a *propitiatory* Sacrifice, and of a Prieſt, that reconciles Sinners to God, they cannot be applied to any Acts of our Worſhip, or to any Order of Men upon Earth.

The Virtue and Nature of it.

ALL the Virtue then, that can, with any Juſtice, be imputed to this Sacrament, is,——That therein we gratefully commemorate the Sacrifice of *Chriſt*'s Death, and, by renewed Acts of Faith, preſent That to God as our Sacrifice, in the Memorial of it, which he himſelf hath appointed; hereby confirming our Covenant with God, and ſharing in the bleſſed Effects of that Death, which our Lord ſuffered for us. This is the whole Intendment of the Inſtitution: And that the firſt *Chriſtians* had no farther Notion of it, is evident from this remarkable Inſtance, that, when the *Heathens* objected to them their Irreligion and Impiety in having no Sacrifices, they readily owned, that [h] *they had no Sacrifices, but Prayers and Praiſes*; no Oblations, [i] *but a pure Heart, clean Conſcience, and a ſtedfaſt Faith*, which they hardly would have done, had this Sacrament, at that Time, been looked upon as a Sacrifice of ineſtimable Value to God.

THIS being ſufficient to ſhew the true Senſe of our Saviour's Words, and, in ſome Meaſure, the true Nature of the Ordinance itſelf; what we have farther to do is, to obſerve,

I. THE ſeveral Ends and Deſigns of its Inſtitution.
II. THE ſeveral Benefits, which we receive from thence.
III. THE Obligations, that lie upon us, to the frequent Obſervance of it. And,
IV. THE Qualifications, that are neceſſary thereunto. Now the

The Ends of this Sacrament.

I. AND only Deſign, that our Saviour mentions in this Inſtitution is, that we ſhould obſerve it *in Remembrance of him*. Whether our bleſſed Saviour might (as [k] ſome imagine) intend, by this Injunction, any Conformity to a Cuſtom, then prevalent among the Diſciples of ſeveral Sects of *Philoſophers*, who uſed to have an *annual Feaſt* or Collation in Rememberance of their reſpective *Founders*, is not ſo material for us to enquire. This only we may infer from the common Acceptation of the Word, that ſince *to remember one*, is not barely to call to Mind, that there was once ſuch a Perſon in the World, but to reflect likewiſe on the particular Quality and Relation wherein he ſtood to us, the Benefits he did, and the Obligations he laid upon us; our bleſſed Lord undoubtedly intends, when, in this holy Feaſt, he deſires us *to remember him*, that we would think of him in all his Capacities and Relations,

To remember Chriſt.

[z] Pſal. cxli. 2. *and* Heb. xiii. 15. [a] Heb. xiii. 16. [b] Pſal. li. 17. [c] Rom. xii. 1.
[d] *Burnet*, on the XXXIX Articles. [e] Heb. vii. 23, 24. [f] Ibid. *ver.* 27. [g] Ibid. x. 11, 12. [h] *Juſtin Martyr*, Apol. 2. [i] Minut. in Octav. Lib. VIII. [k] Iſ. Caſaub. ad Loc. Animadv. c. i.

(ſuch as a faithful *Teacher*, a gracious *Governor*, an entire *Friend*, and generous *Benefactor*, doing the higheſt Kindneſſes, and working the greateſt Deliverances for us, and for all Mankind) wherein he deſerves ſo infinitely to be remembered. [l] We may reaſonably preſume then, that he would have us remember him; 1*ſt*, As our faithful *Teacher*, and to call to Mind thoſe excellent Things, which he hath revealed unto us; as, namely, that, for the Sake of his Death, and through the Merits of his Blood, all Mankind, who were utter Enemies before, ſhall be put in a Way of Reconciliation with God, and have the Benefit of a new Covenant, which proffers *Pardon* to all, who truly repent of their Sins; *Grace* and ſpiritual Help to all, who are careful to endeavour therewith; and the *Bleſſing* of Heaven and everlaſting Happineſs to all, that are entirely obedient. 2*dly*, He would have us remember him, as our gracious *Governor*, and to bear in Mind thoſe Commands, which he, as our Sovereign Lord and Maſter, has laid upon us; as, namely, That we ſhould love God, and truſt in his Goodneſs, and ſubmit to his Providence, and worſhip him with Prayers and Praiſes; but, above all, with an Holy and God-like Life; that we be humble and heavenly-minded, chaſte, temperate, and contented; that we be *dutiful* to our Governors, *reſpectful* to our Superiors, *courteous* to our Equals, *condeſcenſive* to our Inferiors, *loving* and obliging to our Enemies, and juſt, charitable, and peaceable towards all Mankind. 3*dly*, He would have us remember him, as our moſt entire *Friend*, and generous *Benefactor*, who loved us (without any Thing of our Deſerts, and in Spite of the higheſt Provocations) to ſuch a Degree, as made him forego the Pleaſure, which he might have held, without any Interruption, in *heavenly Places*; to become a Man of Sorrows, lead a perſecuted and neceſſitous Life, and at laſt die a painful and ignominious Death for our Sakes; in order to ranſom us from the greateſt Miſery, the Slavery of Sin and Satan, and to procure for us the moſt valuable Bleſſings, that our Nature is capable of, Grace, Pardon, and eternal Life.

To confirm the New Covenant.

2. ANOTHER *End* in the Inſtitution of this Sacrament is, to *confirm* [m] the New Covenant, which *Chriſt* has purchaſed and procured for us by his Death. What the Nature of this Covenant is, we have ſufficiently explained before, and need only now take Notice, [n] that, as we firſt *entered* into this Covenant, when we were baptized, ſo are we called to *renew* and confirm it, every Time we are invited to ſup with our bleſſed Lord in this holy Sacrament; he having wiſely provided, that we ſhould never want an Opportunity of renewing our Engagements; of making up the Breach, whenever it ſhould happen, between us and God; of giving freſh Security and Strength to our Obligations; and of devoting ourſelves, in the moſt ſolemn Manner, to a more conſtant Love and Service of our gracious Maſter, in Spite of all thoſe ſpiritual Enemies, that would ſeduce us from him. And, in this Reſpect, the *Euchariſt* ſupplies the *Deficiency* of Baptiſm, which, tho' it devote us to God at firſt, is no Means to reconcile us to him, upon our having offended afterwards; becauſe it is but *once* adminiſtered, and cannot be repeated: And therefore is the Inſtitution of this other Sacrament intended to guard and maintain the Covenant between God and Man, that our *baptiſmal* Vows may be kept in Force, and we continue, by his gracious Acceptance of the Renewal of our Engagements in this Ordinance, *his faithful Soldiers and Servants unto our Lives End.*

And a League of Love with our Brethren.

3. ONE *End* more, for which this Sacrament was inſtituted, is, to ratify a League of Love and Friendſhip with thoſe Brethren, that communicate with us, and with all others. Eating and drinking together at the ſame Table, and partaking at the ſame Feaſt, hath always been eſteemed a *Note* of Friendſhip, and a Profeſſion of Love and Kindneſs among Men: It is the common Way of the World to compoſe Differences, to keep up Friendlineſs in *Neighbourhoods*, and to beget Endearment and mutual Love in all Fraternities. [o] To this Purpoſe the *Paſchal* Supper, among the *Jews*, was celebrated at one Time, and in one Place, with an entire Lamb aſſigned to each Family; not a Bone of it was to be broken or divided; and with Bread not ſoured with any Leaven, the better to ſignify that Love and Unity, and Sweetneſs of Temper, which was to be among them. And, in Alluſion to this, the Apoſtle exhorts us, now that [p] *Chriſt our Paſſover is ſacrificed for us, to keep the Feaſt, not with the Leaven of Malice and Wickedneſs, but with the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth*; and that the rather, becauſe this Feaſt is in Remembrance of the higheſt Inſtance of Love, ſhewed to us by our Lord's laying down his Life for our Sakes, and therefore

[l] *Kettlewell*, on the Sacraments. [m] 1 Cor. xi. 25. [n] *Kettlewell*, ibid. [o] *Newcombe's* Sermons, Vol. II. [p] 1 Cor. v. 7.

therefore obliging us never to forget the Return of Love again to him, by his appointed *Proxies*, who are our Brethren, Servants of the ſame Lord, and Members of the ſame Body with ourſelves. This then was our Lord's Intention, in appointing this Sacrament, and inviting us to eat at the ſame Table, that we might mutually embrace as *Friends*, and love as *Brethren*, and be knit together in the ſame Fellowſhip and Communion. And accordingly we may obſerve, that the *Primitive* Chriſtians were careful to make this Uſe of it; for *Pliny*, in his Letter to the Emperor *Trajan*, wherein he gives an Account of the *Chriſtian* Meetings, tells us, that their communicating in the Euchariſt [q] *was a religious Compact and Combination among themſelves, that they would do no Hurt to one another, but love as Brethren, and live as Friends together.*

II. THESE are the Ends for which this Sacrament was inſtituted, and anſwerable to theſe Ends are the *Benefits*, which we receive thereby; 1. The Pardon of our Sins. 2. The Increaſe of Grace. And, 3. The Confirmation of our Title to eternal Life. 1. [r] Whenever we repent indeed, we have God's Promiſe of Forgiveneſs, (which may comfort our Hearts, and cure our Deſpondency after any Sin) not only in this bleſſed Sacrament, but even in every *penitential* Prayer and Confeſſion. In this holy Ordinance however, the Promiſe of Forgiveneſs is again repeated, and, in the moſt ſolemn Manner, ſealed and confirmed, to ſhew us, that God is ſtill in the ſame Mind, and to give us a renewed and ſenſible Aſſurance of it. So that, if, after any Offences committed againſt God, we can but make ſure of our own Repentance, the *Euchariſt* may be ſaid to do That in an *ordinary* Way, which an Angel from Heaven, or a ſpecial Revelation, would do in an *extraordinary*, i. e. let us know, that our Sins are remitted, and God become our Friend: For therein we receive from him the *Blood of Expiation*, a plain Proof that our Sins are atoned for, and forgiven; and therein we renew a ſolemn Covenant of Peace and Reconciliation with him, confirmed by a Prieſt of his own preſcribing.

The Benefits of it.
Pardon of Sin.

2. [s] 'TIS not without very good Reaſon then, that our Lord made uſe of the *Elements* of Bread and Wine, as proper and fit *Emblems* of this Divine Myſtery, and the Benefits conferred by it: [t] For, as Bread and Wine convey a *vital* Nouriſhment to the Body, ſo the Sacrifice of *Chriſt*'s Death, by this Sacrament in Commemoration of it, conveys ſomewhat to the Soul that is *vital*, that raiſes its Faculties, and fortifies all its Powers: But, in what Manner this is done, there is a Diverſity of Opinions among Divines. Some think, that this Memorial of the Death of *Chriſt*, when ſeriouſly and devoutly performed; when it animates our Faith, increaſes our Repentance, inflames our Love and Zeal, and ſo unites us to God, and to our Brethren; draws down the Returns of Prayer, and a farther Increaſe of Grace in us, according to the Nature and Promiſes of the new Covenant; and in this they ſuppoſe, that the *Virtue* and Efficacy of this Sacrament conſiſts: But others imagine, that this belongs only to the *inward* Acts of the Mind, and is not properly *Sacramental*, and therefore they think, that the Euchariſt is a *federal* Act, in which, as, on one Hand, we renew our *baptiſmal* Engagement with God, ſo, on the other, we revive, in the Sacrament, a viſible *Conſignation* of the Bleſſings of the new Covenant, which are ſomething ſuperadded to the Return of our Prayers, and the inward Acts of our Minds. This, they think, anſwers the *Nouriſhment*, which the Body receives from the Symbols of Bread and Wine, and fills up the *Idea*, which theſe Words of St *Paul* convey, [u] *The Cup of Bleſſing, which we bleſs, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Chriſt? And the Bread, which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Chriſt*; i. e. a communicating to us thoſe Benefits and Graces, which his Death was deſign'd to purchaſe for all Men? And therefore they conclude, [w] that this Sacrament does not only confer Grace by its *natural* Tendency, as other Means do; but, by Virtue of God's Promiſe and immediate Concurrence with it, conveys ſpiritual Strength and Refreſhment to the worthy Receivers of it, as it is an *Inſtrument* in his Hands: For ſuch has been the Opinion of the Church in all Ages, that * *they, who partake of the Euchariſt by Faith, are thereby ſanctified both in Body and Soul*; that [x] *in it we receive the Similitude of the Body of Chriſt; but, together with that, all the Grace and Virtue, that the true and real Body obtained*; and that [y] *this ſacramental Food, though in outward Appearance a bodily Subſtance, yet, by an inviſible Efficacy, works all the Effects of a Divine Power and Preſence.*

Increaſe of Grace, and how.

3. WHAT-

[q] *Plin.* Ep. Lib. X. Ep. 97. [r] *Kettlewell*, on the Sacrament. [s] *Burnet*, on the XXXIX Articles. [t] 1 Cor. x. 16. [u] *Kettlewell*, ibid. [w] *Clem. Alex.* Pædag. Lib. II. c. ii. [x] Ambroſ. de Sacram. Lib. VI. c. i. [y] Cypr. de Cœnâ Dom. ſub. init.

A Title to eternal Life.

3. WHATEVER then becomes of the Conceit of ſome of the *Antients*, that this Sacrament has a peculiar Efficacy *to prepare our Bodies for an immortal State*; yet, ſince our bleſſed Saviour has ſo poſitively declared, that [z] *whoſo eateth his Fleſh, and drinketh his Blood, hath eternal Life, and he will raiſe him up at the laſt Day*, the leaſt that we can infer is —— That, as it ratifies the *Evangelical* Covenant between God and us, it confirms our Right, and renews our Title to that eternal Happineſs, which Chriſt, the Mediator of this Covenant, has purchaſed and prepared for us: And, in this Senſe, it may not improperly be called, in the Phraſe and Stile of the Antients, [a] *the Medicine of Immortality, which is an Antidote to preſerve Men from dying, and to give them a Life that is everlaſting.*

Our Obligation to obſerve it.

III. SINCE the Benefits then, which are derived and ſecured to us by this Sacrament, are all the Bleſſings of the new Covenant, the Forgiveneſs of our Sins, the Aſſiſtance of Grace, the Comfort of God's holy Spirit, and the glorious Reward of eternal Life; [b] in Point of *Intereſt* we are obliged to frequent it, unleſs we judge ourſelves unworthy of the Bleſſings of the Goſpel, and are minded to be deprived of one of the beſt *Means* and Advantages of confirming and conveying theſe Bleſſings to us. Since this was the *Charge* of our beſt Friend, (nay of the greateſt Friend and Benefactor of all Mankind) when he was preparing to die in our Stead, and to offer up himſelf a Sacrifice for us, to undergo the moſt grievous Pains for our Sakes, and to ſuffer the worſt of *temporal*, that he might deliver us from *eternal* Death; and an Injunction, ſo eaſy, as only to meet at his Table, and there remember what gracious Things he hath done for us; we are bound in Point of *Gratitude* to the Obſervance of it, unleſs we will incur the Charge of neglecting our dying Saviour, the great Friend and Lover of Souls, in a Command ſo reaſonable, and ſo full of Bleſſings and Benefits to the worthy Performers of it. [c] Since this Sacrament, in all the Offices of Religion, is a moſt excellent *Means* to recommend our Prayers, and make them powerful, to fortify us in all the Trials that befal us, and to [d] preſerve us invulnerable againſt all the fiery Darts of our ſpiritual Enemy; we are obliged in Point of *Safety* to a frequent Obſervance of it, unleſs we are minded, by relinquiſhing our *Guard*, to become his Prey, and ſo be led *Captive by him at his Will.* Since, finally, this is the ſolemn Injunction of our great Law-giver, *who is able to ſave and to deſtroy*, in Point of *indiſpenſable Duty* we are bound to perform it, unleſs we will abide the Expreſſes of his Wrath, which all muſt allow to be inſupportable: For, [e] *if he, that deſpiſed Moſes's Law,* [f] by a Non-obſervance of the Paſſover, *died without Mercy; of how much ſorer Puniſhment, ſuppoſe ye, ſhall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under Foot* the Authority of *the Son of God, and counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was ſanctified, an unholy Thing*, or a Thing not worthy his Regard and Conſideration? Since then the Obligations incumbent upon us for the frequent Obſervance of this Ordinance are ſo many, what ſhould be the Cauſe of all this Backwardneſs, which we ſee in Men, to ſo plain, ſo neceſſary, and ſo beneficial a Duty?

Some Hinderances.

The Apoſtle, ſpeaking of this Sacrament, has inſerted a Caution or two; [g] *whoſoever ſhall eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, is guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord:* And again, *he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himſelf:* And from hence ſome infer—That "if the Danger "of unworthy Receiving be ſo great, and the Preparation neceſſary for a worthy "Receiving coſts ſo much Pains, the ſafeſt Way ſeems to be, wholly to refrain from "this *aweful* Sacrament, and never receive it at all."

Now, to ſhew the Fallacy of this Inference, by ſtating the true Occaſion of the Words, it will be neceſſary to obſerve,—— [h] That, in the Primitive Church, it was uſual to bring to their religious Aſſemblies (every one, as he was able and diſpoſed) Proviſions for a common Entertainment. Out of theſe Proviſions, a convenient Quantity was ſet apart, to be conſecrated for the bleſſed Sacrament: This Sacrament was, in ſome Churches, celebrated before, in others, after this *Feaſt of Love*, (as that Entertainment was uſed to be called) but, in all Places, they were both celebrated in Company with each other. The Deſign of theſe Feaſts was to expreſs Friendſhip and Concord, and to ſhew, that Chriſtians eſteemed themſelves one Family, and one Body;

[z] John vi. 54. [a] Ὃς ἐστι φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν, ἀλλὰ ζῆν Ἰησοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ διὰ παντὸς. Ignat. ad Eph. [b] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. I. [c] *Kettlewell*, on the Sacrament. [d] Σπουδάζετε συνιόντες, &c. *Give all Diligence*, ſays *Ignatius*, to the *Epheſians, to aſſemble often in the Euchariſt, for the oftener you meet thereat, the more your Standing is ſecured, and the Power of Satan is deſtroyed.* [e] Heb. x. 28, 29. [f] Exod. xii. 15. [g] 1 Cor. xi. 27, 29. [h] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II.

Body; to be a Comfort to the *Poor*, whoſe Neceſſities were thus relieved at the publick Expence; and to ſpeak the Charity and Condeſcenſion of the *Rich*, who thus declared their meaner Brethren, in all Chriſtian Privileges, Fellow-Members, and equal with the greateſt. Theſe voluntary Contributions were ſtiled *Oblations*, becauſe every Contributor was underſtood to devote, what he brought, to a religious Uſe, and to diveſt himſelf of all Manner of Property in it: And therefore, as theſe Entertainments were deſigned for the whole Body of Believers, every one, who came to the Communion, had a Right to ſhare *alike*, tho' all did not contribute alike; nay, tho' the Circumſtances of ſome were ſo *ſtrait*, that they could not contribute any Part at all.

The Paſſages to the Hebrews *explained.*

Now, when this Parity was broken in upon; when every one would take upon him to eat at his own Time, in ſeparate Company, and in Proportion to his own bringing; [i] the Rich met, and, excluding the Poor from what ſhould have been the common Entertainment, after much Riot and Exceſs, they went to the Sacrament in no ſmall Diſorder; [k] one was *hungry*, having eaten nothing at all; and others *drunken*, having feaſted intemperately; and ſo the Poor were deſpiſed and neglected. This the Apoſtle condemns, as a groſs *Profanation* of that ſolemn Inſtitution of the Sacrament, at the Participation whereof they behaved themſelves with as little Reverence, as if they had been at a *common Meal*. This is [l] *the Eating and Drinking*, which he calls *unworthy*, for which he pronounces them *guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord*, and tells them, that they did incur the *Judgment of God*. For, that the Word Κρίσις (which our Tranſlators render *Damnation*) does not here ſignify *eternal Miſery*, or that which is elſewhere termed *the Damnation of Hell*, but only a *temporal Judgment* and Chaſtiſement, in order to the Prevention of eternal Condemnation, is evident from what follows; [m] *For this Cauſe many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep, i. e.* for this Irreverence of yours, God hath ſent among you ſeveral Diſeaſes, of which many have died. [n] *Wherefore, my Brethren*, ſays he, concluding with this Advice, *when ye come together to eat*, [*viz.* in theſe Love-Feaſts] *tarry for one another; and if any Man hunger, let him eat at home, that ye come not together unto Judgment:* Where he plainly intimates, both what the Crime of unworthy Receiving was, and the Puniſhment of it: Their Crime was, their irreverent and diſorderly Participation of the Sacrament; and their Puniſhment was, thoſe temporal Diſeaſes and other Chaſtiſements, which God inflicted upon them for this their Irreverence and Contempt.

Danger of Unworthineſs, no ſufficient Plea.

AND now, is it not as clear as the Light, that in a Church, like ours, where the conſecrated *Elements* are furniſhed at the *publick* Expence, and a Diſtribution of them made equally, decently, devoutly, and as nigh to the Primitive Inſtitution, as can well be imagined; the *Unworthineſs*, charged upon the *Corinthians*, neither is, nor poſſibly can be ours? And if ſo, it muſt follow, that thoſe Texts of St *Paul* are perverted to a very wrong Uſe, when they are made a Pretence of keeping from the holy Table the Perſons, whoſe preſent Circumſtances have no Manner of Affinity to them.

[o] DID but Men conſider, (what is moſt certainly true) that every Act of Religion, *publick* or *private*, requires the very ſame Diſpoſition of Mind, with the Sacrament; that no Man is fit (for Inſtance) to ſay the Lord's Prayer, who is not fit to eat and drink at his Table; that reading, and hearing, and praying unworthily, *(i. e.* without due Reverence, or in Love or Indulgence to any wilful Sin) is *damnable*, as well as unworthy communicating; they would ſoon perceive, that the Excuſes uſually alledged for the Neglect of this, if purſued through their juſt Conſequences, would hold every whit as ſtrongly for caſting off every Branch of ſolemn Worſhip, enjoined by the Chriſtian Religion: And yet there is not one of all theſe, but what requires, to the due Performance of it, the ſame Sorrow for our paſt Sins, the ſame ſtedfaſt Purpoſes of Amendment, the ſame Faith in *Chriſt*, and the ſame Charity to our Brethren, as the Communicating in that ſacred Ordinance; nor is any Man accepted by God in any of theſe, who is not fit and qualified to come to the other. To ſay all in one Word, no Man, who leads a good Life, can ever be unprepared for the Lord's-Supper; and no Man, who leads a bad one, can come prepared to that, or to any other Chriſtian Ordinance whatever.

[i] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [k] 1 Cor. xi. 21. [l] Ibid. *ver.* 29. [m] Ibid. *ver.* 30.
[n] Ibid. *ver.* 33, 34. [o] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II.

Nor Want of Preparation.

AND this, I think, may ſerve to ſhew the Vanity of another Sort of *Unpreparedneſs*, commonly alledged, *viz.* the Want of Leiſure to retire ſo many Hours, and to ſay ſo many Prayers before each Communion. [p] Theſe, doubtleſs, are very proper Exerciſes, when Men have Opportunities for them, and no Man can take too much Pains with himſelf, to afflict his Soul with Remorſe, and to raiſe his Affections and Devotion on ſuch Occaſions: But then, to think that, by theſe Meditations and Prayers, we are, and that, without them, we cannot be prepared, is no leſs than *Superſtition*, and an Error, which draws a World of ill Conſequences after it. Even theſe Prayers (if we hold faſt any darling Luſt) are an Abomination, an Hypocriſy, that mocks God, and deludes our own Soul; and therefore it is much to be wiſhed, that People could be made duly ſenſible, that, although a Week's Preparation (when ſuch extraordinary Addreſſes are added to a *Conſcience void of Offence*) may be exceeding well, yet nothing can be depended upon, but communicating frequently, and reverently; and living, as if we were every Day to communicate, between one Opportunity and another. To ceaſe to do Evil, and learn to do well; to love God, and keep his Commandments; to follow the Works of our Calling with Induſtry, and to provide for our Families with Honeſty; to truſt in God's good Providence, and to be content with our Condition; to preſerve Unity in the Church, and Peace and good Order in the State; *to ſtudy to be quiet, to do our own Buſineſs*, and the Duty of the Capacity and Relations, we ſtand in; to abhor Uncleanneſs, and Evil-ſpeaking, and all Uncharitableneſs; this is true Preparation, and he that thus communicates, though at a Minute's Warning, will never be rejected by God, nor deſerve to be condemned by Men.

Actual *Preparation.*

4. THIS we may call an *habitual* Preparation: But, becauſe there is a *Decency* to be obſerved, and, on ſolemn Occaſions more eſpecially, the *Wedding-Garment* is to be put on, before we reſort to this *Feaſt*; therefore is an *actual* Preparation peculiar to this Ordinance (which is the higheſt Act of Chriſtian Worſhip, and a Complication of the moſt ſpiritual Performances, ordinarily incumbent on all Communicants.

Before,

[q] Before we addreſs ourſelves then to a Participation of this venerable Myſtery, we ſhould conſider, whither it is that we are going, and what the Nature and Importance of that Action is, we are ſetting ourſelves about: That we are approaching to *our Lord's Table* (as the [r] Apoſtle calls it) to come into his more immediate Preſence, to be entertained by him with the kindeſt Welcome, receive the fulleſt Teſtimonies of his Mercy, and the ſureſt Pledges of his Love: That we are going to behold him offering up himſelf a Sacrifice to God, therein undergoing the ſoreſt Pains, and the fouleſt Diſgrace for our Salvation; and that therefore we ought to bring with us Diſpoſitions of Mind ſuitable to ſuch an Intercourſe with our gracious Lord: And, in Preparation hereunto, we ſhould, with our utmoſt Power, endeavour to cleanſe our Souls from all Impurity of Thought and Deſire, from all Iniquity and Perverſeneſs, from all Malice, Envy, Hatred, and ſuch evil Diſpoſitions, as are offenſive to God's all-ſeeing Eye, and unbecoming his moſt glorious Preſence. On the contrary, we ſhould dreſs our Souls with all thoſe *comely* Ornaments of Grace, with Purity, Humility, Meekneſs, and Charity, which will render us acceptable to him: We ſhould compoſe our Mind into a Frame of Reverence, and awful Regard to the Majeſty of God; into a calm and ſerene Diſpoſition of Heart, apt to expreſs all Reſpect due to his Preſence, fit to admit the gracious Illapſes of his bleſſed Spirit, and ſuſceptive of all ſuch holy and heavenly Affections, as are ſuitable to ſuch a Communion. And therefore we ſhould abandon, not only all vicious Inclinations and evil Purpoſes, but even all worldly Cares, Deſires, and Paſſions, which may diſtract or diſcompoſe us, may cauſe us to behave indecently or unworthily before God, and ſo bereave us of his intended Benefits. Nor ſhould we forget, according to the Apoſtle's Advice, to try and *examine ourſelves*; conſidering our paſt Actions, and preſent Inclinations, and accordingly by ſerious Meditation, and fervent Prayer to God, for his gracious Aſſiſtance therein, working our Souls into an hearty Remorſe for our former Miſcarriages, and a ſincere Reſolution to amend for the future.

At,

THESE are the Duties which are *previous* to our receiving this holy Sacrament; and thoſe, which are proper to *accompany* it, are —— An awful Senſe of Mind, anſwerable to the Greatneſs and Holineſs of him, with whom we converſe, and to the

[p] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels. Vol. II. [q] *Barrow*, on the Sacraments. [r] 1 Cor. x. 21.

the Sacredneſs of thoſe *Myſteries*, which are exhibited to us; an hearty Contrition for our Sins, which expoſed our Saviour to ſuch Pains and Agonies, as are therein remembered, and a firm Reſolution of forſaking them intirely, as injurious and diſpleaſing to him: A fervent Love to our dear Redeemer for his wonderful Goodneſs and Charity to us; a ſincere Thankfulneſs for his inconceivably great Expreſſions of Kindneſs; the deepeſt Humility upon the Senſe of our Unworthineſs to receive ſuch Teſtimonies of his Grace and Favour; a pious Joy, in Conſideration of the excellent Fruits accruing to us from his Performances; a comfortable Hope of obtaining the Benefits of his Paſſion, by the Aſſiſtance of his Grace; and, laſtly, an enlarged Good-will and Charity to all our Brethren, as being, by his Appointment, made Heirs of the ſame Hope, Sons of the ſame Family, Members of the ſame Body, and not only waſhed in the ſame Baptiſm, but fed at the ſame Table with ourſelves.

And after Sacrament.

THESE are the Duties which ſhould attend our Participation in this holy Sacrament; and *thoſe*, which are properly *ſubſequent* to it, are——An Increaſe of all thoſe pious Inclinations and Affections, which were then kindled at the Altar of the Lord; a Cheriſhing thoſe Influences of Grace, which deſcended upon our Hearts in this Communion; a watchful Care and Endeavour in our Lives to approve ourſelves, in ſome Meaſure, worthy of the great Honour and Favour of being admitted to ſo near an Approach to God; a Purſuance of the Reſolutions, and a Performance of the Vows and Engagements, which we made on that ſolemn Occaſion; and, finally, a fixed and permanent Conſideration, that, by the Breach of ſuch Reſolutions, and the Violation of ſuch Engagements, our Sins will be *aggravated*, and our Guilt increaſed; and that, by the Relapſe of our Souls into ſo grievous a Diſtemper, our ſpiritual Strength will be ſadly *impaired*, and, conſequently, our Comforts abated, ſhaken, and our eternal State very much endangered.

Frequent Receiving.

THESE are moſt of the Duties ſubſequent to our Participation of the Lord's-Supper; only there is one more, which, upon this Occaſion, muſt not be forgot, and that is, our gladly embracing every Opportunity, which preſents itſelf, of communicating herein; always remembering, that, [s] beſides the Obligation of the Divine Precept and Command, there is no Office of Religion, ſo immediately deſigned for our ſpiritual Strength and Refreſhment, as our partaking of this Bread of Life, and Wine of elect Souls, which nouriſh and exhilarate the inward Man, and convey into us a *Principle* of living *well*, and of living *for ever*; that, without it, we can hardly deſerve the Character of Chriſtians, and run a great Danger of being excluded from what it finally repreſents, the everlaſting Feſtival of the Faithful, and the *Marriage-Supper of the Lamb of God*.

An Exhortation to it.

To conclude then with a Word or two of Exhortation. [t] The Obligation, which *Chriſt* hath laid upon us, is ſo vaſtly great, not only beyond all Requital, but beyond all Expreſſion, that, if he had commanded us ſome very grievous Thing, we ought, with all the Readineſs and Chearfulneſs in the World, to have done it; how much more, when he hath impoſed upon us ſo eaſy a Commandment, a Thing of no Burthen, but of immenſe Benefit? When he hath only ſaid to us, *Eat, O Friends, and drink, O Beloved?* When he only invites us to his Table, to the beſt and moſt delicious Feaſt, that we can partake of on this Side Heaven? [u] Since therefore this holy Ordinance is not only the *Remembrance* of our Lord's Death, but alſo the ſure *Pledge* of his Love; how barbarous are we to our own Souls, in denying them the beſt and moſt laſting Comfort, of frequently rejoicing in thoſe raviſhing Hopes and Aſſurances, which are here exhibited and confirmed? If not for *Chriſt*'s Sake, then (which yet were moſt unthankful and baſe) at leaſt for our own, (which not to do were moſt inhuman and ſtupid) let us beware of affronting ſo good a Lord, by refuſing his Invitations to ſo much Mercy, and of drawing upon ourſelves the Puniſhment of thoſe unworthy Wretches in the Goſpel, who [x] *went one to his Farm, and another to his Merchandize*, one to the Pleaſures, and another to the Buſineſs of Life, till at laſt they were finally excluded all *from the Marriage-Feaſt of the great King*.

[s] *Stanhope*'s Sermons. [t] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [u] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II. [x] *Vid.* Matth. xxii. 5. and Luke xiv. 18.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of CHRIST's *Humiliation.*

The Nature of Chriſt's Humiliation.

IN treating of the *Nature* of the *Second* Covenant, and therein of its *Mediation* by *the Man Chriſt Jeſus*, we were led to conſider him (in the Execution of that Office) under the different Capacities of *Prophet*, *Prieſt*, and *King*: But come now to enquire into what relates to his *perſonal* Character, and Tranſactions, in the two oppoſite States of his *Humiliation*, and *Exaltation* here on Earth. But, before we apply to that, it will be neceſſary, for the better underſtanding what is to follow, to premiſe, [a] 1. That, in this Humiliation of *Chriſt*, his *Divine* Nature could not poſſibly ſuffer any Change or Diminution, either in its Eſſence, or Attributes, nor he loſe any Part, either of that internal Glory and Greatneſs, which reſult from the *Dignity* of his Nature, or that of external Glory and Honour, which are ſubſequent upon his Works of *Creation*, *Conſervation*, and *Providence*. For beſides the Arguments, that might be drawn from the *Simplicity* of the Divine Nature, the Scriptures have given us ſuch an Idea of God, when they tell us, that [b] *the Heavens ſhall periſh*, yet he *ſhall endure*; though *they ſhall wax old, as does a Garment*, yet he, to all Eternity, *ſhall be the ſame*; as quite excludes all Suſpicion of *Mutability*. When therefore they declare, [c] *that Chriſt Jeſus, being in the Form of God, and equal with God, made himſelf of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant; and being found in the Faſhion of a Man, humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto Death*; the Meaning muſt be, not that he, in his *Divine* Nature, ſuffered any Manner of Abaſement; but that, being minded to manifeſt himſelf to Mankind, he put on the *Veil* of our Fleſh, liable, as it was, to Frailties and Infirmities, to Pains and Sorrows, and Death itſelf. So that the Seat, or *Subject of Inherence* (as ſome term it) of theſe Miſeries and Infirmities, wherein *Chriſt*'s Humiliation conſiſted, was only his human Nature, though the *Subject of Denomination*, to which theſe Sorrows and Frailties may be imputed, is his whole *Perſon*, as he is both God and Man: Upon which Account (by a Communication of *Idioms*) we may apply that to his *Divine*, which, in Strictneſs of Speech, belongs only to his *Human Nature*, and with Propriety enough ſay, that the Son of God (taking in the whole *Complex* of his Perſon) *ſhed his Blood*, and the eternal *Word* underwent many Indignities here on Earth; though we cannot, with any Poſſibility of Truth, affirm, that God, as God, could any Way be liable to ſuch-like Sufferings.

And Exaltation.

2. AND, in like Manner, we may obſerve, that [d] the *Glory*, or *Exaltation* of *Chriſt*, could not poſſibly conſiſt in any *real* Augmentation of Dignity or Excellence, or any advantageous Change to his *Divine Nature*, which, being *infinite*, and *immutable*, can admit of no Increaſe or Diminution; but only in its ſhedding a more abundant Influence upon his *Humanity*, to which it was conjoined, and in making a more bright and viſible Diſplay of the Rays of its Excellencies and Perfections, than it had done before; that, in this Exaltation, I ſay, the Glory of his *Divine Perſon* lay not in a real Acquiſition of Honour and Dignity, but merely in this —— That the *Cloud* of the Meanneſs, of the Infirmities and Sufferings, under which he choſe to appear, being now wholly diſperſed, the native Glory and Brightneſs of his Perſon, like the Sun from behind a Cloud, broke forth in its former Luſtre; that the Glory of his *Human Nature* lay not in its *Converſion into*, or *intimate Union* with his Divinity, (ſince the one was impoſſible, and the other was done at the Moment of his Incarnation) but in its being freed from Infirmities and Sufferings; its entering upon an immortal and incorruptible State, a new, ſpiritual, celeſtial and eternal Life; and participating in ſuch Divine Worſhip and Honours, as the Son of God (to whom it was ſo nearly allied) had an undoubted Right to receive.

3. THE

[a] Les Oeuvres poſthumes de M. Claude, Tom. III. 6, &c. [b] Pſal. cii. 26, &c. [c] Phil. ii. [d] *Claude*, ibid.

3. THE Humiliation of the Son of God, indeed, may, at firſt Sight, appear to be a Thing not ſo becoming his Perſon, nor ſo conſiſtent with his Honour; yet, if we conſider the great *Ends*, for which he humbled himſelf, and the bleſſed *Effects*, which his Pains and Sufferings produced, we ſhall be conſtrained to acknowledge, that the Afflictions and Hardſhips, which he underwent, tended to his own Honour and Renown, as well as our Comfort and Felicity. For by theſe Sufferings it was, [e] that he opened unto us an Entrance into Paradiſe, and merited for us a Reſurrection and eternal Life; by theſe, that he repaired the Honour and Glory of the Divine Juſtice, which before was violated by the Sins of Mankind; that he republiſhed the eternal Laws of Righteouſneſs, which are grown obſolete and quite forgot; reſtored Virtue and Holineſs to the Luſtre and Reputation they had long loſt in the World; diſſipated and deſtroyed Superſtition, Error, Idolatry, Corruption, and all that wild Confuſion, which the Fraud and Malice of the Devil had introduced, and, in the Room thereof, introduced Truth, Peace, Joy, Comfort, and Hope, and re-eſtabliſh'd them in Mens Hearts. Upon theſe Accounts, the Sufferings of Chriſt are ſo far from being inglorious to him, that they ſupply Matter for his eternal Praiſe; and are the Tenor of the Song, in the Service of the Church, both *militant* and *triumphant*; for [f] *worthy is the Lamb, that was ſlain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Bleſſing.* Theſe Things being premiſed, we come now to conſider the *perſonal* Character and Tranſactions of *Chriſt*, in the State of his *Humiliation.*

His Humiliation not inglorious.

I. THAT our bleſſed Lord is really and *eſſentially* a Divine Perſon, might be argued and inferred (had we not in ſome Meaſure done this [g] already) from ſuch Attributes as belong only to God; ſuch Worſhip, as is due only to God; ſuch Acts as can be done by none but God; and ſuch Titles and Appellations, as can agree with none but God, every-where meeting us in the Scriptures. That he is truly Man, as well as God, will appear, not only from [h] the Promiſes, Propheſies, and Predictions concerning him in the *Old Teſtament*, but from ſeveral remarkable Teſtimonies in the *New*. To this Purpoſe, we are informed, that, [i] *when the Fulneſs of Time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them, that were under the Law*; for [k] *he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but he took on him the Seed of* Abraham; upon which Account, we find the Title of *the Son of Man* ſo frequently, ſo emphatically given him in the *Evangeliſts*. In ſhort, the Conception and Birth, the Life and Death of our bleſſed Saviour, ſo largely deſcribed and inſiſted on by the Penmen of the Goſpels, do abundantly manifeſt, that, in the Subſtance of his Body, he was *truly* Man, and not merely the *Shape* and *Shadow* of Humanity, as ſome [l] old Hereticks imagined.

Of the Perſon *of Chriſt.*

His Body.

[m] FORASMUCH *then as the Children are Partakers of Fleſh and Blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took Part of the ſame, that, through Death, he might deſtroy him, that had the Power of Death*, i. e. *the Devil, and deliver them, who, through Fear of Death, were, all their Life-time, ſubject unto Bondage:* And certainly, if the Son of God vouchſafed to aſſume the Frailty of our Fleſh, he would not omit the nobler Part, our Soul, without which he could not be a *perfect* Man. *Wiſdom*, we know, belongeth not to the Fleſh, nor can the Knowledge of God, which all allow to be infinite, admit of Increaſe; and therefore he [n] whoſe *Knowledge* did improve together with his Years, muſt have a *Subject* proper for it, which could be no other than an human Soul. This was the Seat of his *finite* Underſtanding, and reſigned Will, *diſtinct*, we perceive, from that of his Father, and conſequently, that of his Divine Nature, as appears by that known Submiſſion, [o] *not my Will, but thine be done:* This was the *Subject* of thoſe Paſſions and Affections, which manifeſtly appeared in him, when, before his Sufferings, he ſaid, [p] *My Soul is exceeding ſorrowful,*

His human Soul.

[e] Les Ouvres poſthumes de M. Claude, Tom. III. [f] Rev. v. 12. [g] Page 118.
[h] Vid. Gen. iii. 15. Ibid. xii. 3. Deut. xviii. 18. Iſa. vii. 14. Ibid. ix. 6, &c. [i] Gal. iv. 4, 5.
[k] Heb. ii. 16. [l] Theſe were the *Valentinians*, who held, that *Chriſt*'s Body was framed in Heaven, and *paſſed through the Virgin* Mary, *as Water does through a Pipe*; which Notion was likewiſe eſpouſed by *Marcian:* For he, as *Athanaſius* aſſures us, was of Opinion, that God came down from Heaven, and dwelt, or ſojourned in the Virgin, without participating of her Subſtance, being incapable to receive any Thing from the Nature of Man, that was fallen under Sin, and ſubjected to the Ruler of Wickedneſs. Beſides theſe, there was another Sect, called *Apelleans*, from *Apelles*, a Scholar of *Marcian*'s, who own'd indeed, that *Chriſt* had a real and material Body, but denied it to be formed in the Virgin's Womb, or to have participated of any Part of her Subſtance: For they ſuppoſed, that when our Saviour came down from Heaven, (as *Epiphanius adv. Apel. Hæret.* relates it) he framed unto himſelf a Body of the *four Elements*, or (as *Tertullian de carne Chriſti* reports it) of the Stars and Subſtance of the ſuperior World, wherein he truly ſuffered and died. *King*'s Critical Hiſtory of the Creed. [m] Heb. ii. 14, 15. [n] Luke ii. 52.
[o] Ibid. xxii. 42. [p] Matth. xxvi. 38.

ful, even unto Death; and this was the Thing, which, before its Departure out of the Body, while he was yet upon the Croſs, he recommended to the Father, [q] *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit; and having thus ſaid, he gave up the Ghoſt.* So that there is no Queſtion to be made, but that he, who was perfect God, was alſo perfect Man, *of a reaſonable Soul, and human Fleſh ſubſiſting*; though ſome [r] ancient Hereticks, who allowed of his Aſſumption of human Fleſh, did, nevertheleſs, maintain, that the *Word*, or his Divinity, ſupplied, in his Body, the Place of an *informing* Soul.

The Union of the two Natures in Chriſt.

THAT it was highly expedient at leaſt, if not abſolutely neceſſary, for our bleſſed Saviour, as he was deſigned to be the *Mediator* between God and Man, to partake of the Nature of *both*, is what we had Occaſion to ſhew in treating of his *Mediatorial* Office: That both theſe Natures, united in our Saviour, do but conſtitute one *Perſon*, is evident from his being repreſented in Scripture, not as *two*, but one *Chriſt*, and all along ſpoken of and addreſſed to, as *one Perſon*; and that in this Union (how great ſoever the Myſtery be) there is no Contradiction, or Impoſſibility, may, in ſome Meaſure, be gathered from the Union of the Soul and Body, which, though conſiſting of two different Subſtances, do but conſtitute one Man. How this Union of the two Natures in *Chriſt* is effected, and wherein it does conſiſt, is the great Queſtion in our Religion, which we can only reſolve by the Negation of any Poſſibility for ſuch Union to conſiſt either in the *Converſion*, or *Confuſion* of theſe two Natures. That the *Divine* Nature ſhould be *changed* into the *human*, implies a Repugnancy in the very Notion; and that the *human* Nature ſhould be *converted* into the *Divine*, is abſolutely impoſſible. [s] The *Creature* can no more be made God, than God, *bleſſed for ever*, can ceaſe to be God, and become a Creature. To ſuppoſe then, that the human Nature were turned into the Divine, is to deſtroy all Union between the two Natures: For the human Nature, upon this Suppoſition, ceaſing to be, or being, as it were *ſwallowed* up by the *Divine*, there would be plainly, in the Perſon of *Chriſt*, only one Nature, *i. e.* the *Divine*, and no other; and to ſuppoſe that the two Natures were blended and mixed together in the Perſon of *Chriſt*, is, in Effect, to deſtroy them *both*; ſince *Chriſt*, upon this Suppoſition, would [t] be ſo far from being both God and Man, that, in Reality, he would be neither God nor Man, but a Perſon, as different from both, as all mixed Bodies are from the *Elements*, which concur to their Compoſition.

And their Diſtinction.

THOUGH therefore we cannot poſitively account, in what Manner this Union is effected, yet that, after this Union, the two Natures remain *entire* and *diſtinct* in their reſpective *Properties*, may, in ſome Meaſure, be conceived again from the Union of our Souls and Bodies. [u] The Body, it muſt be owned, after its Union with the Soul, does not move, or act, in the ſame Manner, that it would have done in a ſeparate State. The Soul, by which it is now informed, *modifies* it a thouſand different Ways, and gives it quite another Courſe of Operations; and yet, notwithſtanding this, it preſerves all the Qualities and Affections, that properly belong to a Body; from whence we may ſuppoſe, that the human Nature may ſtill retain all its natural Powers and Properties, though ſo intimately united to the Divine, and acting after ſuch a Manner, in Subordination to it, that they both conſtitute but one *individual* Perſon.

The two Natures united for ever.

THUS the *Unity* of the Perſon takes not away the *Diſtinction* of the Natures, but the Godhead and Manhood retain their own Properties ſeverally; neither does the Diſtinction of Natures hinder the Unity of the Perſon, but one and the ſame *Chriſt* is perfect God, and perfect Man, and ſo ſhall abide for ever. For though, after the Day of Judgment, when the Number of God's Elect ſhall be completed, *Chriſt*'s *mediatorial* Office ſhall be at an End; yet the Glory, which he obtained, as the Reward of his meritorious Performances, ſhall never ceaſe. * The Saints, we are told, ſhall inherit an everlaſting Kingdom; and much more then ſhall he, who procured this Exaltation for them, be himſelf for ever poſſeſſed of his Glory; *they ſhall come to* Sion *with a Song*, and, in the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, praiſe and magnify him, that *ſitteth*

[q] Luke xxiii. 46. [r] The moſt remarkable Sects of this Kind were the *Arians*, and the *Apollinarians*. *Arius* taught, *Chriſt* had nothing of Man, but the Fleſh, with which the Word was joined: But *Apollinarius* diſtinguiſhed between the Soul and the Mind, the Ψυχὴ and the Νοῦς; and acknowledged, that the Word aſſum'd the Body, and Soul or Ψυχὴ of Man, but not the Mind or Νοῦς; for the Word itſelf, he ſaid, was in the Place of that. This was then the true Difference between the *Arian* and the *Apollinarian* Hereſy, as *Fœcundus* ſtates it, Lib. ix. *Apollinariſtæ quidem carnis & animæ naturam, ſine mente, aſſumpſiſſe Deum credunt; Ariani vero, carnis tantummodo. Pearſon* on the Creed. [s] *Conant*'s Sermons. [t] *Pearſon*, ibid. [u] *Burnet*, on the Articles, and *Fiddes*'s Body, Vol. I. and *Barrow*, on the Creed. * *Burnet* and *Fiddes*, ibid.

ſitteth on the Throne, and the Lamb for ever and ever; and how great ſoever the Illumination of their Minds may be, yet it is not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that they will ſtill be more ſenſibly affected with all the proper Motions of Love, Veneration, and Gratitude towards him, from the viſible Appearance of his Human Nature in Union with the Divine, which cannot but ſuggeſt the Thought, that to his great Performances in that Nature, ſupported by the Divine Aid and Benediction, all their preſent Glory and Felicity is to be aſcribed.

The Conception of Chriſt.

II. THIS being ſufficient to be ſpoken in general concerning the great Myſtery of the *Hypoſtatical* Union of the Divine and Human Natures, in the Perſon of our bleſſed Saviour; we proceed now to the particular Formation of his *Human*, which, (as the Angel acquainted the bleſſed Virgin) was to be effected in this Manner: [x] *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the Power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee; therefore alſo that holy Thing, which ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be called the Son of God:* In which Words (agreeable to the uſual Modeſty and great Decency of Scripture-Language) is implied all that Action of the Holy Ghoſt, whereby the Virgin was enabled to become *fruitful*, and the Place of ordinary Generation, in this Caſe, ſupplied. [y] For that there was no Concurrence of any ordinary Cauſe, not only ſhe herſelf in the *preceding* Words, but the Angel, by whom ſhe was viſited, teſtifies; when, in order to ſtrengthen her Belief in a Production ſo ſtrange and aſtoniſhing, he declares it the Work of God, with whom, ſhe ought to remember, † *that nothing is impoſſible.*

Why by the Holy Ghoſt.

Now, when this Action is, in Scripture, repreſented as entirely the Work of God, and yet attributed to the Holy Ghoſt in particular, we are not to underſtand it ſo peculiarly his, that the two other Perſons, ſubſiſting in the Godhead, ſhould have no Concern in it; but it is therefore more eſpecially aſſigned to the Holy Ghoſt (tho' common to both Father and Son) becauſe *fructifying* and *ſanctifying* are, in the ſacred Stile, generally aſcribed to his Influences. As therefore he began the *firſt* Creation, by moving, or *brooding* (as it were) upon the Face of the Waters; ſo did he here begin the *new* Creation, by conveying a Principle and Power of Fruitfulneſs into a Perſon, otherwiſe *incapable* of it: And as it was requiſite, that the Saviour and Sanctifier of the World ſhould himſelf be [z] *holy and undefiled, without Blemiſh, and without Spot*; hence grew an abſolute Neceſſity, that he ſhould ſpring from the *immediate* Operation of that Spirit, who is the Fountain of all Holineſs and Purity; and, laſtly, as it was requiſite, that, to enable him to perform the Work of the World's Redemption, the Divine and Human Nature ſhould be conjoined in his Perſon; hence grew a Neceſſity again for the Intervention of an *Agent*, [a] to whom we find, that all the great and magnificent Things of God, thoſe ſignal *Works* of Providence, the *Revelation* of Divine Truth, the *Prediction* of future Events, the *Performance* of Miracles, the *Renovation* of Mens Minds, and the *Reformation* of their Manners, are, in a peculiar Manner, aſcribed.

Chriſt's Human Nature taken from his Mother.

BUT though, to accompliſh the Conjunction of the Divine and Human Nature in the Perſon of our Saviour *Chriſt*, to ſupply the Defect of a *plaſtick* Power in the Subſtance of the Virgin, to rectify the *corporeal* Matter, which he took from her, and to clear it from that Stain and Corruption, which in an ordinary Propagation, adheres to Human Nature, the Intervention and Agency of the Spirit of God was required, in this miraculous Conception; yet, ſince the holy Scripture, with great Significance calls him, [b] *the Seed of a Woman, the Son of God, made of a Woman*, and the like, (none of theſe Titles could, in any Senſe, have been proper, had this Virgin contributed nothing more, upon this Occaſion, but carrying this Burthen, and bringing into the World a Body thus miraculouſly framed) what we are farther to believe concerning his Conception is this — That *Chriſt*'s Human Nature was entirely taken from his Mother; that, by a wonderful Efficacy of Almighty Power, his Body was formed, not only *in* her, but *of* her; that thus he truly became (what otherwiſe he could not have been) [c] *the Seed of* Abraham *and* David, *according to the Fleſh*; and that *Mary*, conſequently, upon all Accounts, was *ſtrictly* and literally his *Mother*; nay, upon ſome Accounts, more ſtrictly *ſo*, than any other Woman can be the Mother of her Child; ſince, in the uſual Courſe of Nature, Children partake of the Subſtance of both Parents, whereas the Whole of *Chriſt*'s human Subſtance was derived from *her alone*.

THOUGH

[x] Luke i. 34, 35. [y] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I. † Luke i. 37. [z] 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. vii. 26, 27. i. 1. Rom. i. 3. [a] *Barrow*, on the Creed. [b] Gen. iii. 18. Gal. iv. 4. [c] Matth.

Why.

THOUGH therefore [d] we may eaſily conceive, that God could immediately have created a Nature, in Kind and Properties, like ours, and ſo aſſumed it to his Divinity; yet this would not have ſo fitly ſerved the Deſign of our Redemption, ſince to effect that, in the moſt congruous Way, not only a *Reſemblance* in Nature, but a *Proximity* in Blood was required; that the Dignity, we had loſt by our Rebellion, might be recovered by the ſatisfactory Merits of *One*, who was of our own Race and Kindred; and that the Devil, who, by the Weakneſs of a Woman, had ſeduced Man from his Duty to God, by the Strength and faithful Obedience of One proceeding from a Woman, might be defeated and debaſed: But then, to diſtinguiſh the Birth of this Saviour of the World from the ordinary Births of other Men, it was expedient likewiſe (according [e] to the Propheſies, which had gone before concerning him) that he ſhould be born of a *Virgin*, to give us a full Conviction of his *Divine Original*.

Whether, after his Birth, ſhe ſtill continued a Virgin.

THAT the Mother of *Jeſus* was a Virgin, at the Time of her Conception, neither is, nor can be queſtioned by thoſe, who believe the Scriptures; and that ſhe ſhould continue ſo, *until ſhe had brought forth her Firſt-born Son*, is pious to believe, (even though we had not the Teſtimony of the Scriptures to this Purpoſe) in Honour both to the *Manner* of his Conception, and the *Sacredneſs* of his Perſon. Whether, after the Birth of Chriſt, this holy Mother continued ſtill in a perfect State of *Virginity*, has been a Queſtion under ſome Debate among learned Men. [f] The peculiar Honour and Privilege vouchſafed that Mother, the Regard and Deference ſhe always ſhewed to her Son, the Awefulneſs of the *Power of the Higheſt*, which *overſhadowed* her, and the preſumed Goodneſs and Piety of *Joſeph*, who eſpouſed her, made the Perſuaſion pretty *general*, that, even after the Birth of our Saviour, ſhe ſtill continued in a perpetual State of Virginity. As it is ſufficient however to the Myſtery of the Incarnation, that at the Time, when our Lord was conceived and born, his Mother was a Virgin, there can be no Impiety in maintaining the contrary Opinion; if ſo be, that the natural and unconſtrained Interpretation of Scripture do but warrant it.

Some Reaſons againſt it.

WHEN therefore we find the *Royal Prophet* bringing in the *Meſſias*, in a Pſalm, which has a manifeſt Reference to him, complaining in this Manner; [g] *I am become a Stranger to my Bretbren, and an Alien unto my Mother's Children*; [h] when, purſuant to this Propheſy, we find [i] St *Matthew* plainly preparing the Way for our Belief of other Children by the bleſſed Virgin, by intimating to us, that *Joſeph* was her Huſband, and ſhe his Wife, and that they cohabited as ſuch, all along after the Birth of our *Saviour*; when, to confirm this Intimation, we find [k] the *Evangelical* Hiſtory telling us, that our Lord had *Brethren* and *Siſters*, and theſe not a few; that his Brethren were four, *James*, and *Joſes*, and *Simon*, and *Judas*, and his Siſters perhaps as many; when we perceive, that theſe Brethren of *Chriſt* were always ſo called by the *Evangeliſts*, and ſo reputed by the *Jews*; nay, that one of them is expreſſly ſo ſtiled [l] by St *Paul*, is frequently made mention of [m] in the *Apoſtolick Conſtitutions*, and [n] by *Joſephus*, the famous *Jewiſh* Hiſtorian, without the leaſt Sign of any other Senſe imaginable; and laſtly, when we conſider, that there is not the leaſt Intimation of *Joſeph*'s being ever married before, and having other Children, who might *improperly* be called the Brethren of *Jeſus*; and that, though the bleſſed Virgin had *Nephews*, yet were they never called the *Brethren of Chriſt* in the whole New Teſtament: When theſe Conſiderations are put together, I ſay, they will make it more than *probable*, that the Mother of our Lord did not continue a *perpetual Virgin*, notwithſtanding it be granted, that, in the *Jewiſh* Language, it was no unuſual Thing to call any *collateral* Kindred, ſuch as Couſins, or Couſins-German, by the Name of *Brothers*. But this we advance, only as the eaſieſt Acceptation of ſome Texts of Scripture, which make mention of our *Saviour*'s Family, without any Deſign to oppoſe the contrary Opinion, [o] which is ſupported by a great Body of learned Men;

[d] *Barrow*, on the Creed. [e] Iſa. vii. 14. Jer. xxxi. 22. [f] *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [g] Pſal. lxix. 8. [h] *Whiſton*'s Sermons and Eſſays. [i] Matth. i. 18. [k] Ibid. xiii. 55, 56. Mark iii. 31. Luke viii. 19. [l] Gal. i. 19. [m] Conſtit. Apoſt. Lib. VI. c. lv. Lib. VI. c. xii, &c. [n] Antiq. Lib. XX. c. 8.

[o] A very learned Man of our Church has produced one of the beſt Arguments, I have met with, for the perpetual Virginity of the bleſſed Mother. *Spanhemius*, *ſays he*, in his *Dubia Evangelica*, concludes againſt the Opinion of *Helvidius*, who denied this *Perpetuity*, merely upon the Account of Decency and Congruity, as judging it more ſuitable and agreeable to that honourable Eſteem, we ought to have of our bleſſed *Saviour*'s Mother, to hold, that, after his Birth, ſhe remained a *perpetual Virgin*. But I add, *ſays he*, to aſſert ſo, ſeems not only decent, but of as abſolute Neceſſity, as that *Jeſus Chriſt*, the *Meſſias*, was to be of Right King of the *Jews*. For, upon Suppoſition, that *Joſeph* had any Children, either by *Mary*, or any other Wife, they, as coming from the elder Line of *Abiud* by *Joſeph*, their Father, muſt have claimed the Inheritance of the Kingdom in his Right, and not *Jeſus*, the

Men; but ought not however to be made an Article of *Divine Faith*, ſince there is no viſible Foundation for it in *Divine Revelation*.

THERE are other Queſtions which fall under this Head, ſuch "as [p], Whether "our bleſſed *Saviour*, while he was in his Mother's Womb, was ſubject to the "ſame Infirmities with other Infants; [q] and whether his Mother felt any Pain and "Uneaſineſs, and was liable to the Diſorders, which attend other Women in the like "Circumſtances, *&c.*" but inſtead of treating on theſe, and ſuch-like Queſtions, which afford Matter for vain *Curioſity*, rather than anſwer any Purpoſe of Religion and Morality, we ſhall rather chuſe to refer our Reader to what is ſaid under the *Page* concerning theſe Subjects; and ſo proceed,

III. To the Conſideration of our *Saviour's Nativity*; and herein, 1. of the Time, when; 2. the Place, where; 3. the Family, from which our *Saviour* was born; and ſo make ſome proper Obſervations from this Part of his Hiſtory. *The Time of* Chriſt's *Birth.*

1. NOW there are three Periods more eſpecially, when it was foretold by the Prophets, that the *Saviour* of the World ſhould be born: The firſt Period was to happen, upon the Accompliſhment of that Propheſy of *Jacob*, [r] *the Scepter ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet, until Shiloh come*, i. e. (as [s] we explained the Text before) the *Jews*, who were ſo denominated from *Judah*, ſhall not ceaſe to be a *political* Body, and to exerciſe a *regal*, or, at leaſt, a *judicial* Power and Authority, till the Time that the *Meſſiah* (for ſo the Word *Shiloh* was always interpreted) ſhall appear. For the *Scepter* or *Rod* does not only denote *Royal* Power, but any *judicial*, or *legiſlative* Authority, under what Form of Government ſoever; and this the *Jews* did certainly retain, even during all the Breaches, which were made in their Government, [t] until the Time of our *Saviour*'s Coming. The Expiration of the [u] *ſeventy Weeks*, mentioned by the Prophet *Daniel*, is another Note of Time, when the *Meſſiah* ſhould appear. * For here, by Weeks underſtanding (as the *Jews* uſed ſometimes to compute) *Weeks of Years*, the whole Number of *When the Prophecies were fulfilled.*

the Son of *Mary*, who deſcended from *Rheſa*, the younger Son of *Zorobabel*, and ſo could not *legally* inherit, but upon Default of Iſſue from *Joſeph*, the only remaining Heir of the Elder. For this being the Law of the *Jews*, which, in this Caſe, would have debarred *Jeſus* from a Title to their Kingdom, and our *Saviour*, coming to fulfil the Law in every Part and Tittle of it, would never have owned himſelf *King of the Jews*, contrary to the expreſs Injunctions of it, had *Joſeph* had any Heirs of his own, to ſucceed to the Title: Whereupon he concludes, that *Joſeph* had no Children after *Chriſt*'s Birth; and that *Mary*, conſequently, was a perpetual Virgin. *South*'s Sermons, Vol. III. But this deſtroys the Solution of another great Man, who, making *Mary*, the Mother of *Jeſus* and St *John*, to be the ſame Perſon with the Mother of *James* and *Joſes*, in St *Matthew* and St *Mark*, ſuppoſes *Joſeph* to have had theſe by a former Venter, and *Mary* to be their Step-mother. See *Whitby*, on *Matth.* xiii. 55.

[p] "En Effet, le Fil de Dieu, ayant voulu ſe faire *Chair*, a revetu toutes nos infirmites, entre leſquelles, celles de "l'enfance, & des prémiers Mois aprés la Conception, doivent être conteſtées. Il ne faut donc pas douter, que "*Marie*, ſa mere, n'ait été expoſée à toutes les incommoditez des Groſſeſſes ordinaires, & que le divin Enfant, qu'elle "portoit dans ſon ſein, n'eut ſa part de ces Incommoditez." *M. Claude, de Jeſus Chriſt*, Liv. V. c. ix.

[q] "Ab hac ſententiâ excipitur virgo, Mater Dei: Quæ, quia ſine peccati colluvione, & ſine virilis admixtionis "detrimento, Chriſtum ſuſcepit, ſine dolore genuit, & ſine integritatis violatione, pudore virginitatis integro, per"manſit." *Auguſt. in Johann.* "Ceux de l'Egliſe Romaine s'imaginent, que, quand *Jeſus Chriſt* eſt né, il ne "s'eſt fait aucune Ouverture dans le Corps de la Vierge, mais qu'il eſt né par, ce qu'on appelle, *la Pénetration des* "*dimenſions*. Mais tout cela ſe dit ſans néceſſité, & ſans aucune Témoignage de l'Ecriture. ——— L'opinion con"ſtante des anciens Peres a été, que *Jeſus Chriſt* eſt ſorti du Corps de la Vierge avec Ouverture de Matrice, & l'E"criture même le dit en termes formels; car elle applique à *Jeſus Chriſt* cette parole de la Loy, *tout mâle, ouvrant la* "*Matrice, ſera appellé ſaint au Seigneur:* Surquoy pluſieurs Peres ont fait cette Rémarque, que *Jeſus Chriſt* eſt le ſeul, "à qui proprement cette parole appartienne, puiſque lui ſeul, entre tous les Enfans, a fait l'Ouverture de la Matrice "de ſa mere. Les adverſaires diſent au contraire, que ſi cela étoit vray, *Marie* n'auroit pas demeuré Vierge dans "l'Enfantement. Mais à cela la je répons, que l'Idee, qu'ils ſe forment de la Virginité, eſt abſurde. Car l'Ouver"ture de la Matrice peut arriver par pluſieurs accidens, comme par Maladie, ſans pourtant que la Virginité ſoit per"duëe. La Virginité conſiſte à n'avoir eu aucun commerce d'homme; *Marie* donc a été Vierge avant l'Enfantement, "dans l'Enfantement, & aprés; puiſque ſon Fruit a été conçu dans ſon ſein, par la virtue du Saint Eſprit, ſans l'In"tervention de l'homme." *M. Claude, de Jeſus Chriſt*, Liv. V. c. ix.

[r] Gen. xlix. 10. [s] See page 351. and *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part II. Lib. IX.

[t] The Scepter, and Law-giver remained among the *Jews*, till both began to be taken from them by the *Romans*, on their reducing *Judea* into the Form of a *Roman* Province; and then *Chriſt*, the promiſed *Shiloh*, began his Coming, as the *Meſſiah*, by then firſt entering on his Father's Buſineſs, for which he was ſent. And that this actually fell in with the Time of this Charge plainly appears: For *Chriſt* was then in the twelfth Year of his Age, and the twelfth Year from *Chriſt*'s Birth was that, wherein *Coponius* entered upon his Government: For *Herod* lived one Year after the Birth of *Chriſt*, and, after the Death of *Herod*, *Archelaus* reigned ten Years, and, the next Year after, the *Romans* ſeized *Judea*, and made it a Province of their *Empire*. *Chriſt* therefore firſt appeared in the Temple, as the *Meſſiah*, at that very Time, when the *Scepter* and the *Law-giver* firſt began *to depart from Judah*; and, ſixty-two Years after that, this Departure was fully completed, in the Deſtruction of the Temple and City of *Jeruſalem*, and the utter aboliſhing of the whole *Jewiſh* Policy, and Conſtitution of Government in that Land, which hath, never ſince, either there, or any where elſe, been again revived. *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part II. Vol. II.

[u] Dan. ix. 24, *&c.* * *Prideaux*, ibid. Part I. Vol. II.

ſeventy Weeks will contain *four hundred and ninety Years*; at the Expiration of which Time, the *Jews* were no more to be the peculiar People of God, nor *Jeruſalem* his holy City; becauſe then the *OEconomy*, which he had eſtabliſhed among them, was to ceaſe, the Worſhip which he had appointed at *Jeruſalem*, was wholly to be aboliſhed, and the *Chriſtian* Church and *Chriſtian* Worſhip to ſucceed in its Stead. 3. Another Note of Time, when the *Meſſiah*, according to the Prophet *Haggai*, was to be born, was during the ſtanding of the ſecond Temple: For [x] *I will ſhake all Nations*, ſays God, *and the Deſire of all Nations ſhall come, and I will fill this Houſe with Glory; the Glory of this latter Houſe ſhall be greater than the Glory of the former.* But how came this latter Temple (which both on Account of its Structure and external Ornaments, as well as the ſpecial Manifeſtations of the Divine Preſence and Power in it, was ſo much inferior) to be accounted more glorious than the former? For no other Reaſon, but becauſe the *Angel of the Covenant*, *the Delight of the Iſraelites*, *and the Deſire of all Ages* (which Characters ſeem plainly to deſcribe the Perfections of our Saviour) was to grace and adorn it with his Preſence.

WHEN therefore theſe Predictions were going to be fulfilled, the *ſecond* Temple was yet ſtanding; *Daniel's ſeventy Weeks* were expiring; and the *Scepter* was upon the Point of *departing from Judah*; then was *the Fulneſs of Time*, or the ſtated and prefixed Time for *Chriſt* to appear. And, from the Strength of theſe Propheſies, very probably it was, that, about the Time of our Saviour's Birth, there was ſo ſtrong a *Tradition* (as [y] ſeveral Hiſtorians tell us) through all the *Eaſt*, that a great and mighty *Prince* was then to ariſe out of the *Jewiſh* Nation. *When Mens Neceſſities* However this be, 'tis certain, that the Neceſſities of Mankind, and the particular Temper and Diſpoſition of the Age, wherein *Chriſt* was born, ſeemed then to call for him, when he came. For (not to mention the Superſtition and Idolatry of the *Gentile* World) even in *Judea*, the Seat of the once beloved People of God, all Licentiouſneſs, Lewdneſs, and Villainy prevailed. [z] The *Hypocriſy* of the *Phariſees*, the *Subtlety* of the *Herodians*, the *Hereſies* of the *Sadducees*, and the *impertinent Traditions* of the Doctors of the Law, had quite ſpoiled and defaced all Religion and Morality; [a] ſo that the greateſt *Jews* were *Atheiſts* and *Epicureans*; they both profeſſed, and lived like Perſons of that Character; and the meaner Sort were ſunk into Ignorance and Brutality. When therefore the World was thus out of Order, and, every Day, like to be worſe, God ſent forth his Son, to bleſs us with greater Diſcoveries of his Will, to give us Rules of exact Holineſs, to recommend Religion and Virtue by his own Example, and ſo [b] *to call us out of Darkneſs into his marvellous Light.*

And the Temper of the Age required it. BUT what might induce God, more eſpecially, to pitch upon this Point of Time, for the Manifeſtation of his Son, was the particular Diſpoſition of that Age; when, the *temporal* Power of the *Jews* being broken by the *Romans*, they were unable to make that vigorous and effectual Oppoſition to *Chriſt*, and his Religion, which they otherwiſe would have done; when a great Part of the Earth being under one Government, and a Communication kept up between different Countries, did promote and facilitate the Propagation of *Chriſt*'s Goſpel; [c] when the *Roman* Empire was in its full Glory, and, together with it, Learning and Wit, as well as all the *Arts* and *Sciences* flouriſhed; when the World enjoyed a profound *Peace*, and was at Liberty to examine into the Truth of any Prophet or Profeſſion, that ſet up with high and uncommon Pretenſions. [d] And, as Men at this Time were ſufficiently qualified to diſcover an *Impoſture*; ſo, conſidering the prevailing Depravity, they muſt be ſuppoſed unwilling to embrace any *Truth*, which put a Check to all Licentiouſneſs, and reſtrained them from their beloved *Luſts*. Vice would be ſure to make a ſtrong Defence, and an eager Plea; and nothing would be difficult for it to diſcover, when it had ſo great a Number of ſuch ſubtle and devoted Advocates. It is no ſmall Argument therefore of the Divine Authority of our moſt holy Religion, that the Providence of God ſent the great Author and Publiſher of it into the World, in a Time, the moſt unlikely for an *Impoſture* to paſs undiſcovered, and therefore the moſt ſeaſonable for *Truth* to manifeſt itſelf; ſince that muſt needs be true, which neither Learning,

[x] Haggai ii. 7, 9. [y] *Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus & conſtans opinio, eſſe in Fatis, ut, eo tempore, Judææ profecti rerum potirentur.* Sueton. de vitâ Veſpaſiani. *Pluribus perſuaſio inerat, antiquis ſacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipſo tempore fore, ut valeſceret Oriens, profectique Judææ rerum potirentur,* Cornel. Tacit. Hiſt. L. V. which agrees very well with what *Joſephus* tells us of a current Propheſy, *that one of their own Country ſhould, at that Time, have Dominion over the World.* And this, as he tells us, was one Means of exciting the *Jews*, to make War with the *Romans.* De Bello Judaic. L. VII. c. xii. [z] Les Oeuvres poſth. de M. Claude, Tom. III. [a] *Edwards*'s Survey, Vol. I. [b] 1 Pet. ii. 9. [c] *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [d] *Jenkin*'s Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion.

Learning, nor Prejudice, nor Vice, nor Intereſt could impair the Credit of, nor any Way prove to be falſe.

The Place of Chriſt's Birth.

2. ANOTHER conſiderable Circumſtance, relating to our Saviour's Birth, was the *Place* where it came to paſs, which, according to the expreſs Prediction [f] of the Prophet, was *Bethlehem*, in the Tribe of *Judah*: *For, thou, Beth-lehem, Ephratah, though thou be* little *among the Thouſands of Judah, yet out of thee ſhall come forth unto me one, that is to be Ruler in Iſrael, whoſe Goings forth have been of old, from everlaſting.* And here we cannot but obſerve, how the *ſpecial* Providence of God was viſible in the Diſpoſition made for the Birth of *Chriſt*, in the very Place, where he was born: For *Auguſtus* having publiſhed a *Decree*, that all the World ſhould be taxed, *i. e.* have their Names and Conditions of Life ſet down in *Court-Rolls*, according to their Families; *Joſeph* and *Mary* were obliged to go up, from the Place of their Abode, to this *City of David*, to be taxed there, as being of the Houſe and Lineage of *David*; where while they continued, the Days were accompliſhed, that *Jeſus* ſhould be born. [g] Had it not been in Obedience to this Decree, it is highly improbable, that *Joſeph* and *Mary* would have taken ſuch a Journey, in the Condition ſhe was, and at ſo unſeaſonable a Time of the Year: But God, who can effect his Deſigns by by what Inſtruments he pleaſes, ſo ordered the Matter, that, by the Command of an *Heathen* Prince, they ſhould, at that Time, repair to *Bethlehem*, to the End that, not only the Accompliſhment of the Propheſies, concerning this Circumſtance, might become more conſpicuous; but that the Birth of our Saviour Chriſt might be recorded in the *publick Acts* of the Empire, for his Followers to appeal to (as we find *Juſtin Martyr* and *Tertullian* expreſſly do) when called upon to make Proof of the Reality of his *Incarnation*.

Highly honoured hereby.

IT is deſervedly counted a great Honour to any Place, that famous and excellent Perſons have been born in it: [h] For this Reaſon, Cities and Nations have, in all Ages, been wont to ſtrive and contend with one another, to draw and appropriate to themſelves the Glory of having given Birth to ſuch and ſuch *eminent* Perſons. Nor is this merely a vain Humour of the World, but what the holy Scriptures repreſent as a great Bleſſing to a Place, when Men of Renown and beneficial Qualities happen to receive their firſt Breath in it. For ſo, promiſing his People a Reward upon the Performance of their Duty, [i] *they that ſhall be born of thee*, ſays God, *ſhall build the old waſte Places: Thou ſhalt raiſe up the Foundation of many Generations*, the Foundations, that for many Ages, have been demoliſhed and ruined, *and thou ſhalt be called, i. e.* thou, in thine Offſpring, and in thoſe that ſhall deſcend from thee, ſhall be called *the Repairer of the Breach, and the Reſtorer of Paths to dwell in.* If then, even in God's Account, it be a great Honour and Privilege to a Place, to have eminent and worthy Perſons born in it; whether we conſider our bleſſed Saviour, in the *Dignity* of his Perſon, as he is [k] *over all, God bleſſed for ever*; or in the Greatneſs of his *Atchievements*, as he is the [l] *Vanquiſher of Satan*, and of *all the Powers of Hell*; or in the *beneficial Effects* of them, [m] *as he is the Author of eternal Salvation, to all that obey him*; under which of theſe Notions ſoever we conſider our Lord and Saviour, I ſay, we ſhall perceive the Reaſon [n] of the Evangeliſt's *Variation* from the Words of the Prophet; [o] *and thou, Bethlehem, in the Land of Judah, art not the leaſt among the Princes of Judah; for out of thee ſhall come a Governor, that ſhall rule my People Iſrael.* For, though it might be *little*, in Reſpect of its Extent, and the Number of its Inhabitants, in *Micah*'s Senſe; yet, in the Senſe of St *Matthew*, it was eminently *great*, by giving Birth to the Saviour of the World, the Son of God. Hither it was, that the holy Angels ſent the Shepherds to declare the [p] *good Tidings of great Joy*, which they brought from Heaven: And hither it was, that a Star directed the [q] *Wiſe Men of the Eaſt*, to come and pay their Homage and Adoration to their *God incarnate*. But who theſe *Wiſe Men* were, *whence* they came, and what the Nature of the *Star* was, by whoſe Conduct they were directed to *Chriſt*, may perhaps be no improper *Digreſſion* here to enquire.

I. THE

[e] Mich. v. 2. [f] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [g] *Conant*'s Sermons. [h] Iſa lviii. 12.
[i] Rom. ix. 5. [k] Heb. ii. 14. [l] Ibid. v. 9. [m] The Prophet *Micah* ſpeaks of *Bethlehem*, as a *little City*, whereas St *Matthew* calls it *not the leaſt, i. e.* a very conſiderable one among the *Princes*, or Cities of *Judah*; and, to reconcile this ſeeming Difference, ſeveral learned Men have affirmed, that the original Word ſignifies indifferently either *little* or *great*; and *with great Emphaſis* (ſays our learned *Pocock*) *ſeems that Word here put, to ſhew, that, as ſome other Things, which are little in Bulk and Quantity, are, in other Regards, of great Eſteem and Value, ſo was it with Bethlehem.* Vid. *Pocock* on *Micah* v. 2. *Whitby* on *Matth.* ii. 6. and *Kidder*'s Demonſtration of the Meſſiah. [n] Matth. ii. 6. [o] Luke ii. 10, 14. [p] Matth. ii. 2, 9.

The Wiſe Men of the East, *who.*

1. THE Word which we render Wiſemen, in its *Original*, ſignifies *Magicians*; which, however now it may bear not ſo good a *Character*, was nevertheleſs heretofore a Name of very *innocent* and *honourable* Signification. [q] The Studious and Inquiſitive, whoſe Buſineſs and Profeſſion led them to ſearch into Nature, its moſt abſtruſe Cauſes and Effects, and more particularly into the Motions and Diſpoſitions of heavenly Bodies, were diſtinguiſhed by this Title: And, in what Veneration and profound Reſpect they were held, appears from the moſt important Matters, both *ſacred* and *civil*, being committed to their Adminiſtration. They were the Counſellors, the Judges, the Prieſts, the Princes, in a Word, the *Oracles* of the *Eaſtern* Countries. But, as the beſt Arts are ſometimes perverted to ill Purpoſes, ſo it happened to theſe, that, falling into the Hands of bad Men, who met with People ignorant and credulous, and not only eaſy, but even glad to be deluded, they degenerated into the common Cheats of *judiciary* Aſtrology; and theſe Abuſes grew ſo general, as, at laſt, to fix an *ill* Senſe upon the Word, and a *Scandal* on the Science itſelf.

IT were a Wrong, and great Indignity to the Perſons now before us, not to believe them of the nobler and better Sort; but we can hardly be perſuaded (though ſome would endeavour to do it) that they were Perſons of *Royal* Dignity; [r] becauſe we cannot reaſonably ſuppoſe, that the *Evangeliſt* would have omitted a Circumſtance of ſo great Moment, both for their Honour and our Lord's: We can hardly think, but that ſome Account would have been given of their Royal Train and Equipage, and that all *Jeruſalem* would have been moved, as much to ſee their *Entry*, as they were to hear their *Queſtions*: Nor can we imagine, that it would have been decent in *Herod* to have received them with no more Reſpect, and to have diſmiſſed them without any Attendance to *Bethlehem*, much leſs to have laid his Commands upon them to return back, and to bring him an Account of the Child, as ſoon as they had found him, had they been Perſons of equal Rank and Dignity with himſelf. Upon theſe Conſiderations, we may not unjuſtly deny them the Title of Kings, tho' we cannot but allow them to be Perſons of great Wiſdom, Learning, and Integrity, [s] of which, *ours*, and ſome other Tranſlations of the Bible, have been ſo ſenſible, as very prudently to decline the odious Name of *Magicians*, and to call them *the Wiſemen from the Eaſt*; but then, what, and where this *Eaſt* was, is a Queſtion, wherein the Body of Interpreters have very much divided.

The Country whence they came.

2. SOME conceive, that theſe Travellers came out of *Perſia*, others from *Chaldea*, others from *Arabia Felix*, and others again from *Meſopotamia*. Theſe Countries all lay *Eaſtward* from *Jeruſalem*, and the Holy Land; and in each of theſe ſome antecedent Notions of the Meſſiah's Advent may be accounted for. In *Chaldea* and *Perſia*, the Captivity of the *Jews*, and the Book of *Daniel*, might be a Means to inform them of it: In *Arabia*, they might learn it from the Nearneſs of their Neighbourhood, and frequent Commerce with the *Jews*; and in *Meſopotamia*, beſides thoſe common Helps, they had the Propheſy of their Countryman *Balaam*, concerning [t] *a Star, that ſhould come out of Jacob*, to direct them. [u] But as we know of no Record, wherein this Propheſy was preſerved, but the Book of *Moſes*, which the People of *Meſopotamia* neither read nor believed; ſo it ſeems evident, that *Balaam*'s Words do not refer us to a *Star*, that ſhould ariſe, at any Prince's Birth, but to a King, who ſhould be as *glorious* and ſplendent in his Dominions, as the Stars are in the Firmament. So that, upon the whole, it ſeems moſt likely, that theſe Wiſemen came out of *Arabia*; not only becauſe the *Gifts*, which they offered, were the *natural* Product of that Country, (which was famous likewiſe for its *Magi*) but becauſe its Neighbourhood to *Judea* might give them the Advantage of diſcerning the Star, better than any other Nation had.

The Nature of the Star, which led them.

3. * FOR, that this was no *common* Star, its Motion contrary to the ordinary Courſe of Nature, its performing the Part of a Guide to theſe Travellers, and that probably by Day, as well as by Night, its accommodating itſelf to their Neceſſities, and diſappearing and returning as they could beſt or leaſt be without it; and (what is a Circumſtance, as remarkable as any) its pointing and ſtanding over the very Place, where the young Child was, is a ſufficient Demonſtration: And therefore the moſt probable Opinion is, that what the Evangeliſt calls a *Star*, [x] was a certain *Inminous* Body, formed on Purpoſe, and hanging in the Air, in the Manner of a *Meteor*,

[q] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I. and *Whitby*'s Annotations on Matth. ii. 1, &c. [r] *Whitby*, ibid. [s] *Stanhope*, ibid. [t] Numb. xxiv. 17. [u] *Whitby*, on Matth. ii. [*] *Stanhope*, ibid. [x] *Whitby*, ibid.

Meteor, over the *Centre* of the Land of *Judea*, to give Notice to the neighbouring Nations, of the Birth of the Prince of Glory; which the Wisemen of *Arabia* perceiving, and (according to the Tradition then prevailing) taking it to be an Indication of this eminent Person's Birth, came to *Jerusalem*, and there enquired, [x] *Where is he, that is born King of the* Jews? *For we have seen his Star in the East*; or from the Place of our Abode, which is in the East. [y] For it seems the better Expedient, to give them Notice hereof, by setting this Light *vertically* over the Place, where the King, which it betokened, was born, than by placing it in any Eastern Part of the Heavens, where it might seem to denote something among the *Indians*, and other distant Nations, rather than among the People of the *Jews*. But, to return:

4. ANOTHER remarkable Circumstance, in the Birth of our Saviour *Christ*, is the *Family*, and Lineage, from whence he descended. To *Abraham*, indeed, God had promised, in general Terms, that [a] *in his Seed should all the Families of the Earth be blessed*; but to *David* he had given a particular Assurance, that [b] *of the Fruit of his Body* (as the Apostle expresses it) *he would raise up Christ, to sit upon his Throne*. The Promise, which God made to *David* in this Behalf, himself introduces in this solemn Manner; [c] *I have made a Covenant with my Chosen, I have sworn unto* David *my Servant; thy Seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy Throne to all Generations*: [d] Which Words are too *great*, to have their Completion in *Solomon*, or any of the succeeding Kings of *Judah*, descended from *David*. And therefore we may observe, that the Psalmist distinguishes between *David*'s Seed, and *David*'s Sons; by his Seed, he means the Messiah; by his Sons, his Descendants and Successors; to the *latter*, the Promise is *conditional*; but to the *former*, *absolute*: Of his *Sons* it is said, [e] *If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments; if they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments, then will I visit their Transgression with a Rod, and their Sin with Scourges*; but of his *Seed* it follows, [f] *Nevertheless, my Loving-Kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the Thing that is gone out of my Lips: Once I have sworn by my Holiness, that I will not lye unto* David; *his Seed shall endure for ever, and his Throne, as the Sun before me; it shall be established for ever, as the Moon, and as a faithful Witness in Heaven*. And as this was the solemn and unalterable Promise made to *David*, so we may observe, that the Prophets, which came after him, speak of the *Messias* in the same Strain, *viz.* That he should [g] *sit upon the Throne of* David *for ever*; that he should be [h] *a righteous Branch*, raised up to *David, and a King that should reign and prosper*; and that the People of the Lord [i] *should have one Shepherd, and* David *be their Prince for ever*: For which Reason, the *Jews*, who well understood the Language of the Prophets, taking our Saviour to be the promised *Messiah*, pray to him thus, [k] *Jesus, thou Son of* David, *have Mercy on us*; and making their Acclamations in these Words, [l] *Hosanna to the Son of* David.

Christ's Descent from David.

IT is not to be doubted then, but that our Saviour Christ was to be of the House and Lineage of *David*; but then, how to adjust his Pedigree to that Purpose, and to reconcile the two Evangelists, St *Matthew* and St *Luke*, who seem to differ so widely in the *Genealogies*, they have given us of him, is a Matter of some Difficulty; and, in order to resolve it, we may observe, 1. [m] That the Designs of the two *Evangelists*, in their respective Deductions of our Saviour's Pedigree, are very different; for St *Matthew* intends only to set down his [n] *Political*, or *Royal* Pedigree, by which he had a *Right* to the Crown of the *Jews*; but St *Luke* shews his *natural* Descent, thro' the several Successions of those, from whom *he took Flesh and Blood*. And, to this Purpose, we find St *Matthew* beginning his Reckoning only from *Abraham*, to whom [o] *the first Promise of the Kingdom was made*; but St *Luke* runs his Line up to *Adam*, the first Head and Fountain of human Nature; which plainly shews, that one deduced only his Title to the *Crown*, the other the natural Descent of his *Humanity*.

[x] Matth. ii. 2. [y] *Whitby* on Matth. ii. 2. [a] Gen. xii. 3.—xxii. 18. [b] Acts ii. 30.
[c] Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4. [d] *Kidder*'s Demonstration. [e] Psal. lxxxix. 30, &c. [f] Ibid. *ver.* 33, &c.
[g] Isaiah ix. 7. [h] Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. [i] Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25. [k] Matth. ix. 27.—xv. 22.
—xx. 30. [l] Ibid. xxi. 9. [m] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. III. [n] That *Matthew* uses the Word *(begat)* only in a *political* Sense, is clear from hence,——That he applies it to him, who had no Child, even to *Jeconiah*, of whom it is expressly said (in *Jer.* xxii. 30.) that *God wrote him Childless*: Whereupon, being deposed by the King of *Babylon*, *Zedekiah*, his Uncle, was made King; and afterwards, upon the Removal of him likewise for his Rebellion, (there remaining no more of the Line of *Solomon*) *Salathiel*, being next of Kin, was declared King of the *Jews*. Which *Salathiel*, upon that Account, is said, by St *Matthew*, to be begotten by *Jeconiah*, not because naturally he was his Son, but only legally or *politically* so, as succeeding in the Kingdom, during his Captivity. *South*, ibid.
[o] Gen. xvii. 6.

2. WE may obſerve farther, that as *David* had ſeveral Sons by former Wives, ſo, by *Bathſheba* likewiſe, he had three beſides *Solomon*, whereof the eldeſt, next to him, was *Nathan*; and that *Chriſt* deſcended naturally from *David*, not by *Solomon*, but by *Nathan*. For tho' it be frequently ſaid in Scripture, that the *Meſſias* ſhould ſpring from *David*, it is never ſaid, that he ſhould deſcend from *Solomon*; for which Reaſon St *Luke* deduces only *Nathan*'s Line, which came into the Poſſeſſion of the Throne, upon *Jeconiah*'s Captivity, and Want of Iſſue, in the Perſon of *Salathiel*.

3. WE may obſerve again, that the Crown of *Judah*, being now come into the Line of *Nathan*, in the Perſon of *Salathiel*, and, after him, in the great and renowned *Zorobabel*; foraſmuch as the two Evangeliſts *agree*, from *Jeconiah* to *Zorobabel*, and, after him, *divide* (each aſcribing to him a different Succeſſor, *viz.* one of them *Abiud*, and the other *Rheſa*); we may rationally ſuppoſe, that theſe *two* were the Sons of *Zorobabel*, and that from *Abiud*, the elder Brother, lineally deſcended *Joſeph*, according to the Calculation of St *Matthew*; and from *Rheſa*, the younger Brother, deſcended *Mary*, of whom *Jeſus* was born, according to the Deſcription of St *Luke*.

4. ONCE more we may obſerve, that it was a Cuſtom of the *Jews*, not to reckon the *Woman* by Name in her Pedigree, but to reckon the *Huſband* in Right of his Wife; for which Reaſon we are not to think it ſtrange, that we find *Joſeph* twice reckoned; firſt in his own Right, by St *Matthew*, and then in his Wife *Mary*'s Right, by St *Luke*: For it is certain, that *Mary* was properly the Daughter of *Eli*, and that *Joſeph*, who is there reckoned after him, is ſo reckoned, not as his *natural* Son, but as his *Son-in-Law*, inſtead of his Wife *Mary*, as the Manner of the *Jews* was. And accordingly it is remarked, by ſome learned Men, that St *Luke* does not ſay of *Joſeph*, that he was the *Son of Eli*, but only τῦ Ἡλί, that he was of *Eli*, *i. e.* related to him, and belonging to his Family, *viz.* as his *Son-in-Law*.

NOW, to ſum up the Amount of theſe Obſervations, it is, in ſhort, this —— [p] That the Royal Line of *David*, by *Solomon*, being extinct in *Jeconiah*, the Crown and Kingdom paſſed into the next younger Line of *Nathan* (another Son of *David*) in *Salathiel* and *Zorobabel*; which *Zorobabel* having two Sons, *Abiud* and *Rheſa*, the Royal Dignity deſcended, of Right, upon the Line of *Abiud*, of which *Joſeph* was the laſt; and he marrying the Virgin *Mary*, who ſprang from the Line of *Rheſa*, the younger Son of *Zorobabel*, and (as ſome imagine) having no Iſſue himſelf, his Right paſſed into the Line of *Mary*, being next of Kin, and, by that Means, upon *Jeſus* her Son; whereupon he was both *naturally* the Son of *David*, and *legally* the King of the *Jews*, the latter of which is accounted to us by St *Matthew*, as the *former* is by St *Luke*.

The Evangeliſts right herein.

THIS ſeems to be a pretty clear and manifeſt Deduction of our Saviour's Pedigree from *David*; but [q] perhaps Interpreters might ſave themſelves the Trouble of giving a Reaſon for ſeveral Difficulties occurring herein, by ſaying, that St *Matthew* (concerning whom the main Diſpute is) recites it, as he found it in the *authentick Copies* of the *Jews*, who doubtleſs had preſerved ſome known and approved *Genealogy* of their Deſcent from *Abraham*, the Father of their Nation, in whom they ſo much gloried, and from whoſe Loins they expected the promiſed *Meſſiah*. That, even in our Saviour's Time, the *Jews* had *Genealogical Tables*, wherein they kept an Account of their Families and Tribes, is evident from what *Joſephus* ſays, [r] *That he gave the Succeſſion of his Family, as he found it written in the publick Books*; nor need we queſtion, but that the like, or greater Care, was employed to preſerve the *Stems* of the Royal Family of *David*. Since then the *Jews*, who lived in the Time, when the Goſpels were publiſhed, (tho' exactly curious in Things of this Nature, and withal maliciouſly bent againſt *Chriſt* and Chriſtianity) never once attempted to *invalidate* the Account, which theſe *Evangeliſts* give, this ſeems to be a ſufficient Proof, that theſe *Genealogies*, when firſt they came abroad, were neither thought [s] erroneous, nor inconſiſtent, but agreeable to the *publick Records*, then in Uſe; and that, if any Difficulties now ariſe in them, they are not to be attributed to any real and intrinſick Cauſe, but accidentally to the Ignorance of Interpreters, for Want of proper Helps, at this Diſtance of Time, to explain them by.

BEFORE

[p] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. III. [q] *Whitby* on Matth. i. 2. [r] Τὴν μέν ὐν τῦ γένες ἡμῶν διαδοχὴν, ὡς ἐν ταῖς δημοσίαις δέλτοις ἀναγεγραμμένην εὗρον ὕτως παρελήφεμαι, *De vitâ ſuâ*. [s] The Reader, that is deſirous to ſee a fuller Vindication and Reconciliation of theſe Genealogies, may look into *Kidder*'s *Demonſtration of the Meſſias*, Part II. where he treats this Argument at large, from Chap. vi. to Chap. xv. and there, with great Accuracy, ſolves all the Difficulties, which either *Jews* or *Deiſts* have alledged.

I

BEFORE we dismiss our Observations concerning the Pedigree and Parentage of our Saviour *Christ*, it may not be improper to make a more particular Reflection upon the State and Condition of the *blessed Virgin*, and the peculiar Favours, which God vouchsafed to her, in order to perceive what Honour and Respect is due unto her, upon the Account of her being the *Mother of our Lord*. [t] How nearly soever she was related to the *Royal Tribe*, and Family of *David*, yet we find her in no better Circumstances, than to be espoused to a poor *Carpenter*; in the Time of her greatest Necessity, forced to make use of a *Stable* for a Lodging-Room; and, at the Day of her *Purification*, able to bring no better Offering, than (what [u] the meanest Sort were appointed to do) *a Pair of Turtle-Doves, and two young Pigeons*. And yet, observe the Wonder of the Divine Condescension! This Woman, so poor, so mean, so destitute, of all the Virgins of *Israel*, is chosen and elected to be the Instrument of bringing into the World the long desired *Messiah*; the Instrument of repairing and making Amends for the Loss and Damage, brought upon Mankind, by the Transgression of the first Mother *Eve*, and a Temple consecrated for the Inhabitation of the Son of God. What then is the Nature and Measure of that Honour and Respect, which we ought to pay her upon this Account? Shall we give her lavish and excessive Epithets, and (as some are wont to do) * call her a *Goddess*, and ourselves her *Suppliants*; stile her the *Queen of Heaven*, and *Mother of Divine Grace*; the *Sovereign Lady* of Angels, Arch-Angels, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, *&c.* the *Refuge of Sinners*, and *Advocate of all Christians?* This, we think, is carrying the Compliment too far: We have no Instance of such Attributes given to the blessed Virgin in the holy Scriptures; nor can we help thinking, that this is a *Strain*, much fitter for some *Poetical Heathen Goddess*, than for a *Christian Saint*.

The Condition of the Virgin Mary.

How we are to honour and respect her.

1. *What we* may not do.

SHALL we give her the Honour of our Prayers, and trust upon her for the Returns either of *temporal* or *spiritual* good Things? † The Word of God remonstrates against this; nor can the Piety of the blessed Virgin herself be presumed to bear it. For the more highly she is exalted in Heaven, the more sensible she is of God's Bounty, the more engaged in his Love, and the more zealous of his Honour; and therefore she cannot but the more detest and abhor any Acts of Worship done to her, which may any Way invade the *incommunicable* Rights of God.

SHALL we give her the Honour of Invocation, and pray to her, to pray for us, as we sometimes desire the Prayers of our Friends here on Earth? Though we have no diminishing Thoughts of her Prevalence this Way, and think that the Charity of her Prayers is more *spontaneous* and free, than to stay for the Motive of our Sollicitations; yet so long as this Text remains in our Bible, *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus*, we can never be perswaded to betake ourselves to the Mediation of the blessed Virgin, nor of any other Saint whatever. For though to desire the Prayers of our Brethren here below is a Duty commanded, because it is an Office in itself necessary for the Improvement of human Charity, Humility, and Edification; yet, in desiring the Prayers of any of the Saints above, we are not secure of any Issue so much as this, *viz. Innovating* in the Rule of Worship, losing our Pains by not being heard, laying in a Stock for *Superstition* to grow upon, and alienating our Minds from their immediate Love, and Dependence on God.

SINCE then into these Errors we are forbid to run, what is the proper Measure of Honour and Esteem, that we may safely pay to the *Mother of our Lord?* [y] We may believe her to have been a most pure, and holy, and virtuous Creature: That her Virgin Mind was clean and spotless, as her Body was chaste and immaculate; and that, upon the Account of both, she was the most fit, of any among her Race or Sex, for the *Holy Ghost to overshadow*, or for the *Son of the Highest* to inhabit. When we consider the Firmness of her Faith, the Fervor of her Devotion, and the Excellence of her Humility, we cannot but acknowledge a *Grace extraordinary* in her, working all these Eminent and Divine Qualities; and accordingly, we always speak of her with Respect, and never mention her Name, without some *Preface*, or Epithet of Honour. In the *daily Service* of our Church, we sing, or repeat her excellent *Magnificat*, and thereby testify our Joy and Complacency in those singular Favours, which God vouchsafed to her; by the Appointment of our Church, we celebrate two *Festivals*, that of her *Annunciation*, and that of her *Purification*, in her Memorial; and without dishonouring God the Father, and his eternal Son, can think

What we may.

[t] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
† *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II.
[u] Lev. xii. 6, *&c.* compared with Luke ii. 24.
[y] *Wake*, ibid.
* *Wake*'s Sermons.

think no other Honour fit to be paid her, except it be the Imitation of that Purity and Holineſs, and of that Faith and Humility, which were ſo conſpicuous in her, as to induce God [b] *to regard the low Eſtate of his Handmaiden.*

IV. THUS we have finiſhed the Circumſtances which relate to the Incarnation and Birth of our bleſſed Saviour, and come now to raiſe ſome proper Obſervations from this Part of his Hiſtory: And,

The divine Attributes *manifeſted in Chriſt's Incarnation.*

1. IN this *Myſtery of Godlineſs, God's Manifeſtation in the Fleſh*, we may happily perceive the Concurrence and Harmony of the Divine Attributes: For here is the *Wiſdom* of God conſpicuous, [c] in contriving ſuch an Expedient to reconcile the Divine Juſtice and Mercy together, when our Iniquities had ſet them at Variance; when Mankind had alienated themſelves from God, in finding out a Method of approaching and regaining them, by ſtooping ſo low as to take the Manhood into God; and when the whole Race of *Adam* ſtood in Need of a *Propitiation* for Sin, in putting himſelf in the Capacity of offering one, that muſt needs be ſufficient for the Atonement of all Sin, ſince the *Oblation*, the *Oblator*, and the *Deity* appeaſed, are all one. That God ſhould exalt himſelf beyond all Meaſure, beyond all Imagination, is no more, than what we account agreeable to the common Conceptions we have of his Greatneſs and Immenſity; but that he ſhould *humble*, and, as it were, go out of himſelf; that he ſhould *make himſelf of no Reputation*, and appear in the Faſhion of a Man; that he, who is the *Antient of Days*, and whoſe Out-goings are from *Everlaſting*, ſhould be born in *Bethlehem*, a Child not an Hour old; that he, who fills Heaven and Earth, ſhould be wrapped in *Swaddling-Clothes*, and the Majeſty of the High and Holy One laid in a *Manger*: In a Word, that the immortal and impaſſible Creator ſhould take upon him the Paſſions and Frailties, the Sufferings and Mortality of his own Creatures; ſhould begin to live and grow, ſhould hunger and thirſt, be weary and ſleep, and bleed and die, in all Points be tempted and afflicted like one of us; this is ſomewhat ſo exceedingly foreign to the Manifeſtations, God hath uſed to make of himſelf, that it quite croſſes our common Apprehenſions of him; and [d] yet, when we look nearer to it, we cannot but acknowledge it the ſtupendious Work of his *Omnipotence*, thus to unite infinitely diſtant and different Natures, to join Heaven and Earth, God and Man in one Perſon; to confine Immenſity, and exhibit a *Virgin-Mother*, and an *Infant-God*.

BUT of all the Attributes of God, that which ſhines out with a particular Luſtre, in the Contrivance of this *Myſtery*, is this unſpeakable *Goodneſs* and *Mercy*, condeſcending to take Pity on our low Eſtate, and to lay our Caſe ſo much to Heart, as to think of redeeming and reſtoring us from that Depth of Miſery, into which we had plunged ourſelves; and to this Purpoſe, ſending not an *Angel*, (the leaſt of which he had no Reaſon to ſpare out of his *Train* for our Sakes) but his own beloved Son, out of his Boſom, to effect our Recovery and Reſtoration. It deſerves to be acknowledged, as a diſtinguiſhing Mark of the Divine Favour, that we were at firſt created in the *Likeneſs of God*; but what Proportion is there between this, and reſtoring to us that Likeneſs (when moſt unhappily loſt) by a Kindneſs ſo amazing, as that of God's being made in the Likeneſs of Man? To his putting on our Paſſions and Frailties, that we might riſe to his Perfections; ſubjecting himſelf to our Neceſſities and Wants, that we might partake of his Fulneſs; promoting us to Honour by ſuffering Indignities; and opening to us a Way to Happineſs, and Life, and a Kingdom everlaſting, by a Life of Afflictions, a Death of exquiſite Torture, and the voluntary Scandal of an ignominious Croſs? And all this done for *Creatures*, who, as ſuch, could add nothing to their Creator's Glory; for *Sinners*, who, as ſuch, had done their utmoſt to impair it: For *Rebels* and *Traitors*, falſe to all their Obligations of Duty, diſloyal to the beſt of Lords, and unthankful to their only Benefactor; *Wretches*, that had incurred his Wrath, and merited Ruin; that were undeſerving of Grace, and yet unwilling to accept it. *Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but he loved us, and gave himſelf for us!* And this ſurely, of all others, is a [e] *faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, i. e.* fit to be embraced and entertained with all poſſible Joy and Thankfulneſs, redounding to the Glory of God, *that Chriſt Jeſus came into the World to ſave Sinners.*

Teach us a true Eſtimate of the World.

2. IN the Birth of our Saviour *Chriſt*, who was not only by Nature the Son of God, but by Human Deſcent the King of the *Jews*, we learn a true Eſtimate of the World; and may poſſibly gueſs at ſome Reaſons, why he choſe to make his Appearance

[b] Luke i. 48. [c] Vid. *Bates*'s Harmony of the Divine Attributes, and *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I. [d] *Newcombe*'s Sermons, Vol. I. and *Stanhope*, ibid. [e] 1 Tim. i. 15.

Appearance, not in any *ſplendid* and pompous, but in ſuch *low* and debaſing Circumſtances. The *Jews* indeed, whoſe ambitious Deſires made them wreſt thoſe Places in Scripture to the *firſt*, which were only meant of the *ſecond* Coming of *Chriſt*, expected that his *Kingdom* would have *been of this World*; that he would have gone forth with his Armies, delivered them from the *Roman* Yoke, made them a great and glorious People, and [f] *given them the Heathen for their Inheritance, and the uttermoſt Parts of the World for their Poſſeſſion.* But it being determined in the Divine Counſel, that the Meſſias ſhould make a quite different Appearance, the Prophets accordingly foretel of him, that there ſhould be [g] *no Form or Comelineſs in him*, nor any Beauty *for which we ſhould deſire him*; that he ſhould be *deſpiſed and rejected*, be accounted the [h] *very Scorn of Men, and the Out-caſt of the People, be oppreſſed and afflicted, taken from Priſon, and from Judgment, and cut off*, at laſt, *from the Land of the Living.* And, to prevent all Expectations of his reigning in this *Life*, where-ever Mention is made of his *Kingdom*, [i] there is added, that he ſhould be *meek, and poor, and lowly*, ſubject to the Inſult of Enemies, and deſtitute of the State and Ornaments of *Majeſty.* And, indeed, conſidering the Deſign of the Errand, he came upon, (which was to teach the World a new Religion) a mean and afflicted Condition was more agreeable to his true Character. For whereas Mankind was over-run with an immoderate Deſire of the Riches and Honours of this World, the Deſign of his Religion was to rectify our Apprehenſions, to diſengage our Affections, and to raiſe them to the Purſuit of a more noble and laſting Happineſs. It is, indeed, intended to give us the fulleſt Conviction, *that a Man's Life does not conſiſt in the Abundance of thoſe Things, which he poſſeſſes*, and that the Value of thoſe Honours and Advancements, which ſo buſily employ the Thoughts of the Ambitious, conſiſt more in Fancy, than in any real Worth. It teaches us, that the moſt deſirable Exerciſe of Power is to govern ourſelves; that *Godlineſs with Contentment is the greateſt Gain*; that Juſtice, Generoſity, and Charity are more honourable, than the moſt magnificent Titles without them; and ſo far it is from encouraging a *Martial* Spirit, from making it a glorious Thing to kill, and deſtroy, and ſet the World on Fire about Empire and Dominion, that, were its Precepts followed, Men might, in Reality, [k] *beat their Swords into Plow-ſhares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks, that Nation might not riſe againſt Nation, or learn War any more.*

The Deſign of the Chriſtian Religion.

Now what could be a more proper Expedient to effect this excellent Deſign, than an obſcure and afflicted Condition in our Saviour? Or what could be a more authentick Proof of the Meaning, and Diſintereſtedneſs of his Laws, than to make them the Rule of his own Actions? His Contempt of the World, his Patience, and Meekneſs, and Reſignation, the Practice of his own *Beatitudes* upon himſelf, and exact Uniformity between his Life and Doctrine, is now a powerful Recommendation of his Inſtitution; whereas, had he choſen a plentiful Condition, he had not only brought his Doctrine into *Diſgrace*, but given Mankind a new Temptation to overvalue worldly Honour and Greatneſs, to which they were too prone already. [l] Had our bleſſed Saviour, I ſay, taken the State of a *King* upon him, and wrought thoſe *temporal* Deliverances, the *Jews* expected, this would have made them more eager after That, which the Apoſtle calls [m] *the Luſt of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life.* Men of enterprizing and incroaching Spirits would have been glad of the Colour of ſo great an Example, in Gratification of their ambitious Views; would have thought themſelves authorized to fill the World with Blood and Slaughter, and, for the Enlargement of their Dominion, to carry Fire and Deſolation wherever they went, to depopulate whole Countries, and * *lay waſte defenced Cities into ruinous Heaps.* And, in like Manner, had he appeared in the Character of a Man of much Learning, [n] as one, that had been brought up at the Feet of the *Jewiſh* Rabbins, inſtructed by *Athenian* Philoſophers, and well acquainted with the *Roman* Orators; there is Reaſon to believe, that the Strength and Uncommonneſs of Thought, the Clearneſs and Majeſty, which appear in his Sermons and Diſcourſes, would have been leſs ſurpriſing. His ſilencing the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, his reſolving the profoundeſt Doubts, and diſengaging himſelf from the captious Queſtions of the *Herodians*, would, in ſuch a Caſe, have been looked upon as Human Acquiſitions; nay, the miraculous Deeds, which he performed, might poſſibly have been imputed to his Skill in *natural* Cauſes, his underſtanding the Laws of the *Elements*, the Conſtitution

Chriſt's Appearance anſwerable to it.

[f] Pſal. ii. 8. [g] Iſa. liii. 2, &c. [h] Pſal. xxii. 6. [i] Zech. ix. 9. [k] Micah iv. 3. [l] *Collier's* Sermons. [m] 1 John ii. 16. * Iſa. xxxvii. 26. [n] *Collier*, ibid.

ſtution of Human Bodies, the Progreſs and Waining of Diſeaſes, and the like; whereas the Meanneſs of his Parentage and Education gives a noble Sanction and Recommendation to what he ſaid and did: For [o] *Is not this the Carpenter?* Is not this *the Son of* Mary, ſay the People one to another? *Whence then hath this Man theſe Things? Or, what Wiſdom is this, which is given unto him, that even ſuch mighty Works are wrought by his Hands?*

Teaches us Humility, and other Virtues.

THESE are the wiſe and gracious Ends of the *obſcure* Appearance of the Son of God; that the ancient Prophecies might be fulfilled; that a new Religion might be inſtituted; that Pride and Ambition might be diſcountenanced; that the Doctrine and Miracles, which he came from Heaven to exhibit, might receive their Confirmation: And (what muſt not be forgotten in this Place) that he might [p] *leave us an Example* of Kindneſs and Condeſcenſion, of Humility and Meekneſs, of Reſignation to Providence, and *committing* ourſelves *to him, that judgeth righteouſly*, in all our Sufferings and Afflictions. [q] *If therefore there be any Conſolation in Chriſt*, (for we cannot conclude this Head better, than in the Apoſtle's moſt *pathetick* Exhortation) *if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowſhip of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies, let nothing be done through Strife, or Vain-glory, but, in Lowneſs of Mind; let each eſteem other, better than themſelves*; and *let this Mind be in you, which was alſo in Jeſus Chriſt; who, being in the Form of God, thought it not Robbery to be equal with God; but made himſelf of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the Likeneſs of Men; and being found in Faſhion as a Man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Croſs.*

SECT. I.

Of the chief Acts and Incidents of Chriſt's Life, from his Birth, to a little before his Crucifixion.

The End of Circumciſion.

AFTER the Birth of *Chriſt*, the firſt Inſtance of his *Humiliation* and Suffering, that we meet with, is his *Circumciſion*. 1. *Circumciſion*, in its primary Inſtitution, (which was ſome hundred Years before the Promulgation of the Law) was intended as a *viſible Mark of Diſtinction*, whereby the holy Seed, in Covenant with God, ſhould be known, as his *choſen Generation*, his *peculiar People*, from the reſt of the Nations, who *were Aliens to the Promiſe*, and *Strangers to the Commonwealth of* Iſrael; and in this Reſpect it was a *political* Inſtitution, to diſtinguiſh the *Jews* from the reſt of Mankind. 2. It was a *Note of Commemoration*, to put thoſe, who bore it, in Mind, whoſe Offspring they were, and what Advantages they were intitled to, provided they took Care not to degenerate from the Glories of that Stock, from whence they ſprang; and, in this Reſpect, it was a *religious* Inſtitution, to remind them of the Privileges they enjoyed, as a *ſpiritual* Society. 3. It was a *Sign* (as the Apoſtle [r] expreſſes it) *of that Reghteouſneſs, which is by Faith*, and what was intended to remind thoſe, upon whom it paſſed, of the Fame and Renown of *Abraham*, the Founder of their Nation, of his generous Truſt in God, and ready Obedience to his Command; and, withal, of that noble Emulation of his Virtues, which ſuch a Pattern ought to inſpire. 4. It was a *Figure and Repreſentation* of that inward Holineſs and Purity, which all, who were admitted into Covenant with God, were to profeſs. And, 5. It was a *Sacrament* of *Initiation* into the Service of God, and (as ſome imagine) an *Expedient* to remove the Guilt of *Original* Sin then, in Proportion to what *Baptiſm* does now.

Why our Lord was circumciſed.

NOW, though ſome of theſe Ends, in the Rite of Circumciſion, could not, with any Reaſon, be applied to *Chriſt*, (foraſmuch as he was *originally* Holy, and always in Favour and Communion with God) yet if we look upon it, 1. As a *Mark of Diſtinction* between the *Jews* and other Nations, [s] we ſhall ſoon perceive, that thus it became *Jeſus* to be circumciſed, in order to qualify himſelf for a free Converſation with his *Countrymen*, to whom he was primarily ſent, [t] as himſelf teſtifies, and to render his *Miniſtry* more acceptable among them. For ſince the *Jews* were ſo rigid, in the Obſervance of this *Diſtinction*, which God had eſtabliſhed between them and other

[o] Mark vi. 3, 2. [p] 1 Pet. ii. 21, 23. [q] Phil. ii. 1, &c. [r] Rom. iv. 11. [s] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I. [t] Matth. xv. 24.

other Nations, as to exclude from their Temple, their Synagogues, and all Manner of *civil* and *religious* Commerce, ſuch People, as were not of their Communion; the Errand, for which *Chriſt* came to them, had been abſolutely loſt; no Audience at all given to it; no Opportunities allowed of preaching, or conferring publickly, nay, not even of Eating and Drinking with them, and ſo inſinuating his Doctrine privately, had not this Ceremony paſſed upon him. 2. If we conſider *Circumciſion*, as a *commemorative Sign* of *Abraham*, and the Covenant made with him, it was highly requiſite that *Chriſt* ſhould undergo it: For as he was *the Seed*, of whom the Promiſe was made, *that in him all the Nations of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed*, he was obliged to give the World this Teſtimony of his being *truly* and rightly deſcended from that renowned *Patriarch*. 3. If we conſider it as a *Seal of the Covenant* between God and Man, it was very expedient that he ſhould be circumciſed, not upon his own *perſonal* Account indeed, but for the Sake of others, whoſe Perſons he came to repreſent, and whoſe Cauſe he undertook. Or, 4. Laſtly, if we conſider it as *Part of the Ceremonial Law*, it was convenient for him to undergo it, not only becauſe (as himſelf declares) *he came to fulfil all Righteouſneſs*; but, being to contract for a perfect Obedience, by this *initiating* Ceremony he obliged himſelf to the Performance of the whole Law, which none, before him, was ever able to accompliſh.

The Import of his Name.

THESE are the Reaſons, that may be ſuggeſted, for the Circumciſion of our bleſſed *Saviour*; and the Name, which was given him on that Occaſion, according to the Direction of [u] *the Angel, before he was conceived in the Womb*, was *Jeſus*; a Name of comfortable Import, becauſe it is ſaid of him, * *that he ſhould ſave his People from their Sins*. Now, if we reflect a little upon what the Nature of Sin unpardoned and predominant is, *viz.* an Offence againſt a righteous Law, and a Contradiction to our Intereſt and our Duty; a *Stain* to our Nature, a *Wound* to our Conſcience, and the Corruption of our Principles, which brings us under the Tyranny of unruly Paſſions and vicious Habits; together with an heinous Provocation of a juſt and holy God, whoſe Power enables him, and whoſe Truth obliges him to puniſh our Diſobedience with inexpreſſible and everlaſting Torments both of Body and Soul: If we look upon Sin under this View, I ſay, we ſhall ſoon perceive the ineſtimable Bleſſing and Value of that *Saviour* and Deliverer, who has waſhed away the *Stain* and Guilt of our Sins by his Blood; has releaſed the *Puniſhment* due to them, by becoming our Sacrifice, and ſuffering in our Stead; by his Obedience has appeaſed the *Anger* of God, and reconciled us to his once offended Father; and is continually ſubduing the Power of Sin, by the Doctrines of the Goſpel, by the Aſſiſtance of his Spirit, and by all thoſe *Means*, and wiſe Methods, in ſhort, that are neceſſary to our Condition; *all*, that our Circumſtances want, conſidering us *frail* and *ſinful* Creatures; and *all*, that our Circumſtances can bear, conſidering us *free* and *rational* Creatures.

To whom applicable.

THIS is the Salvation which *Chriſt* procures, and in this Manner *he ſaves his People from their Sins:* But then we are to remember, that they are *his People*, whom he thus ſaves; thoſe, who believe his Word, obey his Precepts, devote themſelves to his Service, and deſire and endeavour (as far as in them lies) to *ſave* themſelves from them. *Leſs* than this had not fulfilled the *Importance* of his Name, and *more* had defeated the *Deſign* of it: For to ſave thoſe from Puniſhment, who are ſtill fond of their Guilt, had not been to *take away*, but rather to *promote* the Dominion, and encourage the Practice of Sin. If then the Proud and Ambitious, the Unjuſt and Covetous, the Peeviſh and Revengeful, the Profuſe and Riotous, the Profane and Impious; in ſhort, if Men, of whatever Denomination, continue in Sins unrepented of; if they love and like the Fault, how much ſoever they may abhor and dread the Shame or Puniſhment; if they perſuade, entice, or any Way encourage others in the Commiſſion of Sin, either by their Diſcourſe or Example; to every ſuch Man our bleſſed Lord is no *Jeſus* at all, nor does there any one of the innumerable Benefits, implied in that *endearing Name*, belong to him: But, on the contrary, to the penitent Sinner, to the devout Worſhipper, to the juſt and honeſt Dealer, to the bountiful Almſgiver, to the Sober and Pure, to the Meek and the Peaceable, to the humble and the mortified *Chriſtian*, to the *diligent Worker out* of his own, and *zealous Promoter* of other Mens Salvation, the Safety and Defence, the Support and the Joy of a *Jeſus* is inconceivable: Becauſe they feel already his powerful Operation on their Hearts; they know, that Temptations cannot hurt, where he ſhields; nor Sins

[u] Luke ii. 21. * Matth. i. 21.

Sins condemn, where he pardons; nor Adverſity oppreſs, where he ſuſtains; and, in the Language of the Apoſtle, [x] *are perſuaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things preſent, nor Things to come, nor Heighth, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, can be able to ſeparate them from the Love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.*

The Maſſacre of the Children at Bethlehem.

NOT long after our Saviour's Circumciſion, he was forced to remove into *Egypt*, to avoid the wicked Deſigns of *Herod*, who, finding himſelf deluded by the *Wiſe Men*, (whom [y] we made Mention of before) reſolved upon a Courſe, which he thought could not fail of eaſing himſelf of any Apprehenſion from this new-born *King of the Jews*; and that was, to ſend and murther all the Children, in, and about the Place, where it was agreed *Chriſt* muſt have been born, and (according to the Computation of the Time, when the *Star* denoted his Birth) much about his Age. God, however, by the Meſſage of an Angel, provided for his Son's Eſcape; yet, ſince his Providence did not interpoſe for the *reſt*, but ſuffered ſuch a Number of *innocent Babes* to be maſſacred upon this Account, there is ſomething in this Tranſaction, that ſeems to reflect upon the Divine Goodneſs and Juſtice, which deſerves to be cleared up.

IT ought to be remembered then, what we ſaid before [z], in Vindication of the Providence of God,—— [a] That he is no farther concerned in any Sort of Crimes, than barely as he permits the Commiſſion of them: And, if (as we there argued) it be no Imputation upon his Juſtice and Goodneſs, to ſuffer Men to go on in the Sin of deſigning, and acting the worſt, the baſeſt, the cruelleſt Villainies; then the next, and only remaining Enquiry will be, whether the Providence of God will be concerned to hinder the Calamity, *i. e.* whether it be any reaſonable Reflection upon the Wiſdom, the Juſtice, and Goodneſs of God, (who certainly could prevent them) to ſuffer ſuch Deſigns to take Effect, as are levelled againſt the *Innocent*.

God's Permiſſion of it vindicated.

Now, here a mighty Difference muſt be made, between Mens ſuffering unjuſtly, with Regard to Men, who are the next *Agents* and *Inſtruments*, and with Regard to God, who is the *remote Cauſe* of theſe Events. Men may afflict, cruſh, or murther thoſe, who have given them no Provocation, and over whom they have no Manner of Right or Controul: But God has an univerſal Dominion over us, *as Creatures*, and we have ſtill ſtrengthened that Title farther, by forfeiting our Lives, and all the Comforts of them, *as Sinners:* Conſequently, how unjuſt ſoever any of our Sufferings may be, in reſpect of *Men*, who are the immediate *Inflictors*; yet, in reſpect of God, of whoſe deſerved Vengeance theſe Men are the *Executioners*, the extreameſt Sufferings of the very beſt People never are, never can be, unjuſt.

BUT this is not all: For we are to conſider the preſent Life, not as our *laſt* and final State of Being, but as one, whoſe principal Tendency is to another: So that there is no certain Meaſure to be taken, nor any Right or peremptory Judgment made of God's Juſtice or Goodneſs towards us, without taking in the Diſtributions of that other Life, which is the main End, indeed, of our living at all. But now the Scriptures have expreſſly declared, that Sufferings are a Part of our *Diſcipline* and Trial, and that all the Afflictions of our mortal Condition ſhall therefore be recompenſed with immortal Happineſs and Glory. Since *temporal* Death then is the acknowledged Puniſhment of *Original* Sin, and God has an undoubted Right to inflict this Puniſhment, when, and in what Manner he pleaſes; there is certainly the ſame Reflection upon his Providence, in ſuffering ſuch *Innocents* to die by *Convulſions*, a Fever, or any other Diſeaſe incident to that tender Age, as in permitting them to fall by the *Sword*, a Sacrifice to the Rage of a mercileſs *Tyrant*. But then, for a frail, a ſhort, a troubleſome, a dangerous Life, God gives them the Recompence of an immortal, a ſecurely happy, and compleatly glorious one, which not only *vindicates*, but *magnifies* his Goodneſs and Liberality to them. He conſiders their Infancy, and the noble Fruit, which might have ſprung from theſe *tender Plants*, had they been allowed to *grow* to full Maturity, and accordingly rewards them. For tho' they wanted the *Will* of *Martyrdom*, which riper Years may have, yet it muſt be allowed, that they were clear of that *voluntary* and *actual* Guilt, which thoſe riper Years would have contracted. And therefore, as (in the moſt literal Senſe) [b] *they were not defiled* with ſenſual Pleaſures, but left the World in *Virgin* Innocence; as they were moſt truly *redeemed from among Men*, whoſe early Tranſlation to a State of Bliſs

[x] Rom. viii. 38, 39. [y] See Page 636. [z] See Page 92—251. [a] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels. Vol. I. [b] Rev. xiv. 4.

Bliſs prevented the Hazards and Temptations of a wicked World; and as they were (ſtrictly ſpeaking) *the Firſt-Fruits unto God and the Lamb*, who began to ſhed their Blood in the Cauſe of a new-born Saviour; ſo God hath been pleaſed to vouchſafe them a peculiar Honour, [c] *to ſing*, as it were, *a new Song before* his *Throne*, and *to follow the Lamb, whitherſoever he goeth*; becauſe *in their Mouth was found no Guile*; *for they were without Fault, before the Throne of God.*

The Uſe to be made of it.

WHAT then has been argued in Vindication of the Divine Juſtice and Goodneſs, with Regard to the Death of theſe Children, ſhould diſpoſe us to entertain, with Patience and much Meekneſs, not only the Sufferings, laid upon us by God's immediate Hand, but thoſe likewiſe, which proceed from the wrongful Dealings of wicked and unreaſonable Men: Their Injuſtice cannot, in this Caſe, be greater, than *Herod*'s, nor can our Innocence be more, than that of theſe Infants. Since then we have been taught by this Example, that Perſons, the moſt inoffenſive and undeſerving, may be perſecuted even to Death, without any juſt Reflection, either upon their own Virtue thus oppreſſed, or that Providence, which permits it; our Method, in this Caſe, ſhould be, to take Sanctuary in the Peace of a good Conſcience; to look up, with an holy Reſignation of Mind, to the wiſe Diſpoſer of every Event; and to truſt his Mercy and Goodneſs, for the neceſſary Comfort, and abundant Compenſation of all the Hardſhips, his wiſe Providence ſees fit to bring upon us.

Chriſt's Confirmation *in the Temple.*

AFTER our Saviour's Return from *Egypt*, upon the Death of the Tyrant *Herod*, the Evangelical Hiſtory mentions nothing particular concerning him, only that he dwelt in *Nazareth*, in his reputed Father's Houſe, *waxing ſtrong in Spirit, and filled with Wiſdom, and the Grace of God*; until, in the *twelfth* Year of his Age, and at the Time of the Paſſover, we find him [d] *in the Temple, ſitting in the Midſt of the Doctors, both hearing them, and aſking them Queſtions.*

AND this, very probably, he might do, not merely out of *Curioſity*, but to acquit himſelf of a Duty, expected from all, who had attained to a certain Age among the *Jews*. At the Age of *thirteen*, their Youth was uſually brought before ſome of the *Maſters* of the Synagogue, to render an Account of their Proficiency in Religion; and, having paſſed their *Examination*, were ſent away, with the Prayers and Benedictions of the Church, and thenceforward accounted reſponſible for their own Sins. This, [e] as ſome learned Men imagine, was the Occaſion of our Saviour's being *found in the Temple, ſitting among the Doctors*. He was then under the Examination of the Doctors; and, though the Age, appointed for that Purpoſe, was uſually *thirteen*, yet this did not hinder Children of *extraordinary* Parts and Capacities from doing it ſooner, when they were competently prepared, and had a *Genius* (in the Phraſe of the *Jewiſh* Language) *outrunning the Command*. If this Suppoſition be juſt, here ſeems to be a probable Foundation for the Chriſtian Rite of *Confirmation*, wherein our young People, having anſwered to the firſt and neceſſary Rudiments of their Religion, do, in the Preſence of the *Fathers of the Church*, (at that Time imploring the Bleſſing of God upon their future Endeavours) take the Charge of their *baptiſmal* Vow upon themſelves, as being preſumed ſufficiently inſtructed to be anſwerable for their own Duty, the remaining Part of their Lives.

HOWEVER this be, (for I am content to leave it as a probable Conjecture only) yet thus much is certain, that our bleſſed Saviour, in theſe Conferences, behaved himſelf, not only to the Satisfaction, but the Wonder of the whole Aſſembly; [f] *for all that heard him, were aſtoniſhed at his Underſtanding and Anſwers*. Not that we are to imagine, that the *Fulneſs* of his Divine Knowledge diſplayed itſelf upon this Occaſion, but only ſuch a *Brightneſs* of Parts and Apprehenſion, as beſpake an uncommon *Pregnancy*. For, though the *Divine* Nature was always preſent with him, yet it ſeems to have communicated its Powers to the *human* by diſtinct and *gradual* Illuminations, declining induſtriouſly the publick Manifeſtation of itſelf to the World, till (according to the common Courſe of Things) *Ripeneſs* of Years and Judgment had carried him up to the Perfections of a Man, and the *Execution* of his Miniſtry called for ſuch Evidence to aſſiſt him.

His Subjection to his Parents.

'TILL the Fulneſs of Time was come, the Evangeliſt has taken Care to inform us, that he [g] *dwelt with his Parents at Nazareth, and was ſubject to them*: For whether he wrought with *Joſeph* at the Carpenter's Trade (as [h] ſome of the Antients have

[c] Rev. xiv. 3, 4, 5. [d] Luke ii. 46. [e] Vid. Grot. in Locum, *and* Buxtorf Jud. Synag. c. iii.
[f] Luke ii. 47. [g] Ibid. *ver.* 51. [h] 'Tis the Opinion of ſome, that he not only wrought at the Carpenter's Trade, but that, when *Joſeph* died, (which happened before his entering upon his Miniſtry) he wrought alone, and was no more called the *Carpenter's Son*, but the *Carpenter*, as we may obſerve from *Mark* vi 3. *Howell's* Hiſtory of the Bible.

delivered their Opinion) is not ſo material to enquire; this we are ſatisfied of, that, whether his Life was a Life of Labour, or not, it was certainly a Life of Modeſty, and Meekneſs, and exemplary Obedience; which is enough to know how *indiſpenſable* the Duty of Children to their Parents is, and how inexcuſable their Stubbornneſs and Contempt, when he, who was God, as well as Man, in all his Deportment, was full of Reſpect to them, whoſe Son, though he was in one Capacity, yet was he their Father, their Lord, their King, their Creator, in another; and how ſacred the Obligation is, which Blood and Nature have *tied*, when even the *Name* and Character alone is venerable, though the *Relation* be wanting? For ſuch our Lord hath proved it, by the Obſervance, which he paid, not to *her* only, of whoſe Subſtance he was made Fleſh, but to *him* likewiſe, who was no otherwiſe his Father, than by Reputation and common Acceptance; entitled to this Honour, only as the Huſband of *Mary*, and by a Miſtake of the World, which was not, at that Time, let into the myſterious Secret of a *Virgin made a Mother*.

His Baptiſm, by John.

IN this *private* Condition our Saviour lived, until he was *thirty* Years old, when, being about to take upon him his *prophetick* Office, we find him coming [i] *from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him.* The *Singularity* of the *Baptiſt*'s Character, his Contempt of the World, his auſtere Courſe of Life, as well as an excellent Zeal and Spirit in Preaching, created ſo great an Opinion of him among the People, that all held him for a Prophet, eſpecially when, by his Baptiſm, he added a greater Solemnity to his Office. His Office, indeed, (as the Prophet foretels it of him) was [k] *to prepare the Way of the Lord, and to make ſtraight an High-way for our God:* Which Words, as they allude to *Harbingers*, and ſuch other Officers, as, upon the Journies of *Princes*, are employed to take Care, that the Ways ſhould be levelled, and all ſuch Obſtructions removed, as might make their Paſſage leſs commodious; ſo, upon the Approach of the King of Glory, the Preaching and Baptiſm of *John* put Mankind into a Poſture of receiving him, and greatly facilitated the Deſign of his Coming. His *Preaching* was intended to bring Men to a due Senſe of their Sins, and to foretel the dreadful Effects of God's Anger againſt all, who did not apply themſelves to true Holineſs: And his *Baptiſm* (as St *Paul* [l] expreſſes it) *was the Baptiſm of Repentance*, wherein he propounded the *Meſſias*, who was ſhortly to appear, for the Object of *Faith* to all, who received this *Ordinance* at his Hand; *ſaying unto the People, that they ſhould believe on him, which ſhould come after him, i. e. on* Jeſus Chriſt. And, for this Reaſon, ſome of the *Ancients* have repreſented this Miniſtry of the *Baptiſt*'s, as a Sort of *middle Partition* between the Law and the Goſpel; of the *Law*, as a Thing already paſt, and come to a Period; and of the *Goſpel*, as what, upon the Manifeſtation of the *Meſſias*, was then juſt beginning to take Place. [m] *For this is he*, (as the Baptiſt openly declares) *of whom I ſaid, after me cometh a Man, who is preferred before me; for he was before me: And I knew him not, but that he might be made manifeſt unto Iſrael, therefore am I come baptizing with Water.*

OUR Saviour, however, could not ſtand in need of *John*'s Baptiſm, as it was a *Baptiſm of Repentance*; but therefore he ſuffered it, becauſe it [n] *became him to fulfil all Righteouſneſs.* Since this was appointed an Inſtrument of Purification to the *Jews*, it was not fit, that he, who came to be a Pattern of Perfection, ſhould neglect any Ordinance inſtituted by his Father, or any Mark and Profeſſion of Sanctity. He, indeed, himſelf was no Sinner; yet, ſince *he was made Sin for us*, it was proper enough for him to perform the *Sacrament* of Sinners, who was to undergo the Shame and Puniſhment of Sin for them: And ſince this was to be a Sacrament of *perpetual* Uſe in the *Chriſtian* Church, it was highly expedient, that, by his own Baptiſm, he ſhould *ſanctify Water to the myſtical waſhing away of Sin*, that in all future Ages his Followers might look upon the holy Ordinance with Reſpect, and receive it with Joy, upon this Account, that the *Author and Finiſher of our Faith* did not himſelf diſdain to ſubmit to it.

His Temptation in the Wilderneſs.

IMMEDIATELY after our Saviour's Baptiſm, the Evangelical Hiſtory informs us, that he was [o] *led by the Spirit, into the Wilderneſs, to be tempted by the Devil:* And here perhaps it may be of ſome Inſtruction to us to conſider a little, 1. The Time when; 2. The Place where; 3. The Manner how; and, 4. The Ends, for which our Saviour came to be ſubmitted to the Aſſaults of this Prince of Darkneſs.

1. No-

[i] Matth. iii. 13. [k] Iſa. xl. 3. [l] Acts xix. 4. [m] John i. 30, 31. [n] Matth. iii. 15. [o] Ibid. iv. 1.

1. NOTHING is more common, than to find Men complaining, and even wondering with themſelves, that they ſhould be purſued with Temptations, at the Time, or after the Diſcharge of holy Duties. [p] Now, I hope, it may be of Uſe to ſatisfy ſuch Perſons, to remember, that our bleſſed Maſter was baptized, not becauſe he wanted, but becauſe he meant to honour and recommend that *ſanctifying* Ordinance; that he was [q] *filled with the Holy Ghoſt*; that he was, by a Voice from Heaven, declared the *beloved Son of God, in whom he was well pleaſed*; and, yet, the very next Thing we hear of him is, that he *was tempted*; nay, that *the Spirit led him into the Wilderneſs*, to the Intent that he might be tempted by the Devil: Conſequently, we are not to look, that *Sacraments*, or any other holy Duties, ſhould procure us an abſolute Freedom from Temptations; conſequently, again, our being tempted *in*, or *after* the Performance of ſuch Duties, is no reaſonable Cauſe to conclude, that our Services are not accepted by God, or that they have not had their proper Efficacy. For as theſe Conſequences are plainly contrary to the Example of our bleſſed Saviour, ſo are they no leſs repugnant to the Reaſon and Nature of the Thing. *The Time when.*

[r] THE *Sacrament* and other Offices of Piety and Devotion are *Weapons* of our ſpiritual Warfare; they fit and prepare us for more vigorous Actions; they are Means of conveying to us ſuch Strength, as may enable us to withſtand in the Day of Trial; they repair our Breaches, and heal our Wounds: But they are ſo many Acts of *Hoſtility*, ſo many Attempts to reſcue ourſelves out of the Snare of the Enemy, and therefore ſo many freſh *Provocations*, which he will not fail to make his Advantage of, in order to reduce us again. And can we wonder that he ſhould *double* his Diligence, in Proportion to ours, and then labour to recover his *Prey*, when he is in moſt Danger of loſing it? If wicked Men feel not the ſame Conflicts, it is becauſe they would be needleſſly repeated upon thoſe, who are his *Captives* already, and take no Pains to make their *Eſcape*: But there is great Reaſon, why he ſhould not ſuffer good Men to enjoy the like Eaſe and Quiet, who are continually ſtruggling with him, and labouring to get Ground. As therefore we may rationally expect the Service *hotteſt*, when we are moſt careful to diſcharge our Duty; ſo our finding it ſuch ought rather to be accounted a *good*, than a *bad* Sign, a Matter of Satisfaction, not of Diſcomfort; and the Advice of the wiſe Man ſhould be always ſettled in our Hearts; [s] *My Son, if thou come to ſerve the Lord, prepare thyſelf for Temptation; ſet thine Heart aright, and conſtantly endure; cleave unto him, and depart not away, that thou mayeſt be increaſed at thy laſt Hour.*

THE Uſefulneſs of Retirement, when we ſet ourſelves apart to the Buſineſs of Religion, is confirmed by every Man's Experience, that makes the Trial. By withdrawing from the World, we ſhut out infinite *Diſtractions*, and are better qualified to *collect* our Thoughts, and to fix them upon God and a future State. But even here we muſt not flatter ourſelves with an Imagination of an abſolute Security: In ſuch Circumſtances the *Tempter* aſſaulted our bleſſed Maſter, (for he ſet upon him in the *Wilderneſs*) and in ſuch ſhall we frequently find him attacking us. Our *Cloſets* and Retirements may ſeparate us from the *Snares* of Buſineſs and Company, but they cannot diveſt us of the Corruption of our Nature, which, in all Places, gives him an Opportunity of infinuating his Temptations. Our Paſſions and Affections, our Ignorance and Infirmities, and all the neceſſary Conſequences of our *original* Weakneſs and Depravation, theſe we cannot run away from; and, becauſe we carry theſe about us every-where, he can never want a fit Place and Opportunity to aſſail us. *The Place where.*

'TIS the general Opinion of the *Ancients*, that the Devil, at this Time, was ignorant how great a Perſon our Saviour was; for, had he known that, 'tis hardly credible he would have made ſo vain and fruitleſs an Attempt upon him. 'Tis likely enough he accounted him ſome *extraordinary* Perſon. By the ancient Propheſies he might know, that the *Meſſias* was to appear; and, from the Prophet *Daniel* collect, that the Time of his Appearance was already come; nay, it is not improbable, that he was acquainted with all the Circumſtances of his Birth, and heard the Teſtimony, God gave him at his Baptiſm, *This is my beloved Son*; but ſtill he was a Man, tho' an extraordinary Man, and he might not ſuppoſe him any Thing more. Having therefore formerly *foiled* our firſt Parents in Paradiſe, in the State of Innocence, he hoped for the like Succeſs again; and, accordingly, in the *firſt* Attempt, takes Occaſion *The Manner how.*

[p] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II.
[q] Matth. iii. 16, 17. and Luke iv. 1.
[r] *Stanhope*, ibid.
[s] Ecclus. ii. 1, &c.

Occaſion from our Lord's Hunger, to perſuade him to work a Miracle, in order to ſatisfy it, [t] *If thou be the Son of God, command theſe Stones to be made Bread*; in the *Second*, he puts him upon an unneceſſary Experiment of God's preſerving Providence, *If thou be the Son of God, caſt thyſelf down from this Pinacle of the Temple*; and, in the *Third*, he entices him to an unlawful Act, with Promiſe of worldly Honours and Advantages: * *All theſe Things*, viz. *the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them, will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me.* In all which he viſibly forms his Attack upon thoſe natural Appetites and Affections, which God hath put into Mankind, and which (as this Example ſhews) are not the *Cauſes*, but only the accidental *Occaſions* of Sin.

'TIS impoſſible for any Man living to deſcribe all the ſubtle Arts of this *Lier-in-wait to deceive*; but, from the Inſtance now before us, we may diſcover, in general, that he *ſtrikes in* with Mens Wants and Neceſſities, with their different Tempers and Circumſtances in the World, with their governing Paſſions and darling Objects; that from theſe he labours to ſuggeſt ſuch *Ideas*, to kindle ſuch *Deſires*, to raiſe ſuch *Affections*, and to carry thoſe, he finds in our Hearts, to ſuch *Exceſſes*, as may put us upon Thoughts, and Words, and Actions, that are exorbitant and ſinful. Mean while, it is no leſs plain, that he only *ſuggeſts*, he only puts us upon theſe; that there can be no Sin without our Conſent; that he, who *tries* us, cannot compel us; that there is no Hurt done till the Temptation is allowed to prevail; and, in a Word, that Tempting is the Devil's Act, but Yielding or Reſiſting, when we are tempted, is our own; the *former* is our Sin, and the *latter* our Virtue; conſequently, Temptations are capable of becoming Occaſions to either. Danger, indeed, there is, and this ſhould awaken our Care: But God, who ſuffers us to be tempted, has, withal, given us this Declaration and Aſſurance, that [u] *he will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will, with the Temptation alſo, make a Way to eſcape, that we may be able to bear it.* For,

The Ends for which.

IN *that Chriſt himſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted*, ſays the Apoſtle, [x] *he is able to ſuccour thoſe that are tempted*; and this he makes the Encouragement of all good Chriſtians in the like Circumſtances. As he was the *Captain* of our Salvation, who came to fight our Battles, it was fit that he ſhould firſt *engage*, and try the utmoſt Strength of the Enemy of Souls; but, as he fought, ſo did he conquer likewiſe, not for himſelf, but for thoſe, whoſe Duty it is to fight under him. And what can be more effectual to animate ſuch in all their ſpiritual *Encounters*, than the Contemplation of their *victorious Leader*, and their vanquiſhed Foe? What more effectual to inſpire them with Hope, and an holy Confidence of being ſuccoured in all their Straits and Exigencies, than the Conſideration of their Captain's being, in [y] *all Points, tempted like as they*, and *retaining*, now that he is in Heaven, (and, conſequently, in a Condition to ſupply their Weakneſſes and Wants, by pouring the Recruits of Grace and ſupernatural Strength from above) *a Feeling of their Infirmities*, and a ready Diſpoſition to relieve them?

2. AND as the Temptations of *Chriſt* were deſigned to encourage us under Trials of the like Nature, ſo were they intended to inſtruct us, that no Degree of Virtue can ſet Men above them. For, when we find the Chriſtian Life ſo often compared to a *Warfare*, we have fair Warning given us what we are to expect. Frequent Action and continual Danger, we know, is the Lot of *Soldiers*: Experience in theſe is ſo neceſſary to their excelling in that Art, that all the Diſcipline in the World will not

[t] Matth. iv. 3, 5, 6. * 'Tis a great Queſtion, among Divines, how the Devil, in his Temptation of our Saviour, could poſſibly ſhew him all the *Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them.* "It looks very add, (ſays "Mr *Le Clerc*, in his Note upon the ivth Chapter of St *Matthew*) that an evil Spirit ſhould be permitted to have "ſuch Power over our bleſſed Saviour, as to carry him through the Air, and ſet him upon *an exceeding high Mountain.* "But, even ſuppoſing this, the Proſpect of the Kingdoms of the whole World could no more be ſhewn from a Moun-"tain, than from a Plain. For, what can be ſeen from a Mountain, beſides Woods, Fields, Rivers, Villages? *&c.* "which in no Language can denote *the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them*; for this conſiſts rather in their "Guards and Attendants, their ſplendid Attire, and coſtly Edifices, *&c.*" whereupon he concludes, that all this happened to our Saviour in a *Dream* only, and was not *really* preſented to his Sight. But this ſeems to be a *dangerous* Conjecture, and what robs us of all the *practical* Improvement of our Lord's Temptation: It allows the Devil an abſolute Power over his *Phanſy*, to raiſe ſuch Imaginations, and ſuggeſt ſuch Dreams, as he ſhould think fit; which, we think, is a worſe Suppoſition, than to give him that Power over his Body, which neither did, nor could do him any Hurt. And therefore the more ſafe, and, indeed, more probable Opinion is——That as God cauſed *Moſes* to ſee the whole *Land of Promiſe* from the Top of Mount *Nebo*, either by ſtrengthening his Eyes to ſee it thence, or by repreſenting it to him, as it were, in a large Plan or Map, in all the Vallies round about him; ſo might the Devil, in the Vallies round about the high Mountain, on which Chriſt ſtood, make a large Draught of all the Beauties and Glories of the World, of the ſtately Edifices, of the Guards and Attendants of Kings, *&c.* appearing in their Splendor, and viſible to the Eyes of Chriſt: Which Appearance could not have been ſo well made unto him, nor ſo advantageouſly ſeen by him, had he been on a Plain. *Whitby*, on *Matth.* iv. 8. [u] 1 Cor. x. 13. [x] Heb. ii. 18. [y] Ibid. iv. 15.

not ſuffice to make them Maſters of it, who were never engaged: And therefore no Man (leaſt of all good Men) ſhould flatter himſelf with a Freedom from Temptation, which (to continue the Alluſion) were in Effect as abſurd, as to look for a profound Peace in the Field of Battle. [z] *Count it all Joy therefore, my Brethren,* (ſays the Apoſtle) *when ye fall into divers Temptations, knowing this, that the Trying of your Faith worketh Patience, and if Patience have its perfect Work, it will make you perfect, and entire, wanting nothing.*

3. THERE is another End, which Providence perhaps might have in View, in permitting this Temptation to befal our Saviour, and that is, to inſtruct us, by his Example, in what Manner we may beſt repel this Enemy of Souls, whenever he makes his Attempts upon us; which is, by having in Store a good Supply of *Scripture-Truth*, to oppoſe againſt his Allurements and Inſinuations. There is a peculiar Elegancy in that Expreſſion of St *Paul*, where he calls the Word of God [a] *the Sword of the Spirit*, meaning thereby, that it is an *Inſtrument* of Defence, which does not only *ward off* the Blows, but cut to Pieces any *Arms*, with which the Enemy can poſſibly aſſail us. For here we meet with ſuch full and plain *Directions* for our Duty, as all the *Sophiſtry* of the Devil cannot perplex; here ſuch great and precious *Promiſes*, in Caſe of Obedience, as all his boaſted Proffers cannot come up to; here ſuch dreadful *Threats*, in Caſe of Diſobedience, as all his ſevereſt Inflictions cannot compare with; here ſuch *Aſſurances* of Spiritual Aid and Aſſiſtance to thoſe, who do their Parts, as all the Diſcouragements, he can lay in our Way, cannot withſtand: [b] In ſhort, this is a Weapon *quick and powerful*; it is ſuited to all Occaſions, and all Capacities, and is *edged* with an Authority ſo ſacred, and Reaſons ſo convincing, that nothing can reſiſt its Force. Let every Man therefore enquire into his own Circumſtances, and obſerve the Way, whereby the Tempter moſt uſually does aſſail him; *the Sin, that doth moſt eaſily beſet him*; the Paſſion he finds hardeſt to be conquered; the Temptations, to which his Condition or Buſineſs moſt expoſe him; the Infirmities and Frailties peculiar to his Age, or Temper, or Complexion; and be ſure to loſe no Time for laying a *Fund* (as out of ſo rich a Treaſure he quickly may) proper for theſe Exigencies; that none of theſe may any ſooner ſtart up, but ſome Portion of Scripture, well digeſted, may inſtantly come up with it, and effectually bring it under again.

THESE, among others, are the Ends, which might be ſerved by our Saviour's Temptation in the Wilderneſs. But from this Paſſage of his Life ſome have endeavoured to raiſe an Objection againſt his *Divinity*, which muſt not paſs unobſerved: [c] "If *Chriſt*, as is pretended, was God, (ſay they) *why* ſhould he be thus tempted? "Was it to ſhew, that God was able to ſuſtain and overcome the Temptations of "the Devil? This muſt be ſuperfluous: Or, was it to ſhew, that the human Nature, "when perſonally united to the Divine, was able to reſiſt and baffle his Aſſaults? "Under the Divine Strength and Aſſiſtance, how could it do otherwiſe? But then, "how will his doing this, by a Divine Aſſiſtance, afford us any Comfort, when "we grapple with the Tempter, and are deſtitute of that Armour, which in him "was impenetrable?" It muſt be confeſſed indeed, that our Lord's Divinity ſet him above the utmoſt Oppoſition of any created Power; [d] but then it muſt be acknowledged withal, that his Divinity did not exert itſelf upon all Occaſions, but ſuſpended its Operations very frequently, and withdrew. That the Divinity of *Chriſt* was *quieſcent* (as the Ancients call it) for the Space of thirty Years; and very rarely manifeſted itſelf, until he entered upon the publick Execution of his *Prophetick* Office, moſt of the Orthodox do allow: That it ceaſed to act at the Time of our Lord's Paſſion, ſeems very evident, not only from the Hiſtory of his Sufferings, and Death, but even from his own Words, when he tells the People, who came to apprehend him, in the Garden, *This is your Hour, and the Power of Darkneſs:* And that this was the Caſe of our Lord's Temptation in particular, we are obliged to believe, becauſe the Ground of Comfort, in the like Trials which befal us, will be utterly taken from us, if *Chriſt* did only overcome him by Virtue of that Nature, which was *invincible*. So that, in this Conflict, the Divine Perfections *lying by*, as it were, and forbearing to engage, he is to be conſidered abſtractly as a *Man*, though much more perfect than any other Man; and then the Inference will be this —— That, though his being God and Man both made it impoſſible for him to ſin, when he was tempted; yet, in Regard he was attacked as Man only, this Example ſhews,

An Objection againſt Chriſt's Divinity.

Anſwered.

[z] James i. 2, &c.
[a] Eph. vi. 17.
[b] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II.
[c] *Whitby*, on Matth. iv.
[d] *Stanhope*, ibid.

that it is poſſible for us not to ſin, when we are tempted; and then the Conſideration of his Almighty Power, as God, which *enables him to ſuccour* thoſe, that are tempted, is our Security for thoſe ſpiritual Aſſiſtances, upon the ſeaſonable Acceſſions of which, that Poſſibility of not ſinning, in the preſent State of Things, does entirely depend.

The Nature *of our Saviour's Preaching.*

AFTER the Temptation of our bleſſed *Saviour* was over, the ſacred Hiſtory repreſents him as entering upon his Miniſtry, [e] *going about Galilee, teaching in their Synagogues, preaching the Goſpel of the Kingdom, and healing all Manner of Sickneſs, and all Manner of Diſeaſes among the People.* But, becauſe we have conſidered our bleſſed *Saviour* before [f] in the Capacity of a *Prophet*, and, under that Title, diſcourſed at large on the Excellency of his Doctrine; it will here be neceſſary only to obſerve in general, that the main Drift, and Topicks of his Preaching, were, [g] to enforce Repentance and Amendment of Life; to reſcue the Law from the falſe and impious *Gloſſes*, which the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* had put upon it; to explode their ſuperſtitious *Traditions:* To rebuke their Pride, Hypocriſy, and other Vices; and to let his Hearers into the Knowledge of the *Myſteries* of his Kingdom; ſo far as the State and Condition of his Church did then require. But, becauſe there is ſomething peculiar in our *Saviour*'s *Manner* of Preaching, at leaſt to us, living at this Diſtance of Time, and accuſtomed to another *Method* of Diſcourſe; it may not be improper to ſay ſomething concerning the *Parables*, wherein we find him ſo often addreſſing himſelf to the People; and to aſſign ſome Reaſons, why he might chuſe this Method of Inſtruction, rather than any other.

Why he made uſe of Parables.

Now, of the many Reaſons, which might induce our bleſſed Saviour ſo frequently to deliver himſelf in *Parables*, none ſeems to have been more in his View, than that of gaining hereby an Opportunity of inſinuating *unwelcome* Truths in the moſt inoffenſive Manner. [h] To this the *figurative* Stile of Parables very much contributes. It naturally engages Attention; it avoids all * the Harſhneſs of Reproof, which plain and ſimpler Language would occaſion; it appeals to, and leaves the Matter with, the Senſe of the Hearers: and it turns off the invidious Part of drawing the *Parallel*, and making the Application, upon the Parties themſelves: And therefore [i] Hiſtory has ſupplied us with ſome Inſtances, wherein ſuch Parabolical Diſcourſes have had more Efficacy to perſuade Men, than the moſt ſtrenuous Argumentation of another Kind. But our Saviour might have a farther Reaſon for making uſe of Parables, ſince it was a *popular* Way of Inſtruction [k] among the *Jewiſh* Doctors, (as well as other *Sages* of the *Eaſt*) and what his Countrymen were very well accuſtomed to. What therefore is the Wiſh [l] of ſome, *that our Saviour had taught his Religion in the Way of the Heathen Philoſophers*, is highly incongruous and impertinent. The *Eaſtern Way of Reaſoning* was ſo different from that of the *Weſt*, that the ſoundeſt Philoſophy of *Greece* or *Rome* would have been but mere *Jargon*, if propoſed in a plain perceptive Way to the People of *Jeruſalem*. The only Method of Reaſoning, which agreed with their Taſte, was to introduce an handſome *Simile* or Story, appoſite to the Matter in Hand; to apply a ſmart Saying of ſome ancient Worthy; or to bring good Proofs from their Law, or ancient Tradition: But to go about to prove Morality to them, as *Plato* or *Tully* do, from the eternal Rules of Juſtice, from the Rectitude and Honourableneſs of Virtue, and the Pravity and Turpitude of Vice, would have been ſuch a Way of Talking, as the wiſeſt Men of their Manner of Education would have utterly deſpiſed. Our bleſſed Saviour therefore, who well underſtood the Genius and Temper of the People he preached to, and who

[e] Matth. iv. 23. [f] *Vide* Page 571. [g] Les Oeuvres poſth. de M. Claude. [h] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III.

* A fine Writer, and eloquent Preacher, has expreſſed this in ſuch elegant Terms, that I cannot forbear citing him: "Offenders of *Magnitude*, more eſpecially, are exceeding difficult of Acceſs, and ſo tender, that it requires "the fineſt Turn, and Delicacy of Hand, to lance the *Impoſthume* without Offence, and to wound them to a Cure. "The Prophet *Nathan* ſeems to have been a mighty Maſter of Addreſs in this Way of Parable; and, by *ſheathing* "his Correction in artful Apologue, reduced the erring Prince to Confeſſion and Amendment; whereas *ungilded* Re"proof, or plain *bitter* Truth, might have been diſtaſteful to *Majeſty*, and provoked even *David* beyond the Power "of Reflection. *Reeves*'s Sermons.

[i] 'Twas by one of theſe, that *Menenius* perſuaded the Commonalty of *Rome*, which was all then in an Uproar, to be reconciled to the Senate; and by another of the like Kind, that *Demoſthenes* eſcaped being delivered to *Alexander*. [k] The *Jewiſh* Books, at this very Day, are full of ſuch Parables, as our Saviour made uſe of, and they are oft uſhered in with the ſame Phraſe, *Whereunto ſhall I liken ſuch a Thing?* As our Saviour introduces his. In the Talmudical Treatiſes, there are the Parables to be found of the *Rich Glutton*, and the *Fooliſh Virgins*; and, in the Treatiſe *Killaim*, there is a Diſpute of ſowing upon *Rocks* and *Stones*, and of *mixing Wheat* and *Tares* together. *Vid. Nicholls*'s Conferences, Vol. I. and *Whitby*, on Matth. xiii. [l] Celſus apud Orig. & Julian apud Cyril.

who himſelf always induſtriouſly avoided the leaſt Affectation of *Singularity*, took Care, that his Method of inſtructing them ſhould be agreeable to their Education, and of better Tendency to their Edification, than any *regular Lectures* of Philoſophy poſſibly could be; becauſe ſuch figurative Alluſions, as he employed, are certainly beſt remembered, when once their Senſe is attained, and will ſtick cloſer to us; becauſe the Time ſpent in unfolding them makes the Idea more fixed and laſting in the Brain.

Why ſome Parables are obſcure.

'TIS allowed, indeed, that there is ſome Obſcurity in ſuch *allegorical* Diſcourſes, and that the Doctrine, contained under the *Covert* of theſe Parables, is not ſo eaſy to be apprehended, as if it were delivered in a more plain and familiar Way: But then it muſt be obſerved, that, where this happens in our Saviour's Parables, it is the Perverſeneſs and Captiouſneſs of his Hearers, which compelled him to it; for [m] *therefore ſpeak I to them in Parables*, ſays he, *becauſe ſeeing, they ſee not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they underſtand.* [n] Had they underſtood all he meant by the Parable of the *Vineyard planted by the Huſbandman*, wherein he upbraided their Obſtinacy and Diſobedience; by the Parable of the vaunting *Phariſee*, wherein he taxed their Pride and Self-conceit; by the Parable of the *Leaven* and *Grain of Muſtard-Seed*, wherein he foretold the Propagation of the Goſpel among the Heathens; by the Parable of *cutting down the unfruitful Fig-Tree*, wherein he foretold the Ruin and Deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* Nation; or had the Things, couched under theſe Parables, been delivered with greater Plainneſs, there is no Doubt to be made, but that they would have enraged the leading *Jews*, and ſtirred them up to a more violent Oppoſition to his Doctrine, or a more quick Endeavour to deſtroy his Perſon; and therefore, when he undertook to reprove and catechize the *Jews*, and to lay before them ſuch Truths and Doctrines, as were unacceptable to Fleſh and Blood, he choſe to do it in this *Parabolical* Way, as the moſt engaging *Method* to win over the well-diſpoſed to hear and apply, and to print his *Leſſons*, in the moſt lively and laſting Characters, upon their Minds; and, at the ſame Time, to ſcreen himſelf from the Malice of his Enemies, and to leave them to their beloved Darkneſs: "For Parables (as * one expreſſes it) are a Touchſtone to diſcriminate the Ingenious and "Teachable, from the Conceited and Obſtinate, and ſerve as the *Pillar of Fire and* "*Cloud*, to lighten the one, and blind the other."

THO' therefore the great and fundamental Precepts of the Goſpel, as well as the Parables, which repreſented the Duties of Morality, were delivered, in the Audience of the People, with all imaginable Clearneſs; [o] yet, when the Myſteries of Chriſtianity, the Rejection of the *Jews*, the Vocation of the *Gentiles*, or any other offenſive Truths were the Subject of Diſcourſe, our Lord, in Point of Prudence, thought proper to make Uſe of obſcure *Similes*, which thoſe, who followed him out of no good Deſign, might not underſtand, and which he afterwards took Care to explain to his Diſciples in private: And in this he did no more, than what is reported of *Pythagoras*, viz. [p] *That he ſaid many Things in an hidden and covert Manner, which thoſe, who came to learn of him with a pure Mind, might underſtand; but others, tho' they heard him, could not perceive his Meaning.*

Chriſt's Miracles, *their Number and Quality.*

ANOTHER Part of *Chriſt's* Miniſtry was the *Miracles*, which he wrought, in Confirmation of the Doctrine, which he publiſhed to the World. For, upon all extraordinary and new Diſcoveries of God's Will to Mankind, recorded in Scripture, it appears to have been his conſtant Uſage, to ſtrengthen the Authority of the Perſons, whom he employed as Inſtruments for publiſhing theſe Diſcoveries, by a Power of working Miracles. That our Lord was inveſted with ſuch a Power, and this Power a ſure Evidence of his Divine *Miſſion*, is what we had Occaſion to prove [q] in the Beginning of this Work; and need only now take a ſhort Review of the Number and Nature of the Miracles, which he did. [r] When therefore we behold, by our bleſſed *Saviour*, natural Defects [s] ſupplied, accidental Infirmities [t] repaired, the moſt [u] malignant and * inveterate Diſeaſes, ſuch as no Length of Time, no Skill, no Remedies, no Expence could aſſwage, perfectly cured; [x] Winds and Seas reſtrained and quieted; the [y] Malice of Men awed and eluded; the Rage [z] of Devils ſubdued; and Perſons [a] at Death's Door, nay, [b] even actually dead, commanded back to

[m] Matth. xiii. 13. [n] *Whitby*, on Matth. xiii. 10. * *Reeves*'s Sermons. [o] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [p] Jamblicus, in Vitâ Pythag. [q] See Page 34. [r] *Stanhope*'s Sermons, at *Boyle*'s Lectures. [s] John ix. 6. [t] John v. Mark iii. [u] Mark i. 31. * Ibid. v. 25, 26. [x] Matth. viii. 26. [y] Luke iv. 29, 30. Johnv iii. 59. [z] Matth. xii. 22. Mark ix. 25. Luke viii, 29. [a] John iv. 47. [b] Luke vii. 15. John xi. 44.

to Life and Health: When we behold these Miracles done in a Moment, sometimes without any [e] outward Application at all, always without such [f] as could have any *natural* Efficacy to serve such mighty Purposes; with a [g] Touch, nay, with the Touch [h] of a Garment; with a [i] Word, nay, with a Word, that operated effectually upon [k] the Absent, and at a Distance: When we consider this, I say, we cannot but be convinced of the *Number* and great Variety of *Christ*'s Miracles. And, in like Manner, when we behold him giving [l] Sustenance to the Hungry, Supplies [k] to those in Want, Safety to them that were [l] ready to perish, Speech to the Dumb, Hearing to the Deaf, Eyes to the Blind, Understanding to the Disturbed, Strength to the Impotent, Limbs to the Maimed, Health to the Sick, Life to the Dead, and Release to Souls and Bodies held in Bondage by the Devil; we cannot but acknowledge the blessed *Quality* of such Miracles, as captivate our *Affections*, at the same Time that they raise our *Astonishment*: And, from the Number and Quality of them, both put together, cannot but conclude, that the Person *must be from God*, to whom was committed such a prodigious Extent of Power, all terminating in Wonders of Gentleness and Pity, of Beneficence and Love.

SECT. II.

The Preparatory Incidents before CHRIST*'s Crucifixion.*

Christ's *Entry into* Jerusalem.

IN this Course of his *Ministry* our Lord went about, preaching the Word, and working Miracles, and doing all Manner of Good, for three Years and upwards; till, the Time of his Return to his heavenly Father approaching, the *Evangelists* represent him, as assuming the Part of a *King*, and making his *publick Entry* into *Jerusalem*, but in a *Pomp* and Solemnity somewhat singular. For, [m] instead of numerous *Guards*, and triumphal *Chariots*, and costly Preparations, we find only the Attendance of a vulgar and despised Croud; the Person, for whom these Honours were designed, riding, in humble Poverty, upon a *borrowed Ass* [n]; and the Way before him, not covered with *Tapestry*, or rich Furniture, but strowed [o] with *Branches*, hastily cut down from Trees, and the Garments of them, who made up the Train. The Songs and Acclamations, applied to this Occasion, did not tell of bloody Battles fought, of Victories obtained at the Expence of his infinite Toil and Treasure, of Countries miserably harrassed, and reduced by Fire and Sword; but rehearsed the Mercies of God, long expected, and now fulfilled in the peaceful Reign of the *Messiah*, that Son of *David*, who should turn Mens [p] *Swords into Plow-shares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks*, by establishing such Laws, as (if duly observed) would effectually curb and quiet those great Disturbers of Mankind, Envy, and Avarice, and Ambition; and settle the World in profound and perfect Tranquillity, upon Principles of Justice and Contentedness, Meekness and mutual Love.

At

[e] Mark ii. 11. [f] Mark i. 31. John ix. 7. [g] Matth. ix. 25. [h] Ibid. ix. 22.
[i] Luke vii. 14. [k] Matth. viii. 13. John iv. 50, 53. [l] Matth. xv. 31. [k] Ibid. xvii. 27.
[l] Ibid. xiv. 30, 31. [m] *Stanhope*, on the Epistles and Gospels, Vol. I.

[n] To ride upon an Ass may, in these *Countries*, be thought a very odd Thing: We reckon an Ass to be a *contemptible* Creature, and a Man, especially a Man of Character, riding upon an Ass to be a *ridiculous* Figure. These are Prejudices of our Time and Country: And when they, who look no farther than the Manners and Customs which are before them, examine this Part of sacred History by the Standard of modern Prejudices; they see, or think they see something, quite inconsistent with the *Gravity* or *Dignity* of the Person pretending to be *King of the Jews*, when *Christ* is represented entering in Triumph into *Jerusalem* mounted on an Ass. But as contemptible as an Ass, or a Man riding on an Ass, may be at present, from the Beginning it was not so. In many Countries, and particularly in *Judea*, Persons of the highest Distinction were usually so mounted. The Governors of *Israel* are described, in the Song of *Deborah*, as *riding on white Asses*, Judg. v. 10. The thirty Sons of *Jair*, who was Judge and Prince over *Israel* twenty Years, are said to ride on thirty Asses, *Judg.* x. 4. And another Judge of *Israel* is recorded to have had forty Sons, and thirty Nephews, that rode on *seventy Ass-Colts*, Judg. xii. 14. For the Matter of Fact is, that, in most *Eastern* Countries, Asses were generally made Use of for this Purpose, and Horses seldom or never mounted, but in Order of Battle. Bishop *Sherlock*'s Dissertation iv, annexed to the Use and Intent of Prophesy.

[o] At the *Feast of Tabernacles*, it was the Custom of the *Jews*, not only to sing *Hosannas* with the greatest Joy, but also to carry *Branches* in their Hands, desiring (as the *Jews* still wish at this Feast) that they may thus rejoice at the Coming of the *Messiah*: For which Reason it is, that the Multitude, acknowledging *Jesus* to be the *Messiah*, used *Hosannas*, and the Rites observed in that Feast, wishing Prosperity to him and his Kingdom, from him that dwelleth ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις *in the highest Heaven*. *Whitby*, on Matth. xxi. 8.

[p] Isaiah ii. 4. and Micah vi. 3.

AT a *former Paſſover*, when the People, in Admiration of his Miracles, would have paid him *Kingly* Honours, he withdrew, and refuſed the unſeaſonable Teſtimony of their Zeal; becauſe his Acceptance of it *then* might have obſtructed the Efficacy of his Preaching: But now, that the Courſe of his *Prophetic Office* was finiſhed, and the Time of his Departure was at Hand, he permitted the People to proclaim his *Regal* Dignity, that their free and ſolemn Acknowledgements thereof might be a Ballance againſt the *Shame* and Scandal of his *Croſs*. And more than a Ballance they certainly will be to every impartial Conſiderer, when it is obſerved, that his Death was the Contrivance of a reſtleſs Party, prejudiced by ſecular Intereſt, and jealous of his growing Greatneſs in the Eſteem of the People; whereas theſe Acclamations and Acknowledgments were the Effect of Sincerity, and an honeſt Reverence to One, who (they verily believed) had fully anſwered all the Predictions concerning the *Meſſias*, and muſt of Neceſſity be that very Perſon, ſo long promiſed, ſo impatiently expected, and ſo punctually deſcribed by the ancient Prophets. *The Deſign of it.*

AND, as this ſolemn Entry was a Declaration of *Chriſt*'s Kingdom, [q] ſo the Circumſtances, attending it, were ſignificant Intimations, that it was not *to be of this World*, ſince its Pomps and Proceſſions were ſo different from thoſe of earthly Princes. Our bleſſed Lord, indeed, could not have taken a more effectual Courſe, to confute that vain Imagination of the *Meſſiah's temporal* Dominion at his *firſt Coming*, than by ordering Matters ſo, as, in this only Inſtance of his receiving *Princely* Honours, to go counter to the cuſtomary Forms and Solemnities; [r] and, even in the Manner of his *Triumph* and *Inauguration*, to teach us Humility and Contempt of the Pride and Glories of this Life. But, how mean and deſpicable this Pomp and Appearance might be, it certainly drew upon him the Malice and Indignation of the *Jewiſh* Rulers, quickened them in their Meaſures againſt him, and confirmed them in the *Expediency of his dying for the People*, in that wicked Senſe intended by *Caiphas*. And therefore we may ſuppoſe that our Lord, who foreſaw every Conſequence diſtinctly, ſuffered the *officious* Reſpects of a well-meaning Multitude, to draw on his Paſſion, by exaſperating his bloody Enemies, and making them more vigorous, and impatient in the Execution of their wicked Deſign. Nor is their Conjecture to be found Fault with, who ſuppoſe that our *Saviour* intended this *Pomp* and Solemnity for a *Type* and Prelude of his triumphant *Advent* to the general Judgment; when, inſtead of a vulgar Train, he ſhall deſcend from his celeſtial Throne, with Troops of Angels and bleſſed Spirits innumerable, in a Figure, as becoming an univerſal Lord and Conqueror *then*, as this other was ſuitable to the Character and Condeſcenſion of a ſuffering Saviour *now*.

UPON our *Saviour*'s triumphant Proceſſion to *Jeruſalem*, we find him, near the *Mount of Olives*, ſadly lamenting the Fate of the City, and all the diſmal Circumſtances, which he punctually *foretels*, as a Puniſhment determined by God, to avenge the *Jews*, for their obſtinate Infidelity, and affected Blindneſs; [s] *If thou hadſt known even thou, at leaſt in this thy Day, the Things, which belong unto thy Peace; but now they are hid from thine Eyes:* In the Temple, juſtly reſenting the *Profanations* of the Place, and, with a noble Zeal, driving out thoſe, who kept a publick Mart in the Court of the *Gentiles*; [t] *ſaying unto them, It is written, my Houſe ſhall be called an Houſe of Prayer, but ye have made it a Den of Thieves:* In the *upper Room*, celebrating his laſt *Paſchal* Supper, and inſtituting that bleſſed *Sacrament* (whereof we have treated [u] before) to be a conſtant *Memorial* of his meritorious Blood-ſhedding, and obliging all his Followers to obſerve the ſame *in Remembrance of him:* And (what deſerves a particular Conſideration) in the *Garden of Gethſemane*, expreſſing a *Sorrow and Heavineſs of Soul, even unto Death*; ſweating out large Drops of Blood, by Reaſon of the Pain and Agony, which he felt; and, through the amazing Proſpect of what he ſaw approaching him, ſending up his earneſt and importunate Prayer to God, [*] *O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me.*

IN opening this ſad and *tragical* Scene therefore, we ſhall, 1ſt, obſerve the Height and Bitterneſs of his *Agony*, and from what probable Cauſes it might ariſe; and then, 2dly, conſider what the *Ingredients* of *this Cup* might be, and, upon what Account, our *Saviour* might *deprecate* it with ſo much Importunity. *His Agony in the Garden.*

[q] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I. 42. [r] *Nicholls*'s Conference, Vol. I. [s] Luke xix. [t] Matth. xxi. 13. [u] See page 618. [*] Matth. xxvi. 39.

1. Now that this Agony, which our *Saviour* ſuffered in the Garden, was very grievous and exceſſive, not only [x] the ſtrong *Expreſſions*, whereby the Scriptures repreſent it, ſignify the utmoſt Horror and Amazement, Dejection of Mind, and Anxiety of Spirit; but the Earneſtneſs of his Petition, which he thrice repeats upon his Knees, and proſtrate on his Face, to ſhew the Vehemence of his Deſires; [y] his ſweating large *Drops of Blood*, which ſhewed the Extremity of his Fear and Conſternation; and the Appointment of an Angel, to ſtrengthen and ſupport him, which ſhewed the great Weight of what lay upon him, are ſufficient Indications: But then, from what Quarter all this Sorrow and Dejection, all this Amazement and Conſternation ſhould ariſe, is not ſo eaſy a Matter to determine. [z] Thoſe, who impute it only to a natural Dread and Abhorrence of Pain, and Torments, and Death, have this Difficulty to contend with, that, how grievous ſoever the Apprehenſion of theſe Things be, eſpecially to ſinful Fleſh and Blood; yet they are ſuch, as have been corrected by Reaſon, and, in their moſt tremendous Shapes, borne, not only by *Chriſt*'s faithful Servants, the *Martyrs*, but even by many wiſe Men and Philoſophers of old: And therefore we can hardly imagine, that the Proſpect of the Pain and Ignominy of his *Crucifixion* could give this Exceſs of Sorrow and Conſternation to his Soul; eſpecially conſidering, that in the Space of three Days he knew he was to be releaſed, and for ever afterwards glorioufly rewarded, for what he then ſuffered.

Whence, occaſioned different Opinions.

IT is the Opinion of [a] others therefore, that this exquiſite Senſe of Pain and Dejection of Mind were occaſioned by the perfect and penetrating Light, which then diffuſed itſelf in his Mind all at once, concerning the *Guilt* and *Demerit* of Sin, and the Wrath of an incenſed God. They ſuppoſe, that the Image of all the Iniquities of the World (for which he was to ſuffer) did then appear clear, and lively, and expreſs to his Mind; and that all the vile and horrid Circumſtances of them ſtood (as it were) particularly ranged before his Eyes, in all their diſmal Colours: That he ſaw, for Inſtance, how much the Honour of the great God of Heaven and Earth was abuſed by them, and how many Millions of poor Souls they muſt inevitably have caſt under the Preſſures of a Wrath infinite and intolerable, had not he turned the Blow upon himſelf: That the Horror of this filled and amazed his vaſt apprehenſive Soul; and that thoſe Apprehenſions could not but affect his tender Heart, full of the higheſt Zeal for God's Glory, and the moſt relenting Compaſſion for the Souls of Men; till it fermented and boiled over with Tranſport and Agony, and even forced its Way through all his Body in thoſe ſtrange Ebullitions of Blood. "For, [b] if "the true Contrition of one ſingle Sinner, *ſay they*, bleeding under the Sting of the "Law only for his own Iniquities, cannot be performed without great Bitterneſs of "Sorrow and Remorſe; what Bounds can be ſet to that Grief, what Meaſures to "that Anguiſh, which proceeded from a full Apprehenſion of all the Tranſgreſſions "of ſo many Millions of Sinners?"

THIS is the common Solution: And yet there is ſomething in the Force of the Words, as well as other Paſſages in Scripture, which has induced [c] others to think, that, on this Occaſion, the Devil and his Angels had collected all their Force, in order to fill our *Saviour*'s Mind with the moſt diſmal, terrifying Scenes of Horror, thereby to divert him from his intended Enterprize. For, 1. we may obſerve, that before he entered the Garden, where this Agony ſeized him, he expected ſome terrible Aſſault from theſe infernal Powers; and therefore he tells his Diſciples, [d] *Hereafter I will*

[x] The Words in the *Original*, are three, λυπεῖσθαι, ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, and ἀδημονεῖν. The firſt, λυπεῖσθαι, is of a known and ordinary Signification, but, in this Caſe, it is to be raiſed to the higheſt Degree of its Significancy, as appears by the Words, which follow, περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή μου. So that it does not only denote an Exceſs of Sorrow, ſurrounding and encompaſſing the Soul; but alſo ſuch, as brings a Conſternation and Dejection of Mind, bowing the Soul under the Preſſure and Burthen of it. The ſecond, ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, in the vulgar *Latin*, is *pavere*; but, according to the *Greek* Idiom, bears a much ſtronger Senſe, and ſignifies, indeed, the higheſt Degree of Fear, Horror, and Amazement. The third, ἀδημονεῖν, denotes the Conſequences of exceſſive Fear and Sorrow, *i. e.* Anxiety of Mind, Diſquietude, and Reſtleſſneſs. *Pearſon*, on the Creed.

[y] Our *Saviour*'s ſweating Blood is not ſpoken by Way of Compariſon, or *Hyperbole*, but was really That, which Phyſicians call διαπήδησιν, when the *ſerous* Blood is grown ſo thin and hot, as to find a Paſſage out at the Pores of the Body, as in an extraordinary Sweat it may do, by rarifying the Tunicles of the Veſſels, which contain the Blood: And to this Purpoſe *Maldonate* tells us of one at *Paris*, in his Time, who had Drops of Blood mingled with his Sweat, at the hearing the Sentence of Death pronounced againſt him, though he was a Perſon of a very ſtrong Conſtitution. *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons.

[z] See *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons. *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II. and his Sermons on ſeveral Occaſions. [a] See *Pearſon*, on the Creed, and *South*'s Sermons, Vol. III. [b] *Pearſon*, ibid. [c] See *Scott*'s Mediator. [d] John xiv. 30.

I will not talk much with you; for the Prince of this World cometh, and hath nothing in me; as if he had said, "give me leave now to discourse freely with you; because "within a little while I shall be so engaged, that I shall not be at Leisure to discharge "my Mind to you: For the Prince of the Devils is just now mustering up all his "*Legions*, and coming to make his Effort upon me; but this is my Comfort, *he* "*will find nothing in me*; no sinful Inclination to take part with him, no guilty Re-"flection to expose me to his Tyranny." And accordingly, when the *Jews* apprehended him, he expostulates with them, why they did not lay Hands on him before, when he was daily with them in the Temple, and then answers himself, [e] *but this is your Hour, and the Power of Darkness.* 2. We may observe, that, when the Disciples enter the Garden with our *Saviour*, he gave them a Caution, what extraordinary Danger they were in, and therefore bids them [f] *pray*, and [g] *watch and pray, that they enter not into Temptation.* Now this plainly implies, that, in that Time and Place, there was some Occasion requiring a more than ordinary Application to these Duties, which cannot so well be imputed to any Thing else, as those Numbers of evil Spirits, who had furiously assaulted their Master, and not altogether spared them: For, 3. we may observe, that, before our *Saviour* went into the Garden, he expressly told his Disciples, that his *Hour was come*, and, when he was in it, earnestly intreated them to *watch* with him. One would have thought therefore, that the dear Love which they bore him, and the infinite Concern they had in him, might have kept them *awake* for some Hours at least; and yet we find them suddenly asleep, and no sooner awoke, but asleep again and again; for the Text tells us, that [h] *their Eyes were heavy*: Heavy indeed, that could not hold up, for a few Hours, upon such an awakening Occasion: Now to what Cause can we impute this prodigious *Drowsiness* of theirs so well, as to a *preternatural Stupefaction* of their Senses, by some of these infernal Spirits, then conflicting with our *Saviour*; who, perhaps, to deprive him of the Solace of his Disciples Company, did, by their *diabolical* Art, produce that extraordinary *Stupor*, which oppressed them; that so, having him alone, they might have the greater Advantage to tempt, and terrify him?

THESE Observations make it reasonable to imagine, that this last Agony of our Saviour was occasioned by a mighty Struggle and Conflict with the *Powers of Darkness*, who having, by God's Permission, mustered up all their Strength, intended once more to try their Fortune against him; and, to this Purpose, surrounding him, very probably, with a *mighty Host*, exerted all their Power and Malice, in persecuting his innocent Soul, in distracting it with horrid *Phantasms*, in afflicting it with dismal Suggestions, in vexing and tormenting it with dire Imaginations, and dreadful Spectacles; and, in short, in practising all the Arts and Machinations, their Subtlety could invent, to tempt or deter him, if possible, from his gracious Design of redeeming the World.

2. I SEE no Reason, however, why all these terrifying and distracting Things, which Interpreters are so apt to separate, *viz.* the Apprehension of a cruel and ignominious Death, the Sense of the Guilt, and heinous Nature of Sin, the Prospect of God's Wrath, and the Combination of Devils, all approaching him, like a black and angry *Cloud*, fraught with Thunder, and ready to break over his devoted Head, might not be *united* in our Saviour's View; and, meeting together, make up the several Ingredients of that *bitter Cup*, which we find him, with such [k] *strong Crying and Tears*, imploring his Father to *remove*. This will account for our Saviour's Conduct, the Expressions of his Dread, and the Deprecation of his Doom, as he saw the Cloud advancing; whereas to make any one of these *singly*, much more the Apprehension, that he was shortly to die, and his Soul, for some Time, to be separated from his Body, the Cause of his excessive Sorrow and Uneasiness, [l] is, in Effect, to disparage the Constancy of the *Captain of our Salvation*, and to give a Preference (as we said before) to the Behaviour of some *Soldiers* of his, that have since fought under his *Banner*, in the Confirmation of that Truth, which they gladly sealed with their Blood.

The Cup, what.

"BUT

[e] Luke xxii. 53. [f] Ibid. *ver.* 40. [g] Matth. xxvi. 41. [h] Ibid. *ver.* 43, *&c.*
[i] *Scott's* Mediator. [k] Heb. v. 7.

[l] If there had been nothing in this Cup, but what is commonly incident to human Nature, as to the Apprehensions of Death or Pain, it seems strange, that he, who had the greatest Innocency, the most perfect Charity, the freest Resignation of himself, the fullest Assurance of the Reward to come, should express a greater Horror of his Sufferings, than Thousands did, who suffered for his Sake. *Stillingfleet's* Sermons.

Why Chriſt *declined it.*

" BUT, how bitter ſoever the Ingredients of this Cup were, why ſhould our Sa-
" viour, who came into the World for this Purpoſe, that he might ſuſtain the Wrath
" of God, and taſte *Death for all Men*, endeavour to decline it? He certainly knew
" what God had decreed, and himſelf had conſented to it, before his Incarnation;
" and therefore, when he came to the Point, for what Reaſon was it that he altered
" his Purpoſe, and deſired a *Releaſe* from his former Engagements?" Now in Anſwer to this, it muſt be obſerved, 1. [m] That, in Regard our bleſſed Saviour had the divine and human Nature both united in one Perſon, great Caution muſt be uſed in obſerving his Actions, that we do not miſtake in aſſigning any of them to a wrong Principle. For, as thoſe Works of Wonder, which exceeded, or controuled all the Powers of created Nature, muſt be attributed to a Principle *omnipotent* and *divine*; ſo in thoſe others, which relate to Subjection and Suffering, he muſt be underſtood to proceed upon a Principle purely *human*, and that the Faculties of the Divine Nature were, in ſuch Caſes, totally ſuſpended. 2. That, the Efficacy and Myſtery of Man's Redemption conſiſting in this *Union*, it was neceſſary, that there ſhould be a clear and undoubted Demonſtration given of the *Reality* of both theſe Natures in *Chriſt*; which had not been done, unleſs, as our Lord's Miracles evidenced him to be *truly God*; ſo all the eſſential Properties and Affections of our Nature had appeared in him too viſibly, to leave any Doubt of his being *truly Man*. Now, ſince the diſtinguiſhing Marks of human Nature lie chiefly in the Soul, there had not been that Demonſtration given of our Saviour's perfect *Humanity*, unleſs he had diſcovered, in his Conduct, an exact Reſemblance to us in all the natural Paſſions and Inclinations of our Souls. 3. That in this Soul of ours there is a twofold Principle, *Reaſon* and *Senſe*; that *Senſe* catches at the preſent, purſues Eaſe and Safety, and induſtriouſly conſults the Preſervation and Advantage of the Body: Whereas *Reaſon* enlarges our Proſpect, takes into Conſideration diſtant and future Objects, and perſuades the foregoing ſome Satisfactions, the running ſome Hazards, and enduring ſome Difficulties, in the Diſcharge of our Duty, and the Expectation of a greater Good in Reverſion. So that under the *former* are comprehended all our *Natural* Paſſions, which are the ſecret Springs, that move us in what we do; under the *latter* are the Underſtanding and Judgment, which direct, and regulate, and bound, and over-rule thoſe Paſſions: But ſtill both theſe are *conſtituent* Parts, and as neceſſary to make a *perfect Soul*, as the rational Soul and human Body are to make one *perfect Man*. And from hence it follows, 4. That the Weakneſs and Corruption of our Nature, as it ſtands depraved by Sin, does not conſiſt in our being tenderly touched with the Fear of *preſent Evil*, or the Deſire of *preſent Good*, but only in ſuffering thoſe Fears and Deſires to prevail, and take Place, againſt the Dictates of Reaſon and Duty. Averſion to Pain and Conflict, to Sorrow and Death, and whatever is ſhocking and frightful to human Nature, are Affections interwoven with our *original* Frame and Conſtitution: *Adam* in his State of Innocence felt them; and therefore it is no juſt Reflection upon the *ſecond Adam*, that he, in like Manner, felt them too. Infirmities, indeed, theſe Averſions may be called, in Compariſon of theſe *Perfections*, which belong to God and *unbodied* Spirits; but then they are ſuch Infirmities, as all, who partake of Bodies, muſt have, and which, if our Saviour was deſtitute of, he could not have been truly Man. Now, 5. If *Chriſt*, as Man, could not be altogether *indifferent*, and unconcerned at ſuch ſevere Trials, as the Impoſition of the Burthen of our Sins, the Infliction of Pain and Torment, and his approaching Combat with the Powers of Darkneſs, muſt neceſſarily bring upon him; then ſurely it could not miſ-become him to uſe all poſſible Means for declining them, and, conſequently, to expreſs his Concern, by praying againſt them, with ſuch Reſerve and Limitation, as we find he does; [n] *Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me; nevertheleſs, not my Will, but thine be done.* For it was no Diſparagement of his Love to Mankind, to deteſt Death, and Pain, and Sufferings; but, in Truth, an higher Commendation of it, that, notwithſtanding ſo quick a Senſe, and ſo paſſionate a Regret, he offered himſelf to undergo whatever God, for their Benefit and Salvation, ſhould think proper to lay upon him. The more *vehemently* he wiſhed for a Releaſe, the more *meritorious* was his Submiſſion; and the ſtronger his Averſions were, the more he renounced his own Will, and, conſequently, the more acceptable was his Compliance with that of his heavenly Father.

AFTER

[m] *Stanhope*'s Sermons on ſeveral Occaſions. [n] Luke xxii. 42.

AFTER the *Jews* had reſolved, in Council, to put our Saviour to Death, the Evangeliſt acquaints us, that *no Man laid Hands on him for Fear of the People.* [o] Such was his Eſteem among all thoſe, who envied him not, that they could not ſeize him publickly, without the Hazard of a *Tumult*; and therefore they concluded it the ſafeſt Method to ſeize him by Night, in his Retirement, where none ſhould be aware to reſiſt their Attempt. *Judas*, in all Probability, was a Man of commendable Manners, and inoffenſive Carriage; had he been otherwiſe, our Saviour would have ſcarce taken him into the Number of his Apoſtles, nor would he have eſcaped the Cenſure and Reproach of the *Jews*, for having ſuch a *Blot* in his Train. Nay, in the very Night of his Treaſon, and while it was enquired, among themſelves, who might poſſibly be the Traitor, *Judas*, we find, lay no more under the common Suſpicion of ill Deſigns againſt his Maſter, than any of the *twelve*: And therefore we may ſuppoſe, that he was a Perſon of a ſober and regular Converſation, plauſible in his Addreſs, and full of ſeeming Reſpect to his Lord; though he was certainly an *Hypocrite*, and had another latent Sin, which put him upon the moſt deteſtable Meaſures. Whether it was his own Option, or our Saviour's Order and Appointment, that he ſhould carry *the Bag*, or common Purſe, and ſo, in the Manner of a *domeſtick Steward*, give Alms to the Poor, and provide Things neceſſary for the Maintenance of our Lord and his Attendants; but ſo it was, that his Employment in this Office adminiſtered Matter to his *Covetouſneſs*, and gave him frequent Opportunities of *purloining* not a little to himſelf; till, having gone on ſome Time [p] in robbing the Poor, and defrauding his Maſter, *Satan*, at length, ſuggeſts to him another Way of ſatisfying his Avarice, even the betraying him for a *Sum of Money*: And when this Suggeſtion prevailed with him to go to the High-Prieſts with this Queſtion, *What will ye give me to betray him?* Then [q] *Satan* fully *entered into him*, and carried him, without Remorſe, to the Performance of that horrid Enterprize. For, having received a vile Reward for the Hire of his Conſcience, and finding, ſoon after, a convenient Opportunity, he fetches a *Band of Soldiers*, and conducts them to the Garden, where the Sorrows of our Lord were propitiating for the Sins of *Eden*; and there, by a ſhameleſs Addreſs, and perfidious Kiſs to diſtinguiſh him, delivers up his Maſter into the Hand of his Enemies.

Judas's *Treachery.*

His *Character.*

'TIS no ſmall Aggravation then of this Man's Crime, that he was a *Diſciple*, One, who had given up his Name and Faith to our Lord, and not only heard his Doctrine, and ſeen his Miracles, but himſelf likewiſe preached the Goſpel, and wrought Miracles, in the Power of his Commiſſion: And that his Wickedneſs was not the Effect of a ſudden Surprize, or Want of Recollection, but the Work of Deliberation, and long Contrivance, and ſolemn Debate. He conſulted with the High-Prieſts and Elders, concerning the Time, the Place, and every Circumſtance for the moſt convenient Execution of his Villainy; he ſet his own Soul and his Maſter's Life to ſale [r] at a vile Price; he continued his Attendance upon that Maſter ſtill, that ſo, under the *Diſguiſe* of Friendſhip, and by much laboured Hypocriſy, he might the better carry on his Deſign of deſtroying him; and, when his Project was thus formed, he had many broad *Hints* given him, that his Deſigns were detected, many Warnings of the Sin and Danger he was running into, and that it [s] *had been better for him he had never been born*; and yet none of theſe altered his Purpoſe. So that, in this Act of *Judas* there was a Complication of Ingratitude, Perfidiouſneſs, Hypocriſy, prepenſe Malice, and a ſettled inflexible Reſolution to do wickedly, beyond the Power of Advice and Warning, and the moſt awful Menaces to controul it; a ſeared Conſcience, and hardened Infidelity; and a formed avowed Deſign to ruin the Cauſe of Chriſtianity, in the Deſtruction of its *Author*; and therefore we need leſs wonder, that we find the Repentance, which he afterwards expreſſed, ſo inavailable to his Pardon and Salvation.

The Nature and Aggravation of his Crime.

HE expreſſed great Sorrow for what he had done, and condemned himſelf ſeverely for his wicked Treachery; [t] he brought again the *thirty Pieces of Silver*, for which he had ſold his Maſter's Life, and not only took the *Shame* of his Fault to himſelf, but in ſome Degree made Satisfaction to his injured Maſter, by a publick Declaration of his unblemiſhed Innocence. When he found Matters grow to ſo deſperate an Height, that there was no Probability of our Saviour's eſcaping the Malice of the *Jews*, he began to reflect, very likely, on the Prediction of our bleſſed Lord con-

His Repentance.

[o] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [p] John xii. 6. [q] Luke xxii. 3. [r] *Thirty Pieces of Silver* is the ſame with thirty Shekels, which, of our Money, according to Dr *Hammond*, is 3 *l.* 15 *s.* [s] Matth. xxvi. 24. [t] Ibid. xxvii. 2, 3.

cerning the dreadful Vengeance, which ſhould overtake the Perſon that betrayed him to Death: Theſe, and probably many other Reflections working together, with all that Horror and Confuſion, which Fear and Guilt are known to create in Mens Minds, ſeem to have made up the Concern, which the *Evangeliſt* calls *repenting himſelf*; a *Concern* reſulting from a Principle of Self-Preſervation, in the moſt *carnal* Senſe of the Word; but we find not any due Senſe in him of the Villainy of the Fact, nor any condemning himſelf, as the baſeſt, the moſt ungrateful, moſt abandoned Wretch alive; *one*, that had violated the Laws of God, and Society, and Nature, and caſt all Fidelity, and Gratitude, and common Humanity, behind his Back. All which, and a great deal more, were not only Aggravations due to his Crime, but the very propereſt Occaſions of Remorſe. He felt, indeed, ſome Regret for what he had done, (as an awakened Conſcience cannot fence off ſuch Reflections) and he wiſhed, perhaps, he had never done it; but the Regret, which he felt, ſeems rather to have been the Effect of Confuſion and Rage, than any godly relenting; the Agonies of Frenzy, and Amazement, and Deſpair, which are the moſt diſtant Things in the World from that ſober and regular Sorrow, which worketh [a] *Repentance unto Salvation, not to be repented of.*

Wherein it was defective.

HEREIN then lay the Defect of *Judas's* Repentance, that the Horror of his Sin ran him into *Depair*. [*] For Repentance, we muſt know, does not barely conſiſt in Sorrow for Sin, but in ſuch a Sorrow, as is tempered and ſupported with Hope; not in a mere Confeſſion of our Tranſgreſſions, but in ſuch a Confeſſion as depends on Forgiveneſs. It imports the Change of our Manners; but if there be not a firm Perſuaſion, that our ſincere Endeavours, for the future, will be kindly received, and our former Iniquities graciouſly paſſed over, all Ground and Encouragement for ſuch a Change is taken away. It requires, that we chuſe new Objects for our Affections, draw them off from the World, and its treacherous Allurements, and ſettle them on God, and heavenly Things; but he that loves God muſt, of Neceſſity, conſider him under ſome other *Character*, than thoſe of a ſtern *Judge*, and implacable *Avenger*: He muſt have ſome Notions of his Clemency and Goodneſs; for nothing but what is good, can be the Motive of our Love; nor does it work upon our Affections, but in Proportion to what we apprehend it: And therefore no Man can fix his Affections on Heaven and God, who is the Fountain of all Felicity there, who has no Proſpect, no Hope of ever having a Part in the Joys of that bleſſed Place.

REASON, indeed, cannot lead us to infer, that Sorrow for the paſt, and Amendmend for the Time to come, can be any equivalent Satisfaction for our Offences: But Revelation aſſures us, that God may be appeaſed, and it hath told us withal in what Manner he is appeaſed, even by the precious Blood of his Son, who came to *give his Life a Ranſom for many*. In this Matter God hath declared himſelf ſo fully, that the very Heinouſneſs of our Sins is not a greater Provocation, than the Diſtruſt of Mercy (which, in Effect, is making God a Lyar, and diſparaging the Merits of *Chriſt's* Sacrifice) after we have committed them. So that Hope of Mercy and Faith in the Promiſes and Satisfaction of *Chriſt* are the very *Life* and *Spirit* of true Repentance, eſſential, and indiſpenſably requiſite to quicken and recommend every Part of it; and therefore no Wonder if *Judas's* Repentance proved ſo ineffectual, which was plainly deſtitute of theſe neceſſary Qualifications. [x] If it be enquired, how *Judas* came to be wanting in this Point; the *immediate* Cauſe, no Queſtion, was, that God had forſaken him, and withdrawn his Grace from him; but then, if we purſue the Enquiry, the Matter will fall, at laſt, upon *Judas* himſelf, as the proper and original Cauſe of his own Miſery and Deſtruction.

An Objection.

"BUT if this Fact of *Judas* was foretold, as we find it was [y] in a Propheſy, as "high as the Pſalmiſt, wherein was he ſo mightily to blame? What was foretold, "was likewiſe pre-ordained, and made neceſſary to come to paſs by an irreſiſtible "Decree: Now, where there is a *Fatality* of acting, there can be no *Choice*, and "where there is no Choice, there can be no *Guilt*." The Fallacy of ſuch Arguments as theſe, which, from the Notion of Divine *Preſcience*, charge God with the Sins of Mankind, is what we had Occaſion to conſider, in treating of [z] the Doctrine of Predeſtination; and we ſhall only take Notice, in this Place, that miſerable *Judas* was not aware of any Power in this Argument to ſuſtain his Mind, when he came to reflect on

Anſwered.

[a] 2 Cor. vii. 10. [*] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II. [x] Ibid. [y] Pſal. xli. 9.
[z] *Vid.* Page 151.

on what he had done. He could not interpret, that the *Foreknowledge* of God had any *Cauſality*, or Influence upon his Sin, being conſcious, that there was Cauſe enough for *that*, ariſing from his own Deportment. For having given Way to a covetous Deſire, and hardened his Heart, by a ſinful Indulgence, againſt all Impreſſions of wholeſome Counſel, he was convinced, that the Propheſy of his Treaſon could not fail of its Event; becauſe, when the Temptation offered, he found himſelf under a Neceſſity to comply: But then he knew withal, that it was a Neceſſity, not *fatal*, but *natural*, not of God's *decreeing*, but of his own *procuring*. [a] Under the juſter Apprehenſions of his Crime, he is ſaid to have *repented*, *i. e.* he grieved, he deſpaired, and then hanged himſelf; and, though we allow, that his Paſſions tranſported him too extravagantly in theſe latter Violences, yet, even from what is rational in his Grief, we may learn this Leſſon, —— "That, when an awakened "Conſcience comes to eſtimate the Nature of its Guilt, there will be found but "poor Shelter in all thoſe Palliations, that can be formed by human Subtlety and "licentious Wit."

A Caution againſt Covetouſneſs.

ONE very ſucceſsful Artifice, made uſe of by the Devil for our Deſtruction, is to dreſs up his Temptations to ſuch Advantage, that all the Profit, all the Pleaſure, all we promiſe to ourſelves as the End of our ſinning, ſhall be ſet in its beſt Light, and appear in Proportion larger than the Life; but all the Difficulty, all the Danger, the Troubles, and ill Effects of it ſhall be infinitely leſſened, or altogether concealed from our Sight. This Deceit is one Cauſe, why we find ourſelves ſo very *different Men*, while we are preſſing forward, heated with Deſire, and big with falſe and flattering Expectations, from what we are, when looking back upon the Thing done, and ſtung with Reproaches and Self-condemnation. Now this was exactly the State of *Judas*: His Greedineſs of Gain blinded his Eyes, and quite diverted his Thoughts from conſidering the Horror of his Treachery: But then the Reflection fell upon his Mind with a terrible *After-blow*; and he, who brought again the *thirty Pieces of Silver*, would have given ten thouſand Worlds, had he been Maſter of them, never to have yielded to this villainous Suggeſtion. [b] The Pieces looked dazzling and pleaſant to him at the firſt Sight; but, by that Time he had had them a little in his Hands, ſuch a loathing Regret grew upon his Mind, that he could not in the leaſt enjoy what he had ſo ſtrongly coveted. Let this Example therefore teach us to [c] *take Heed, and beware of Covetouſneſs*; becauſe [d] *the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil*, and *they who will be rich*, who reſolve, and make it their Buſineſs, and ſtick at nothing to make them rich, *fall into Temptation, and a Snare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful Luſts, which drown Men in Deſtruction and Perdition.*

Chriſt's Sufferings.

As ſoon as *Judas* had betrayed our Saviour *Chriſt*, the Soldiers immediately ſeize him, and bind him, and carry him away to the High-Prieſt's Palace. [e] *Caiaphas* was High-Prieſt, at that Time; but *Annas*, having formerly borne that Office, and being a Man of great Authority in the *Sanhedrim*, they bring him firſt of all before him, and, as he was upon his Examination, [f] an Officer ſmote him on the Face, and ſhamefully inſulted him. From *Annas* he was ſent to *Caiaphas*, who having convened the *Council*, pretended to proceed againſt him in a *judicial* Way; but, finding no Evidence ſufficient to convict him, he adjured him by the living God to tell him *whether he was Chriſt, the Son of God*; to which our Saviour anſwering in the Affirmative, the High-Prieſt, in the Name of the Aſſembly, accuſed him of *Blaſphemy*, and ſo, declaring him guilty of Death, for the preſent diſmiſſed the Council.

THE *Jews*, at this Time, were [g] under the Juriſdiction of the *Roman* Governor; and, having no Power to condemn any Man to Death, the next Morning they led him

[a] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [b] *Young*, ibid. [c] Luke xii. 15. [d] 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

[e] *Annas* and *Caiaphas* are both called High-Prieſts; *Annas* being a Man of principal Authority among the *Jews*, and *Caiaphas* placed by *Pontius Pilate*, the Procurator, in the Pontificate. For the Succeſſion of the High-Prieſt was now changed, the lineal Deſcendant of *Aaron* being poſtponed, and ſome other, whom the Procurator pleaſed, named to that Office every Year, or removed, as oft as he thought fit.

[f] The Injury done the holy Jeſus in this Blow, was heightened in this Reſpect, that the Perſon, who ſtruck him, was one *Malchus*, an *Idumean* Slave, and the very Man, for whom he had wrought a Miracle a little before in curing his Ear. *Howell*'s Hiſtory.

[g] About threeſcore Years before our Saviour's Birth, the *Jews*, by *Pompey the Great*, were made tributary to the *Romans*; And although, during the Life of *Hyrcanus*, the High-Prieſt, the Reign of *Herod*, and his Son, *Archelaus*, the *Roman* State ſuffered the *Jews* to be ruled by their own Laws and Governors; yet, when *Archelaus* was baniſhed by *Auguſtus*, they received their Governors from the *Roman* Emperor, being made Part of the Province of *Syria*, which belonged to his Care. In the Life of *Auguſtus*, there was a Succeſſion of three, *Caponius*, *Ambivius*, and *Rufus*. At the Beginning of the Reign of *Tiberius*, they were governed by *Valerius Gracchus*, and, at his Departure, by *Pontius Pilate*. The Office which this *Pilate* bore, was the *Procuratorſhip* of *Judea*; but what this Office was is not ſo eaſy to determine, becauſe it was newly introduced into the *Roman* Government. For,

him away to *Pilate*, in Hopes of prevailing with him to ratify their Sentence. And, to this Purpoſe, they brought ſeveral Accuſations againſt him, pretending that he perverted the Nation, forbad *Tribute* to be paid unto *Cæſar*, and ſet himſelf up for a King. But our Saviour diſclaiming all *ſecular* Power, and the Governor underſtanding that he was a *Galilean*, took Occaſion from thence to diſcharge himſelf of the *Jews* Importunity, and immediately ſent him to *Herod*, the Governor of *Galilee*, who was then at *Jeruſalem*, upon the Occaſion of the *Feaſt*. *Herod* was glad to ſee Jeſus; for he had long deſired it; and, having heard much of his Fame, expected to have beheld ſome Miracle done by him; but, being diſappointed in that, he, in Revenge, delivered him up to his Attendants, who treated him with all poſſible Contempt and Ridicule, and ſo ſent him back to *Pilate*. [h] *Pilate* was a Man of Pride and Cruelty enough: *Philo*, who has given us his Character, chargeth him with ſelling of Juſtice, and giving any Sentence for Money; with Rapines, with Injuries, with Murthers, with unjuſt Tormentings, with putting Men arbitrarily to Death, and with much exceſſive Cruelty, during his whole Adminiſtration. But ſo apparent was our Saviour's Innocence, that even this Governor profeſſes he *can find no Fault in him*, and labours with the People to have him acquitted. When this would not do, he endeavours to ſave his Life, by propoſing ſome lighter Puniſhment to be inflicted on him; but, when this was rejected too, he mentions him as the *fitteſt* Perſon to be releaſed, in Honour of the *Feſtival*. When this they refuſed, and another was made choice of, in hopes of moving their Compaſſion, he had him brought out, diſguiſed, and miſuſed as he was by the Soldiers, and offered to ſcourge him, and let him go: But this exaſperated the People to that Degree, that, adding Threats to their Clamours, they prevailed with the Governor, contrary to his own Conviction, as well as his Wife's Sollicitation, to *releaſe* Barabbas *unto them*, [i] *and to deliver Jeſus* [k] *immediately to be crucified*.

Pilate's *Character.*

The Aggravations of Chriſt's Sufferings.

THIS is a plain Narrative of the Fact. And now to obſerve ſome Aggravations of it: To have his Blood ſet to Sale at a Price, and that but a poor one too; that Blood, which was a Purchaſe, more than equivalent for the whole World, rated at *thirty Pieces of Silver*; to be betrayed, and ſold by one of his own Servants, his Friend, and conſtant Companion; to be aſſaulted with Swords and Staves, and apprehended as a common *Robber*, and Peſt of Mankind; to be hurried from one High-Prieſt to another, and there blind-folded, buffeted, ſpit upon, and inſulted; to be expoſed to the *mercenary* Tongues of falſe Witneſſes, and in the Midſt of all his Diſtreſs left alone, not one *Friend*, not one *Diſciple* to ſtand by him; but betrayed by *One*, forſaken by the *reſt*, and ſolemnly diſowned and denied by the *Chief* of them; to be dragged from one Judgment-Seat to another, and, when neither *Pilate* nor *Herod* could *find any Fault in him*, to have an unjuſt Sentence of Death pronounced againſt him; to have a known Robber and Murtherer, one who ſtood convicted of *Sedition* and *Blood*, preferred before him; to be made a Spectacle to the People, and a Laughing-Stock to thoſe, that were about him; to be arrayed ridiculouſly in *Purple*, as if he pretended to a *Royalty*, which belonged not to him; to have a *mock Crown* and Scepter given him, and Obeyſance made to him in Jeſt and Wantonneſs; Royal Salutations, together with *Spittings* in his Face, and his Scepter broke about his Head, to make him more contemptible: Theſe are all of them Circumſtances of ſuch Horror, and Inſolence, and Cruelty, as render this a Caſe without *Parallel*, and a Wickedneſs beyond Example: And yet obſerve, with what invincible Patience he bore *this Contradiction of Sinners againſt himſelf*. He did not

For, before the Dominion of that City was changed from a Commonwealth into an Empire, there was no ſuch publick Office, in any of the Provinces, and, particularly in *Judea*, none, till after the Baniſhment of *Archelaus*, ſome Years ſubſequent to our Saviour's Birth. When *Auguſtus* divided the Provinces of the Empire into two Parts, (one of which he kept for his own Care, and left the other to the Inſpection of the Senate) he ſent, together with the Preſident of each Province, a *Procurator*, whoſe Buſineſs it was to take an Account of the Tribute, and whatever elſe was due to the Emperor, and to order and diſpoſe of the ſame to his Advantage. Neither was there, at the firſt Inſtitution of this Office, any other Act belonging properly to their Juriſdiction, but ſuch a Care and Diſpoſal of the Imperial Revenue, which they exerciſed, as inferior, and ſubordinate to the Preſident, who was always ſupreme *Provincial* Officer. Now *Judea*, being made Part of the Province of *Syria*, and, conſequently, under the Care of the Preſident of that Province, according to this Inſtitution, a particular Procurator was aſſigned unto it, for the diſpoſing of the Emperor's Revenue; and, becauſe the Nation of the *Jews* was always ſuſpected to be of a rebellious Diſpoſition againſt the *Roman* State, and the Preſident of *Syria*, who had the Power of the Sword, was forced to attend upon the other Parts of the Province; therefore the Procurator of *Judea* was inveſted with a Power of Life and Death, and the whole Power of Judicature left in the Hands of the Reſident-Procurator. *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [h] *Prideaux*'s Connection, Lib. IX. [i] Mark xv. 15. [k] This was contrary to the *Tiberian* Law, which, about twelve Years before this Time, decreed in Favour of condemned Priſoners, that, after Sentence paſſed, Execution ſhould be deferred ten Days. *Howell*'s Hiſtory.

not impeach the Righteouſneſs of God, for ſuffering ſuch Indignities to befal a blameleſs and innocent Perſon; [l] *he was wounded*, not for his own, but *for our Tranſgreſſions*; *he was bruiſed*, not for his own, but *for our Iniquities*; *he was oppreſſed, he was afflicted, yet he opened not his Mouth*; for, [m] *when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he ſuffered, he threatened not; but committed himſelf to him that judgeth righteouſly, leaving us an Example, that we might follow his Steps.*

St Peter's Fall.

WHEN our bleſſed Saviour was taken by the *Jews*, and carried away to the High-Prieſt's Palace, St *Peter*, we are told, [n] *followed afar off, and went in, and ſat with the Servants*, in order *to ſee the End.* From the ſeveral Paſſages, wherein this Apoſtle is concerned, we may learn, that he was a Perſon of a *ſanguine Complexion*, and great Courage: His making ſo many Profeſſions of a fixed Adherence to his Maſter's Cauſe, let the Conſequence be what it would; his drawing his Sword in his Vindication, and adventuring his ſingle Reſiſtance againſt a ſtrong Body of Men, which came armed and prepared to apprehend him, may ſufficiently juſtify this Part of his Character. However, when he came to the High-Prieſt's Palace, he found Matters there in ſuch Confuſion; the Pomp and Solemnity of the Council met together, the ſevere and dreadful Face of Juſtice, the Spite and Malice of every Perſon in *Authority*, and the Inſults and Indignities, the Forgery and falſe Evidences thrown upon his Maſter, ſo terrified and ſhocked his Courage, that the bold St *Peter*, who, but a little before, had ſingly engaged a whole Band of armed Men, to reſcue his Maſter, upon the Accuſation of a poor Servant-Wench, now ſhamefully abjures him.

The Occaſion of it.

Circumſtances.

[o] FEAR, we know, is a Paſſion ſo *interwoven* in human Nature, and ſo immediately conſequent upon the Principle of *Self-Preſervation*, that, in ſome Circumſtances, it may befal the beſt and braveſt Minds. In theſe Conjunctures we pity Mens Failings, and God, no Doubt, makes favourable Allowances, when human Nature is ſurprized, and unable to withſtand an unexpected Shock. This, however, was not St *Peter*'s Caſe entirely. The bitter Things, that were come upon his Maſter, had been foretold over and over again, and he himſelf ſharply rebuked for not giving a ready *Credence* to them. He had been taught, that Hatred, and Perſecution, and Contempt was to be the Lot of the firſt *Planters* of the Goſpel; that the *Diſciples were not above their Maſter*, but appointed by God to follow him in his Sufferings, as well as his Virtues; and, in ſuch their Diſtreſs, ordered [p] *to fear, not them*, who could kill the Body only, but him alone, *who, after he had killed, had Power to caſt into Hell.* All this, firmly believed, was certainly enough to prepare his Mind, and inſpire him with Courage, had he been called to ſuffer in his own Perſon. But this he was not: He only ſaw his Maſter ſuffer, and ſuffer no more, than what had been frequently foretold. No Man had yet laid Hands on *him*, nor any Perſon in Power and Authority given him the leaſt Moleſtation; only a few inferior Servants officiouſly put the Queſtion, and he, with a ſhameleſt Falſehood, labours to clear himſelf of it; [q] *I know not the Man, neither underſtand I what thou ſayeſt.* Had the Denial been but once, it might have been deemed ſome *ſudden Lapſe* of Mind, and gone off with a better Conſtruction; but the Denial is twice repeated, and every Time with more *Vehemence*; till, at laſt, not content to back one Lye with another, he flies to *Oaths* and *Curſes*, profanely calls God to witneſs, and imprecates his Judgment upon his own Head, in a Thing that he knew utterly falſe and baſe.

Aggravations.

THESE are ſome of the ſad Circumſtances of our Apoſtle's Fall: And theſe Circumſtances are all aggravated by the many Advantages he had to do better: [r] A *Perſon*, who, for the Space of three Years and more, had the Honour of our Saviour's Converſation, the Conviction of his Miracles, and the Inſtruction of his Doctrine; who had been let into a full and diſtinct Knowledge of thoſe *Myſteries*, which, for wiſe Reaſons, were delivered to the Multitude in Terms ſometimes ambiguous; had been admitted to his *Tranſfiguration* on the *Mount*, his Converſe with *Moſes* and *Elias*, and the hearing of that Voice from God's *excellent Glory*, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*, [s] as himſelf teſtifies: A *Perſon*, that hereupon had made *Confeſſion* of his Maſter's Divinity, and received his Commendations for it; had been choſen a *Companion* of his Agonies and Sufferings, and forewarned frequently of the great Danger of *denying* him; who, in a due Senſe of this, had,

[l] Iſa. liii. 5.
[m] 1 Pet. ii. 21, 23.
[n] Matth. xxvi. 58.
[o] *Stanhope*'s Sermons on ſeveral Occaſions.
[p] Luke xii. 5.
[q] Matth. xxvi. 70, 72.
[r] *Stanhope*, ibid.
[s] 2 Pet. i. 17, 18.

that very Evening, profeſſed himſelf ready to go with him [t] *into Priſon, and to Death*; and, to diſtinguiſh his Affection and Conſtancy above any of his Brethren, declared, that "*though all ſhould be offended* becauſe of his Maſter's Sufferings, *yet would not he*; *and though he were to die with him, yet would he not deny him*: A *Perſon*, I ſay, placed in that Rank and Elevation, to fall off in the Time of Trial; to deny and abjure that very Maſter, to whom he had made ſuch large Profeſſions; to diſclaim all Relation to, and all Knowledge of him, and that with the bitterеſt Oaths and Imprecations; this implies a Guilt ſtill more heinous, the more his Knowledge and former Conviction, the more his Warning and long Experience, the more his Profeſſions and boaſted Firmneſs of Mind were conſpicuous; and we read this Paſſage to ſmall Purpoſe, if it does not convince us of the miſerable *Frailty* even of the beſt Men, and effectually overthrow all thoſe vain *Confidences*, which are apt to riſe in our Hearts from our own ſuppoſed Strength and Virtue.

And Uſes of it. WHAT a lamentable Inſtance have we here of one of the greateſt Men, that ever was, falling in the moſt *ſcandalous* Manner? And who ſhall hereafter dare to depend upon the higheſt Degrees of *Knowledge*, when one ſo well inſtructed, ſo perfectly ſatisfied in the Chriſtian Truth, was yet, in Deſpite of the fulleſt Convictions of his own Conſcience, driven to deny the Lord that taught, and the Lord that bought him? Who ſhall preſume upon the beſt *Reſolutions*, when he, who declared ſo firm a Purpoſe of adhering to Jeſus, even to the Loſs of his own Life, ſhamefully retracted, and diſclaimed all Relation to him? And, if ſo great a Champion ſo ſoon gave Ground, how ſhall we be able to ſtand in the Day of Battle? *We*, who are Men as well as he, but not near ſo well *appointed* for this ſpiritual *Combat*; *we*, who have the ſame Principle of *Corruption* to betray us, and the ſame Paſſions to bear us down; but few, very few, the ſame Knowledge and Wiſdom, the ſame Courage and Reſolution, the ſame Zeal and Affection for our Maſter, that this Apoſtle had, and yet he was foiled. Blame therefore, we may, the Conduct of St *Peter*, and pity his Infirmity, when we pleaſe to overlook ourſelves; but, certainly, if we conſider the general State of human Nature, the Leſſon, which this Example teaches us, is properly this—That Reliance upon our own Strength is *Folly*, and the Iſſue of it, *Defeat*; that, in all our ſpiritual Encounters, our beſt and ſafeſt Way is to flee unto God by Supplication and Prayer, becauſe (as the Apoſtle himſelf learned by ſad Experience) they, who * *are kept unto Salvation*, are not ſupported by their own Strength, but *are kept through Faith, and by the Power of God.*

His Repentance, WE ſhould be injurious, however, to the Memory of St *Peter*, not to take Notice of his Repentance, as well as his Fall; who, upon the crowing of the Cock, and our Saviour's [x] *turning, and looking upon him, remembered the Word that Jeſus had ſaid*, and found, by comparing his Behaviour with it, how ſhamefully he had fallen from his boaſted Courage and Conſtancy, how frail and unſtable his ſtrongeſt Reſolutions had proved; how eaſily he had been betrayed into a Crime, that he thought himſelf not capable of; how *baſe* he had been to ſo kind a Maſter, how *falſe* to his Promiſes, how *regardleſs* of Truth, how *peremptory* in the moſt notorious Falſhood, how *profane* and profligate in his Oaths and Curſes; and when his Offence was thus ſet before him in its proper Colours, and loaded with all the Aggravations, which belonged to it, the Spectacle proved ſo frightful, that he could no longer refrain from Tears; *he went out, and wept bitterly*. And ſufficient Reaſon he had to weep: For, beſides the many particular Circumſtances, which heightened his Guilt, and embittered the Rememberance of ſo foul an Offence; the very Kindneſs of his Maſter, who, in the Midſt of his Contumelies and Sufferings, ſhewed a greater Concern for his Servant's Sin, than for any Thing that himſelf endured; and, by a ſilent, but ſignificant Rebuke of his Eye, upbraided his Baſeneſs and Ingratitude to him, could not but cut him to the *Quick*, and fill him with Confuſion. This, very probably, was one of the bitterеſt Ingredients of St *Peter*'s Sorrow, and what confirmed him in his Duty ever after: For we muſt remember, that, in his future Behaviour, the Apoſtle abundantly ſhewed the Sincerity of his Converſion, and made an ample Amends for the *Scandal* of his Offence.

And Reformation, and Zeal. IT was the ſame St *Peter*, that, after our Saviour's Reſurrection, returned to his former *Fervor* of Affection; that [y] caſt himſelf into the Sea, out of Impatience to haſten to his Maſter on Shore; that exerted himſelf on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, and proved,

[t] Luke xxii. 33. [u] Matth. xxvi. 33, 35. * 1 Pet. i. 5. [x] Luke xxii. 61.
[y] John xxi. 7.

proved, by irrefragable Arguments, [a] *that Jesus Christ was the Son of God*; that maintained his Point against the *Jewish* Rulers, [b] despising their Rebukes, and angry Menaces, and telling them plainly, *that God was to be obeyed, rather than Man*; that confirmed his Brethren, by his resolute Behaviour, and made it a Matter of [b] *rejoicing, that he was counted worthy to suffer Shame for the* once abjured *Name of Christ.* In a Word, it was he, who, after a long Labour of Preaching and Persecution, at length finished his Course, and glorified God by the same Kind of Tortures and Death which his Master condescended to undergo. So that St *Peter* was not more different from himself, when trembling at the Voice of a silly *Damsel*, than the same St *Peter*, afterwards, the *glorious*, the *invincible* Apostle, before the Council, in Prison, and upon the Cross, was from the *cowardly* and *infamous* Renegade in the High-Priest's Palace. This settled and deliberate Fidelity was a noble Compensation for the Infirmity and Transports of his Fall. This shewed what the Man was, when perfectly himself, and supported by the Grace of God; as the other did, what he was, when *naked*, and destitute of heavenly Succours, depending upon his own Strength, and left in the Hands of his own Passions; which is enough to convince us, that *of ourselves we can do nothing*, but all our Safety, and [c] *all our Sufficiency is of God.*

SECT. III.

Of CHRIST's *Crucifixion and Death.*

Christ's *Crucifixion,*

AFTER *Pilate* had given Sentence against our blessed *Saviour*, and the *military* Men and Rabble had wearied themselves with their *blasphemous Merriment*, they stripped him of all his *Ensigns of Royalty*, and, putting on him his own Raiment, hurried him away to the Place of Execution. [d] The *Jews* had four Kinds of *capital* Punishments, *Burning*, *Beheading*, *Strangling*, and *Stoning*; but here they make Choice of Crucifixion [e], because they accounted it the most painful and the most ignominious Death. *Painful* it needs must be, [f] because the Hands and the Feet, which, of all the Parts of the Body, are most *nervous*, and, consequently, the most *sensible*, being extended to their utmost Dimensions, and pierced through with Iron Pins, could not but give exquisite Torture, when the Weight of the Body, thus stretched out, was left hanging upon these Fastenings; and yet, as the Wounds were in the extreme Parts, and so immediately affected none of the Vitals, the Pain must necessarily have been *long* and *lingering*, as well as sharp and dolorous. For which Reason, the *Romans* themselves, who made Use of this Punishment, were frequently so compassionate, as to *strangle* the Party first, and so content themselves with having his dead Body fixed upon the Cross; though in our *Saviour*'s Case there was no *relenting*, no Remains of Humanity for his Ease and Relief. And as this was a very *painful*, so was it a most *ignominious* Kind of Death, peculiar to the meanest Condition, and the most heinous Offences, [g] the Punishment of *Robbers* and *Murtherers*, provided they were *Slaves*; otherwise if they were *free*, and had the *Privileges* of the City of *Rome*, it was then thought a *Prostitution* of that Honour, and too infamous a Penalty for such to suffer, let their Misdemeanors be what they would. Nay, so very odious and abominable was this Punishment, that when they had a Mind to *brand* the Memory of any flagitious People, Traitors to the State, and common Enemies to Mankind, the most effectual Way to fix an *indelible* Infamy upon

a painful and ignominious Death.

[a] Acts ii. 14—36. [b] Ibid. iv. 19, 20. [b] Ibid. v. 41. [c] 2 Cor. iii. 5. [d] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

[e] Crucifixion was a *Roman* Punishment, in Use in the Empire, as long as it continued *Heathen*; but, when the Emperors embraced *Christianity*, this Punishment was forbidden by the supreme Authority, out of a due Respect and pious Honour to the Death of *Christ*. The Form of a Cross, according to the Custom of the *Romans*, was that of a straight and erect Piece of Wood, fixed in the Earth, towards the Top of which, another transverse Piece was fastened, in such a Manner, that they cut one another in right Angles. The *erected* Post extended itself above the *Transverse*, and, towards the lower Part of it, another Piece of Wood was fastened, and standing out. To the erected Post our *Saviour*'s Body was applied; his Head to that Part of it, which was above the *transverse* Beam, and above his Head was the Table of his Accusation fixed; to the transverse Beam his Hands were nailed, and upon the Piece, which came from the lower Part of the erected Post, his Body rested, and his Feet were transfixed. *Pearson*, on the Creed.

[f] *Pearson*, ibid. [g] *Stanhope*, on the Epistles and Gospels, Vol. II.

upon them, [h] was, in their Opinion, to hang up their *Pictures* thus, and to crucify thoſe in *Effigie*, whoſe Perſons were out of their *Reach*. And as this Kind of Puniſhment was ſhameful and odious among the *Romans*, ſo the *Jews* carried their *Deteſtation* of it to an higher Degree. For though they never inflicted it on any Criminal, when *alive*, yet, when notorious Offenders had ſuffered another Way, their Bodies were ſometimes hung up to be ſeen, which, according to their Notion, was accounted an *accurſed Thing*, becauſe it deprived them of the Privilege of Burial. The Care of *funeral Rites* indicated a Life to come, and that the Body and Soul ſhould be rejoined after Death; but this *lifting up of Men from the Earth*, and hanging them in the Air, (where they were to rot and periſh) ſeemed to be treating them like *Brutes*, the cutting off the Hopes of a future Life, and a Kind of defeating the Immortality of their Souls, and the Reſurrection of their Bodies; and therefore the Senſe and Denunciation of their Law was, that [i] *he who hanged on a Tree, was accurſed.* In this painful, this ſhameful, this accurſed Manner, did our bleſſed Lord, for the Space of ſix long Hours [k], ſuffer the moſt exquiſite Torments both of Body and Mind, until Nature being quite worn out, and the Work of Man's Redemption finiſhed, into God's *Hand he commended his Spirit*, or human Soul, and, having done that, *he bowed his Head, and gave up the Ghoſt.*

The Manner of it.

DEATH conſiſts in a *Diſſolution* of the principal Parts or Organs of the Body, ſo that neither they, nor any of the leſs noble Parts, in Dependence on them, can any longer perform their reſpective *Functions:* In Conſequence of which, according to the *Laws of Union* between the Soul and Body, the Soul can no longer *inform* the Body, but departs, and retires elſewhere. That the Torments, which *Chriſt* ſuffered, were of ſufficient *Force* and Intenſeneſs to cauſe ſuch a Diſſolution of the Body, cannot be diſputed; and that they had their Effect, and *Chriſt* did actually die under them, was the conſtant Concluſion both of Enemies and Friends, before whoſe Eyes he was executed in the moſt publick Manner. *Pilate* indeed is ſaid to wonder, when he heard, in the Evening, that he was dead ſo *ſoon*; but to us it can ſeem no ſtrange Thing, that his Spirit ſhould be then waſted, who know what a ſad Variety of Pains and Miſeries he underwent. The wonderous and unſpeakable Agony in the Garden, the Violence of the *Jews*, the Buffetings of the Servants, the Harraſſing him from one Court of Judicature to another, the *thorny* Crown, and mercileſs Scourges; theſe, I ſay, and (what was worſe than all theſe) that inconceivable Anguiſh of Heart, which, before any outward Violence befel him, did, with its own Weight, depreſs his Soul, and make it *exceeding ſorrowful, even unto Death*, all conſpired to ſpend his natural Strength, and force his Life away: Though (properly ſpeaking) it was *not forced away*; for as he [l] *had Power to lay down his Life*, ſo nothing could have taken it from him, without his own Permiſſion and Conſent. For he, who [m] ſtruck his Enemies down to the Ground with his *Majeſtick* Preſence, and afterwards gave them leave to apprehend him, could likewiſe, if he had pleaſed, have *come down from the Croſs*; he could have continued *inſenſible* in all the Pains of it; he could have ſurvived the ſharpeſt Anguiſh; and had he not *ſuſpended* his Divine Power, Death itſelf could not have taken hold of him, nor have *bound this ſtrong Man*, this infinitely more than Man, in thoſe *Chains*, which he therefore ſubmitted to, that, ſhortly after, he might break *and burſt them aſunder*, in a Manner more *glorious* and *triumphant*. And from hence it will follow, that the Death of *Chriſt* was not a *Caſual* Event, but a Deſign, from all Eternity, contrived by Divine Wiſdom, and reſolved upon by Divine Goodneſs, for the Illuſtration of God's ſacred Attributes, the

[h] Thus they uſed *Celſus*, one of the thirty Tyrants of *Rome*, as *Trebellius Pollio* teſtifieth. *Novo injuriæ genere, Imago in crucem ſublata perſultante vulgo, quaſi Patibulo ipſe Celſus videretur affixus.* *Pearſon*, on the Creed.

[i] Deut. xxi. 23.

[k] The *Jews* divided their Day, not only into twelve Hours (as is evident from *John* xi. 9. and many other Places) but likewiſe into four Quarters, (in the ſame Manner as they divided the Night) allowing to every Quarter three Hours. The *firſt* Quarter was from *ſix* a-Clock in the Morning until *nine*; and the laſt of theſe three Hours was called by them *the third Hour*: The *ſecond* Quarter was from *nine* in the Morning until *twelve*; and the laſt of theſe Hours was called *the ſixth Hour*: The *third* Quarter reached from Mid-Day to *three* a-Clock in the Afternoon, and the laſt of theſe Hours was known by the Name of the *ninth Hour*: The *fourth* and laſt Diviſion was into three more Hours, which began at *three* a-Clock in the Afternoon, and ended at *ſix*, or *Eventide*. Now, from this brief Account of the Diſtribution of the Hours of the Day, it is eaſy to gather the Beginning and End of our *Saviour*'s ſuffering on the Croſs. For, as to the *former*, it is ſaid, that *it was the third Hour when they crucified him*, Mark xv. 25. *i. e.* they faſtened him to the Croſs at nine a-Clock in the Morning, according to us; and as to the *latter*, St *Matthew* relates, that, *about the ninth Hour, Jeſus cried with a loud Voice, and yielded up the Ghoſt*, Chap. xxvii. 50. wherewith St *Mark* agrees, Chap. xv. 34. which is at three a-Clock in the Afternoon. So that it is manifeſt from the whole, that *Chriſt* was ſix Hours on the Croſs in all. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

[l] John x. 18. [m] Ibid. xviii. 6.

the Exaltation of our *Saviour*'s Glory, and the Procuration of Man's Redemption and Felicity; of which we have treated at large in the Doctrine of *Chriſt*'s [n] Sacerdotal Office.

The Wiſdom of God herein.

HERE then we cannot ſufficiently admire the Wiſdom of Almighty God, who thus ordered the great Work of Man's *Redemption*, in Deſpite of all the Malice and Subtlety of the *Devil*, and his wicked Inſtruments to the contrary. [o] The Envy and Malice of the Chief Prieſts and *Phariſees*, the Eagerneſs and Fury of the common People, the profligate Conſciences of falſe Witneſſes, the Treachery and Avarice of one of his Diſciples, the Timorouſneſs of a corrupt and time-ſerving Judge, the Barbarities of thoſe, who ſcourged and crucified him, and inſulted over his dying Agonies; all theſe were made uſe of by the Enemy of Mankind to deſtroy *Jeſus*, and to overthrow his Kingdom, to root out his Name, and all the Honour of it from among Men: But obſerve the Wiſdom and Power of Providence in bringing Good out of Evil, and the moſt excellent and beneficial Events out of the moſt unlikely, the moſt ungodly, the moſt malicious Intentions! Had not theſe Men been ſo exceedingly barbarous and wicked, the holy *Jeſus*, ſo great a *Teacher*, ſo innocent a *Liver*, and ſo generous a *Benefactor* to the Diſtreſſed, could never have been taken off by ſo ignominious a Death: Had he not been put to *ſuch* a Death, he could not have ſuffered the Shame and Torment, which the Divine Juſtice required, as a Satisfaction for the Sins of Men; had not the Proceedings againſt him been injurious and unreaſonable, *that* Death had not bore the *Merit* of a Sacrifice, and Expiation for the Guilty, whoſe Perſons he repreſented: In a Word, had he not died, he had *not conquered Death*, nor *led Captivity Captive*; but now, by Virtue of his Death, which theſe wicked Inſtruments procured, *having*, as St *Paul* tells us, [p] *ſpoiled Principalities and Powers*, (all the principal Powers of Darkneſs) *he made a Shew of them openly, triumphing over them upon his Croſs.*

The Triumphs of the Croſs.

[q] No *Conqueror*, ſeated in his *triumphant Chariot*, did ever yield ſo glorious a Spectacle: No *Tree* was ever adorned with ſuch glorious *Trophies*. To the outward Eye, and carnal Senſe, our *Saviour* was expoſed to Shame and Scorn; but to the *Eye of Faith*, and ſpiritual Diſcernment, all *his* and our Enemies hung upon his Croſs, Objects of Contempt, undone, and overthrown: The *Devil*, [r] *that ſtrong* and mighty one, hung *there*, bound and fettered, ſpoiled and diſarmed, quite baffled and confounded: *Death* hung there, gaſping and expiring, with its *Sting* plucked out, and all its *Terrors* quelled: The *World*, with all its vain Pomps, its counterfeit Beauties, and bewitching Pleaſures, hung there, all defaced and diſparaged: Our *Sins*, thoſe Sins, which [s] *he bare in his own Body on the Tree*, hung there expoſed as *Trophies* of his Victories, and Objects of our Hatred and Horror: In ſhort, thoſe manifold Enmities between God and us, between Man and himſelf, between one Man and another, did all hang there together, aboliſhed in his Fleſh, and ſlain upon his Croſs, [t] *by the Blood of which he made Peace, and reconciled all Things in Heaven and Earth.*

Our Glory.

[u] LET *it then to the Jews*, prepoſſeſſed with falſe Notions of a *Meſſiah* appearing in great Secular Pomp, *be a Stumbling-Block*, and to *the Greeks*, puffed up with Conceit, and Maxims of worldly Wiſdom, *Fooliſhneſs*, * that God ſhould put his Son in ſo ſad and deſpicable a Condition; that Salvation from Miſery ſhould be procured by ſo miſerable a Death; that eternal Joy, Happineſs, and Glory ſhould iſſue from ſuch Springs of extreme Sorrow and Shame; that a Perſon, in outward Appearance, ſo contemptible, and expoſed to ſuch infamous and injurious Uſage, ſhould be the Son of God, the Lord and Redeemer of Mankind, the King and the Judge of all the World: Let this, I ſay, be diſtaſteful to ſome *prejudiced*, and incredible to ſome *ſelf-conceited* Perſons; to us, who diſcern by a clearer Light, 1. That God could not, in a fitter Method, *illuſtrate* his glorious Attributes of Goodneſs and Juſtice; and, 2. That Virtue could not be *taught*, and exemplified in a Way more advantageous; the Sufferings and Death of *Chriſt* muſt be always *grateful* and *glorious.*

God's Goodneſs herein.

[x] THAT God, who is by Nature incapable of Sufferings and Death, ſhould condeſcend to become *mortal* Man, to qualify himſelf to endure the bittereſt Afflictions; that he ſhould do this for Enemies and Rebels, for ſuch are wretched Sinners; that the Miſeries of thoſe, who had provoked, and injured him, and merited his utmoſt

[n] See page 576, &c.
[o] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II.
[p] Col. ii. 15.
[q] *Barrow*, on the Creed.
[r] Matth. xii. 29.
[s] 1 Pet. ii. 24.
[t] Col. i. 20.
[u] 1 Cor. i. 23.
* *Barrow*, ibid.
[x] *Stanhope*, ibid.

Indignation and Wrath, ſhould move his Pity to ſave their Souls, at the Expence of his own Life; that, in the Midſt of Sorrows and Agonies, of Pains and Torture, he ſhould ſtill perſevere in his moſt gracious *Purpoſe*, and not *accept a Deliverance*, till he had finiſhed this laborious Undertaking; that he ſhould embrace Poverty and Hardſhip, Reproach and Ignominy, bodily Anguiſh and Death, with a ready and chearful Mind, when all the Powers of Hell could not have compelled him to one ſingle *Pang*; this is ſuch an Inſtance of Compaſſion and Friendſhip, as no Tenderneſs ever yet did, or can compare with. [y] *Greater Love hath no Man*, ſays our Saviour, *than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friends*; *but* herein [z] *God commendeth his Love towards us, in that, while we were yet Sinners*, and, conſequently, his Enemies, *Chriſt died for us.*

And Juſtice, and Severity againſt Sin.

BUT, at the ſame Time that *Chriſt's dying for us* ſhews us the Riches of God's Goodneſs, it ſets before us a dreadful Image of his ſevere *Juſtice* and Indignation againſt Sin. [a] For, if God, in Conſideration of our Pardon, would admit of no meaner Sacrifice, than the precious Blood of his own eternal Son; and, when that Son undertook to *propitiate* for us, would not ſo much as abate him one Degree or Circumſtance of a moſt ſhameful and tormenting Death, where ſhall *Sinners ſtand, when he is angry?* [b] How be able to bear his Wrath and Indignation, ſmoking againſt them, when the *Heat* of it was ſo violent againſt him, who ſuſtained the Repreſentation only of Sinners, but himſelf had never done any Sin? How exquiſite muſt be the *Amazement*, how ſharp and raging the *Pangs* of Offences unpardoned, when he, whoſe Mind had nothing to reproach him with, trembled, and ſunk under the Apprehenſion of that Fury, which others had provoked? And can we read the doleful Story of our Saviour's Paſſion, and at the ſame Time reflect, that our Sins and Iniquities were, in a great Meaſure, the Occaſion of it, without a deep and ſincere *Remorſe?* Can we think, that we contributed to his Agonies and Griefs, that the malicious *Jews* [c] and barbarous Soldiers were only the *Inſtruments* of Cruelty, but every ſinful Man, in Part, the *Cauſe* of what he ſuffered, and think it without aking Hearts, and a Multitude of ſelf-condemning Reproaches? Can we behold our dear Lord's Temples pierced with *Thorns*, his holy Face beſmeared with *Blood*, his Body torn with *Scourges*, nailed to the Croſs, hanging there in *Convulſions*, thirſting, fainting, bleeding, dying, in Pity to us; and yet ſuffer ourſelves to be fond of thoſe Luſts, which injured, diſgraced, tormented, and ſlew our beſt Friend, and moſt generous Benefactor? Surely, if Men have any Gratitude, if any Bowels, this Proſpect, livelily repreſented to their Minds, muſt needs check their wildeſt *Career*, and reſtrain them from thoſe wicked Practices, which, we are told, do even now [d] *crucify afreſh the Son of God, and again expoſe him to open Shame.*

The Virtue of Patience and Reſignation learnt from hence.

[e] FORASMUCH *as Chriſt hath ſuffered for us in the Fleſh*, ſays the Apoſtle, *we muſt arm ourſelves likewiſe with the ſame Mind:* For, be the Troubles, we complain of, in *Number* never ſo many, be they in their *Kind* and *Meaſure* never ſo afflictive, they are *few*, in Proportion to that innumerable Train of Evils, which *Chriſt* went through; they are *light* and *trivial*, in Compariſon of that exceſſive Weight, which our Saviour bore. [f] Do we complain that others live in great Plenty and Affluence, while we are ſo oppreſſed with Poverty, that we want many of the Comforts, and perhaps ſome of the Neceſſaries of Life? But know we not the mean and low Condition [g] *of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that for our Sakes he became ſo poor*, as to have no Place *where to lay his Head?* Do we, at any Time, find our Actions miſrepreſented, and our Perſons treated with Scorn and Contempt? The ſame happened to our Lord and Saviour, who, though [h] *he went* conſtantly *about doing good*, was, by the Tongue of Malice, ſtiled a *Blaſphemer*, a *Sabbath-breaker*, a *Deceiver*, an *Incendiary*, a *Madman*, a *Demoniack*, and one [i] *who caſt out Devils by Beelzebub, the Prince of the Devils.* Are we touched to the Quick, when we are treated with Diſgrace, or do we cry out for Anguiſh, when we are afflicted with Pain? What Shame was ever like that, to which our Saviour was expoſed, when, beſides other notorious ill Uſage, he was poſtponed to a vile Thief and Murtherer, crucified between two Malefactors, and reviled as a greater Malefactor, than either of them? What Gout, what Stone, what Melancholy, could be ſo hard to bear, as the Tortures he underwent, the acute Pangs of his dolorous Crucifixion, and the cutting Sorrows, that wounded his Soul *even unto Death?* So far are our moſt ſenſible Afflictions

[y] John xv. 13. [z] Rom. v. 8. [a] *Scott's* Mediator. [b] *Stanhope's* Sermons on ſeveral Occaſions. [c] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II. [d] Heb. vi. 6. [e] 1 Pet. iv. 1. [f] *Smalridge's* Sermons. [g] 2 Cor. viii. 9. and Matth. viii. 20. [h] Acts x. 38. [i] Matth. xii. 24.

ſlictions ſhort of that, wherewith it pleaſed God to bruiſe this Son of his Love, in the Day of his *fierce Anger!* But, could we ſuppoſe them *equal*, yet does not this make a mighty Difference, and ought it not to compoſe our Spirits to Submiſſion, that his Obedience was an Act perfectly *free*, his Sufferings *choſen* for ours, and not his own Benefit? But we, alas! as *Creatures*, are entirely at the Mercy of our common Maſter and Maker; and, as *Sinners*, bound to acknowledge the Righteouſneſs of God in every Thing he ſends upon us: And [h] *doth a living Man complain for the Puniſhment of his Sins?* Can Impatience, and Diſcontent, and hard Accuſations of that *Providence*, which diſpoſes all Events, become one, who, in the Courſe of Juſtice, hath brought Miſery upon himſelf, by his own Fault? Can he murmur at what is laid upon a *Principal*, when ſo much more was laid upon a *Proxy*; eſpecially, when he remembers, [i] *that tho' no Chaſtening, for the preſent, be joyous, but grievous; nevertheleſs, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable Fruit of Righteouſneſs unto them, that are exerciſed thereby?* Inſtead of fretting, and being uneaſy, and diſcontented then, the proper Reflection for a Man in ſuch Circumſtances is, [k] *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him.* "My Saviour, who had done no Sin, ſuf-
"fered chearfully the ſevereſt Diſpleaſure of his Father, on Account of my Sins
"imputed to him, and ſhall not I patiently bear the Chaſtiſement of God for my
"own Sins, whereby I have juſtly provoked his Wrath, and have deſerved all thoſe
"Torments, which infinite Juſtice can inflict, and from which nothing leſs, than
"the infinite Satisfaction made by *Chriſt*, could have delivered me?".

[l] THUS may we be able to learn the difficult Leſſon of ſubmitting to God's Will in all his Diſpenſations, if we do but duly attend to the Example of *Chriſt*; we may, [m] *with Patience run the Race, that is ſet before us*, if, when we find ourſelves weary, and ready to faint, we re-invigorate our Spirits, by [n] *looking unto Jeſus, the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, who, for the Joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the Shame, and is ſet down at the Right-Hand of God*; remembering always, that, whatever our Condition of Life be, [o] *we are not to live to ourſelves, but to him that died for us*; for [p] *we are not our own, but are bought with a Price*, and therefore *muſt glorify God in our Body, and in our Spirits, which are God's.*

The Caſe of the penitent Thief.

DURING the Time of our Saviour's Crucifixion, the *Evangeliſt* informs us, that two *Malefactors, one on his Right-Hand, and the other on his Left*, were put to the ſame Kind of Death; that *one railed on him*, while the other, reproving his Companion, declared his Innocence, and profeſſed his Belief of his *Divinity*, and Reliance on him for Salvation; [q] *Lord, remember me, when thou comeſt into thy Kingdom:* A Declaration ſo full of Faith and Integrity, that our Saviour accepts it with this gracious Promiſe, *To-day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* Paradiſe is allowed, on all Hands, to be the Place, into which pious Souls, when ſeparated from the Body, are immediately admitted: From whence ſome have inferred, that ſince, in all Probability, this Thief began his Repentance on the Croſs, and yet was received into *Paradiſe*, they too may be received into the Arms of God's Mercy, be their Repentance never ſo late. But, to ſhew the Precariouſneſs and Danger of this Suppoſition, we ſhall, 1ſt, State the Caſe of this penitent Thief on the Croſs; and then, 2dly, Obſerve, what is the proper Uſe, that any Chriſtian may be allowed to make of it.

I. [r] Now, in examining any of the ſurpriſing and unuſual Acts of Divine Mercy, we muſt always be ſure to bring this *Rule* along with us, *viz.* That Almighty God, in the Inſtances of Love and Compaſſion, is perfectly void of all that *Biaſs* of Humour, and Paſſion, and partial Fondneſs, which oftentimes are a *Blemiſh* to the Proceedings of *eaſy* and good-natured Men; that he conſtantly acts with ſuch *Steadineſs*, as becomes infinite Goodneſs, regulated, and duly tempered with infinite Wiſdom, and infinite Juſtice; and, conſequently, that all his Dealings are ſtrictly agreeable to Equity and Reaſon, though we cannot enter into the Grounds of them; that, as he is the *Searcher of all Hearts*, he has a diſtinct Knowledge of Mens Intentions and Qualifications, and from theſe is induced (whenever he does ſo) to make a Difference in Favour of ſome above others; and that the Worth and Efficacy of ſuch Qualifications is not always to be meaſured by the *Length of Time*, or by the Number of Acts produced by them, becauſe it may ſo happen, that a very *few*,

[h] Lament. iii. 39. [i] Heb. xii. 11. [k] Micah vii. 9. [l] *Smalridge*'s Sermons.
[m] Heb. xii. 1. [n] Ibid. *ver.* 2. [o] 2 Cor. v. 15. [p] 1 Cor. vi. 20. [q] Luke xxiii. 42, 43. [r] *Stanhope*'s Sermons on ſeveral Occaſions.

few, or but *one single* Inſtance may be ſo circumſtantiated, as to give Teſtimony of a Man's Sincerity and Zeal, equivalent to a *Multitude* of others. From theſe Things thus premiſed, it plainly appears, that, in order to a right Underſtanding, and a fair Application of the Example now before us, we muſt enquire a little into the good Diſpoſitions of the *Penitent* upon the Croſs, ſuch as we may preſume recommended him to Mercy: And of theſe we may obſerve in him,

His willing Diſpoſition,

I. A GREAT *Ingenuity* of Temper, and Readineſs of Mind to embrace the Faith of *Chriſt*, as ſoon as ſufficient Means of Conviction were afforded him. 'Tis highly probable, that this Man had never known any Thing of *Jeſus* before, otherwiſe, than by *common Fame*; nay, according to [t] the Conjecture of ſome, he was prepoſſeſſed againſt him, as an *Impoſtor*, and joined with his Companion in reviling him at firſt. The greater then was his Virtue, to overcome theſe Prejudices ſo ſoon, and to ſuffer the Meekneſs and Patience, the Charity and Piety of our Lord's miraculous Death, to diſabuſe him. This is ſo far from making him a *late Penitent*, that it gives him the Glory of an *early Convert*; one, whoſe Heart was open to the firſt Impreſſion of Grace, and wanted not ſo much the *Inclination*, as the *Opportunity* of being brought over to the Truth before. And, what is yet more for his Commendation, we may obſerve in him,

and ſtrong Faith.

2. A MOST noble and *vigorous Faith*, ſuch as confeſſed our Lord in his loweſt, moſt afflicted, and ignominious Condition: [t] 'When his hardened Companion reviled him; when his Enemies mocked, and inſulted over him; when one of his Diſciples had betrayed him, another had denied him, and all of them had forſook him: *Such*, as acknowledged him to be the Son of God, and the Lord of Life, when he was hanging on the Croſs, ſuffering the Pangs of Death, and ſeemingly deſerted by his Father: *Such*, as publiſhed his Innocence in the Face of triumphant Malice, and, through the thickeſt Cloud of Shame and Sufferings, that ever intercepted the Glories of the Son of God, diſcovered his Divine Power, and placed his Hope in a *ſpiritual* Kingdom, which *Fleſh and Blood* and human Reaſon could never have diſcovered; a Kingdom, which no Eye, but the Eye of Faith, could have ever perceived; and which even they, who had enjoyed the Advantage of three Years Inſtruction and Converſation, never yet perfectly underſtood, and now utterly deſpaired of. This was a *Confeſſion* ſo reſolute, ſo ſingular, ſo illuſtrious, that no *Preacher*, no *Apoſtle*, no *Martyr* ever came up to the heightening Commendations of it; none gave ſo ample a Teſtimony to the bleſſed *Jeſus*, becauſe none had this peculiar Excellence, of giving it under ſo many diſadvantageous and diſcouraging Circumſtances.'

No Encouragement to a late Repentance.

II. [u] AND now, with what Colour of Reaſon, can any late and *Death-bed* Penitent pretend to draw this Example into a *Precedent*, for his own Support and Advantage? What Affinity, what Shadow of Reſemblance is there between a *Man*, ſubmitting to the firſt Impreſſion, and *one*, who hath wilfully hardened his Heart againſt all the Methods of Inſtruction and Amendment? Between a *Man*, accepting Offers, as ſoon as they were made, and *one*, who hath refuſed Salvation, and ſtopped his Ears againſt the moſt affectionate Importunities? We ſhould be exceedingly blind, and corrupt Advocates for Sin, to bring this unexpected Honour, paid to our Saviour, in his loweſt and moſt deſerted Eſtate, to the wretched *Level* of thoſe Men, who, notwithſtanding his *Reſurrection* from the Dead, and *Exaltation* to Glory, notwithſtanding the *Conqueſt* made by his Goſpel, and the *Infamy* of denying him, continue ſtill to injure and affront, to deſpiſe and defy him, in his moſt proſperous and triumphant Condition.

The proper Uſe to be made of it.

IN a Word, no Chriſtian, who hath lived under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, can, at the End of his Days, plead the ſame ready *Compliance* to the Calls of Grace; and no Man whatever can have an *Opportunity* of exerting the ſame noble Faith; becauſe *Chriſt* could die but once, and 'twas his Shame and Suffering only, that could have made this penitent Thief's Confeſſion ſo peculiarly glorious. If then we are allowed to make any Uſe, or draw Conſolations from this Example, they muſt be no more than theſe —— That it ſupports Men with an Inſtance of a great and grievous *Malefactor*, received into Grace, juſt at his leaving the World, and thereupon teaches us, that no Impurities of Life, though never ſo *foul*, no Crimes, though never ſo *black*, though never ſo numerous, ſhut us out from Mercy, provided we ſincerely repent; that the Grace of God can recover Wretches, even when they are

[t] St *Chryſoſtome*, and St *Jerome*. [t] *Whitby*'s Annotations on *Luke* xxiii. [u] Chryſoſt. Tom. V. Orat. VII.

are at the *laſt Gaſp*, and juſt dropping into everlaſting Torments: But, as to *actual* Repentance itſelf, and ſuch Grace being extended to thoſe (when they come to Death's Door) who have been profligate and habitual Sinners all their Days) the moſt that can be inferred from hence is, that ſuch a Thing *may be*; but it gives us no Manner of Security, nor ſo much as one poſſible Argument, that it certainly *ſhall be*. The Concluſion of the Whole is, *Repentance*, when true, is never too late, and therefore the Thief upon the Croſs is a ſovereign *Antidote* againſt *Deſpair*: But Men may outſtay the Day of Grace; they may not go about this Work, 'till it be too late, 'till they have loſt both the *Will* and the *Power* to repent; and therefore this Example, when truly conſidered, is an excellent *Preſervative* likewiſe againſt *Preſumption*.

SECT. IV.

Of CHRIST's *Burial, and Deſcent into Hell.*

IT [x] is very obſervable, that the *Evangeliſts* are not more circumſtantial in any Particular, relating to our bleſſed Saviour, than in that Part, which concerns his *Burial*; and this ſeems to be done, not ſo much for the Sake of any Conſequence there is in the Action conſidered apart by itſelf, as for the Service it does to the Proof of the Truth of his *preceding* Death, and the Reality of his *ſubſequent* Reſurrection: For which Reaſon, I ſuppoſe, it is, that St *Paul* mentions our Saviour's *Burial*, as a Point, which, among other *Articles* of Religion, he did uſe to preach and inculcate, as a Matter of Faith: [y] *I delivered to you, firſt of all, that which I alſo received, that Chriſt died for our Sins, and that he was alſo buried.* But before we come to treat of that, conſidering *Chriſt* in a State of the Dead, and his Body ſeparated from his human Soul, the Queſtion may ariſe, "Whether, during that Separation, the Divine "Nature was ſtill united, in any particular Manner, to his Body?"

Whether Chriſt's Divinity was united to his dead Body.

THAT the two Natures of *Chriſt* did ſtill continue united after his Death, is evident from the Teſtimony of the holy Scriptures, wherein the ſame individual Perſon, *Chriſt*, is ſaid to be crucified, dead, and buried; that *Chriſt*'s Divine Nature was *conjoined* to his human Soul, after its Separation from the Body, is clear from the Promiſe he makes the penitent Thief, *This Day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*; and that there was ſuch a *general Union* of the Divine Nature with Chriſt's dead Body, as that, whereby he *ſupports* and *conſerves* all other Creatures, is not to be queſtioned; but that there was the ſame *particular Union* of his Divinity with his Body in the Grave, as when it was alive, is not allowed by ſome, for this Reaſon; "[z] That ſup-"poſing the Divinity united, after a ſpecial indiſſoluble Manner, to the Fleſh of "*Chriſt*, it muſt have been united after a Manner more powerful, with Reſpect to "all the Functions of Life, than that, whereby an human Soul is united to an "human Body: And if it be the Union of the Soul that prevents the Death of the "Body, much more would the Death of it be prevented by any ſpecial Union of the "Divine Nature, unleſs we can ſuppoſe ſuch an Union of it, as has no Manner of Ef-"fect or Operation; which in a Divine *Principle* is hardly within the Compaſs of Sup-"poſition." It is no eaſy Matter to imagine then, according to theſe Mens Sentiments, how *Chriſt*'s Body could ever have died, and been laid in the Grave, if his Divinity had, at that Time, any *vital* Communication with it: Nor is it leſs difficult to conceive, [a] *ſay others*, why the Divinity ſhould not ſtill continue, even after Death, united to both Body and Soul, ſince no Power has any Force againſt *Omnipotence*, nor can any *finite Agent* work an Alteration in that Union. A Separation there was made indeed between *Chriſt*'s Soul and Body, but no Diſunion of them with his Deity: For though *Chriſt* was more than Man, yet it is not to be ſuppoſed, that he died any more, than Man can die; and therefore, though his Soul and Body were diſjoined from one another, yet were they not diſjoined from him, who took them both together; [b] but, by Virtue of that remaining Conjunction, were rather

 united

[x] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II. Divinity, Vol. I. [a] *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [y] 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. [z] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. To whoſe Opinion St *Auſtin* [*Trac. in John* 47, 48,] and *Greg. Nyſſen.* [*Orat.* i. *de Reſur.*] ſeem to accede. [b] Tam velox incorruptæ Carnis vivificatio fuit, ut major ibi eſſet ſoporis ſimilitudo, quam mortis; quoniam Deitas, quæ ab utrâque ſuſcepti hominis ſubſtantiâ non receſſit, quod poteſtate diviſit, poteſtate conjunxit. *Leo, Serm. de Reſurr.*

united again after their Separation. In this Manner Men have argued on both Sides, but on which the Presumption of Truth lies, it is not so easy to determine. The Question is abstruse in itself; but perhaps it may be of Use to reconcile the contending Parties, to remind them of the ancient Notion of the Godhead's being *quiescent*, and not exerting its Power and Efficacy in such Instances, where the Humanity is known to have suffered. In this Manner it confessedly withdrew at his Death; and, by Parity of Reason, might continue its *Quiescence* during the whole Space of his Interment, and until its Power and Operation were necessary, in order to effect his Resurrection. But this we suggest but as a probable Expedient; and so proceed to consider in what Manner the two separated Parts of our Lord's Humanity were disposed of. And,

The Circumstances of Christ's Burial.

1. To take Notice of some Circumstances, relating to the *Burial* of his Body. His Body, as we said, was now upon the Cross, submitted to the Custom of the *Roman* Laws, which ordered such as were crucified, to hang upon the *Gibbet*, exposed to all the Injuries of Weather, and a Prey for ravenous Beasts, and Fowls of the Air. The *Jewish* Institution, however, did not allow of this Severity to the Dead: It required, that [c] *the Bodies of such, as were hanged up, should not remain all Night*, but be buried on the Day of their Execution: And therefore, in Obedience to the Command, as well as in Respect to the Sanctity of the Day approaching, the *Jews* themselves besought *Pilate*, that his Body, together with those of the *Malefactors*, might be taken away: But, it being a farther Custom among the *Jews* to bury their Malefactors in some *publick* and ignominious Place, our Saviour's Body must have undergone the same Fate, had not *Joseph* of *Arimathea*, [d] *a rich Man, and honourable Counsellor, i. e.* a Member of the *Jewish Sanhedrim*, (that very Assembly of Chief Priests and Rulers, which laid wait for *Jesus*, which charged him with Blasphemy, which used him with so much Cruelty and Contempt) applied himself to the *Governor*, in whose Disposal were the Bodies of Persons executed, and begged it of him, that he might rescue it from the contemptuous Usage of common Malefactors; and, by the Help of [e] *Nicodemus*, another *Ruler of the Jews*, who contributed a great Quantity of *Spices* and *Ointments* towards its embalming, (as the Custom of the *Jews* was) might give him an honourable Interment, [f] *in a new Sepulchre, wherein never Man was laid, and which he had hewn out of a Rock, for his own Tomb.*

[g] By many Passages in the *Old Testament*, the *Jews* appeared to have been, in all Ages, extremely sollicitous concerning the Place of their *Burial*, and to esteem it a Curse *not to sleep with their Fathers*; (as we often find it phrased) *i. e.* not to lie among those of their own Race and Family. The Care of *Abraham*, [h] in buying a Field for this Purpose from the Children of *Heth*, seems to have proceeded from a Desire, that the Bodies of those, who worshipped the one true God, might not be mingled with *Idolaters*. As the *Jewish* People increased, they not only distinguished themselves from other Nations, but even from one another, in their Burying-Places; insomuch, that every Family of Distinction, purchasing some Piece of Ground near their respective Cities, (for within the Cities none might be buried) and making it convenient for the Purpose, had *Sepulchres* appropriated to themselves. Such was the Tomb of *Joseph* in a Garden, and here he deposited the Body of *Jesus*, where he designed to lay his own, and theirs, whom Nature and Affection had made dearest to him: A Mark of his great Veneration for our Lord, and, at the same Time, an Evidence of the Reality of his Death. For, since *Joseph* was his Disciple, and his Friend, he would not have treated the Body of one (whom he honoured, and loved) in such a Manner, as must needs have destroyed all Remains of Life, had there been any in it: Nay, a strong Confirmation of the Truth of his Resurrection too; for, since it was *a new Tomb, in which no Man had lain before*, [i] if any one rose from it, it must be our Lord; since it was a Tomb *hewn out of a Rock*, there could be no digging through it, to convey *Christ*'s Body away; and lastly, since its Enterance was shut up with a [k] *large Stone*, fastened *with a Seal*, and watched *by a strong Guard* of Soldiers, the *Centry*, to be sure, would not suffer the Body to be conveyed out by *this*, or the Nature of the Place, by *any other* Way. And therefore we are told, that a Divine Power burst all these Bars asunder; that an Earthquake and an Angel rolled away the Stone, by an Operation so amazing, that the *Keepers*

[c] Deut. xxi. 23. [d] Matth. xxvii. 57. [e] John iii. 1. and xix. 39. [f] Matth. xxvii. 60. [g] *Stanhope*, on the Epistles and Gospels, Vol. II. [h] Gen. xxiii. [i] *Whitby's* Annotations on Matth. xxvii. 60. [k] Ibid. *ver.* 60.

Keepers could not withſtand, could not ſuſtain it: For they became [l] *as dead Men, trembling for Fear, and running affrighted into the City, to tell what was done*; as we ſhall have Occaſion to take Notice of by and by.

An Inference from thence concerning our own Burials.

IN the mean Time, the Deſcription of the Perſons, who interred *Chriſt*, and the Enumeration of Qualities and Virtues, as well as the Account of the Spices and Ointments expended at his Burial, have been thought a ſufficient Reaſon and Encouragement for the careful and decent *Sepulture* of Chriſtians. [m] For, as natural Reaſon will inſtruct us to give ſome Reſpect to the Body, though dead, becauſe an human Soul once inhabited it; ſo much more will it teach us, that a greater Care and Reſpect is due to the Bodies of *Chriſtians*, which once entertained a more glorious Inhabitant, and were *living Temples of the Holy Ghoſt*: [n] *Thoſe Bodies*, which were conſecrated to the Service of God, which bore their Part in the Duties of Religion, and *fought the good Fight of Faith* and Patience, of Self-denial and Mortification, for the Sake of Piety and Virtue: *Thoſe Bodies* which we own ſtill to be under the Care of Divine Providence, which ſhall one Day be *faſhioned like unto Chriſt's glorious Body*, and made Partakers of the ſame Happineſs with their immortal Souls, as once they were of their Sufferings, and good Works: *Thoſe Bodies*, in fine, which, as Members of *Chriſt*, are already, in him, their Repreſentative, exalted to the Throne of God on high. Theſe Conſiderations prevailed with the *Primitive* Chriſtians, to bury their Dead with much *Solemnity*; to commit them to the Ground with *Prayers* for their *Reſtitution*; with *Praiſes* of the Virtues, they had exerciſed, while living; and with ample *Recommendations* of their good Example, to the Imitation of thoſe that ſurvived. And this they might do with the greater Chearfulneſs, conſidering, that *Chriſt*, by his own Vouchſafement to be buried, hath changed our Graves, from Seats of Rottenneſs and Corruption, into *Beds* and *Chambers* of Reſt; where, after his Example, we retire and lie down for a while; but, having taken a ſhort Repoſe, are ſure to be awakened again, and to riſe up, more freſh than from our Beds, to Life, to Vigour, and Immortality.

Chriſt's Deſcent *into* Hell.

2. THE Royal Pſalmiſt, as he is [o] cited by St *Peter*, ſpeaking of our bleſſed Lord, has theſe remarkable Words; [p] *I have ſet God always before me; for he is on my Right-Hand, therefore I ſhall not fall; wherefore mine Heart was glad, and my Glory rejoiced, my Fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in Hope: For, why, thou ſhalt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither ſhalt thou ſuffer thine holy One to ſee Corruption.* From which Concluſion, not only the Reſurrection of our Saviour's Body, but that famous *Article* of our Chriſtian Faith, his Paſſage, or *Deſcent into Hell*, may, in this Manner, be fairly deduced, "[q] If the Soul of *Chriſt* was not *left in Hell* at his Reſurrection, then was "his Soul in Hell before his Reſurrection: But it was not there before his Death; "therefore, *upon*, or *after* his Death, and before his Reſurrection, the Soul of "*Chriſt* deſcended into Hell. For as his *Fleſh* did *not ſee Corruption*, by Virtue of "this Promiſe or Prediction, and yet it was in the Grave, the Place of Corruption, "where it reſted *in Hope*, until his Reſurrection; ſo his Soul, which *was not left in* "*Hell*, by Virtue of the like Promiſe or Prediction, was in that Hell, (where it was "not left) until the Time, that it was to be united to the Body, in order to ac-"compliſh its Reſurrection."

The different Senſes of it.

SOME by the Word *Hell* underſtand no more than the *Grave*, and ſo [r] make the *Deſcent* of *Chriſt* to import the ſame with his *Burial*. But this, in a *Summary* of Faith, would be very improper, to have a redundant Repetition of the ſame Thing, by an Expreſſion much more *obſcure* and perplexed, than that which it is deſigned to illuſtrate. Others, by *Hell*, underſtand no more than a *State of Death*, and that *Chriſt's Deſcent*, conſequently, denotes no more, than his Stay or Continuance in that State: But, beſides [s] that the *original* Word is always thought to ſignify not a *State*, but a *Place*, this again would be a needleſs Repetition of the ſame Senſe, and highly incongruous in a ſhort Form of Belief. Some *modern* Authors have thought,

[l] Matth. xxviii. 4. [m] *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [n] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II.
[o] Acts ii. 25. [p] Pſal. xvi. 9, &c. [q] *Pearſon*, ibid.
[r] This Expoſition has a double Advantage, *viz.* that *Ruffinus*, who firſt mentioned *Chriſt's Deſcent* in the Creed, did interpret it of his Burial, and where this *Article* was expreſſed, there that of the Burial was omitted. But, notwithſtanding theſe Advantages, there is no Certainty of this Interpretation. 1. Becauſe *Ruffinus*, who thus firſt interprets it, acknowledges, at the ſame Time, the *Deſcent of the Soul of Chriſt into Hell*; and thoſe other Creeds, which did likewiſe omit the *Burial*, and expreſs the *Deſcent*, did ſhew, that, by the Deſcent, they underſtood, not that of the Body, but that of the Soul. 2. Becauſe the *Roman* Creed, having added the *Deſcent*, in Contradiſtinction to the *Burial* of Chriſt, and expreſſed that *Deſcent* by Words of a ſtronger Import, it cannot but be ſuppoſed, that the Creed, as it now ſtands, ſhould ſignify ſome other Object of our Belief, beſides that of his *Burial*. *Pearſon*, ibid. [s] *Pearſon*, ibid.

thought, that, in a *figurative* Senſe, the Word [t] might well enough import thoſe *infernal Pains* due to Sinners, which *Chriſt* ſuffered upon the Croſs; and that therefore he might, in a large Way of Expreſſion, be ſaid *to deſcend into Hell.* [u] But, beſides that the Word is not to be found in any other Place of Scripture, nor among any of the ancient Fathers, in this Senſe; the Pains, which our Saviour felt, were *antecedent* to his Death, Part of them in the Garden, Part on the Croſs, but all before he commended his Spirit into the Hands of his Father, and gave up the Ghoſt. And though, without all Controverſy, they were very *ſevere*, and heavy to be borne, yet it is incongruous to ſuppoſe, that they were of the ſame Kind or Degree, with what the Wicked ſuffer in Hell. * For *there* is a *Worm*, that never dies, which could not lodge in his innocent Spirit; there is a *Fire*, which feeds upon them, and is never to be extinguiſhed, but could not ſeize upon his righteous Soul; the Damned are under a conſtant Apprehenſion of God's everlaſting Diſpleaſure, and under an utter Impoſſibility of ever obtaining Favour, which could not affect him, who was never at Variance with the *Almighty*; who looked upon the Reward, that was ſet before him; knew the Beginning and End of his Sufferings; and was, all along, conſcious, [x] *that the Pleaſure of the Lord was proſpering in his Hand*, who, in due Time, *would ſee of the Travel of his Soul, and be ſatisfied.*

[y] SOME of the ancient Fathers took the Word in its *literal* Signification, for the *Seat of the Damned*; and, accordingly, were of Opinion, that the Soul of *Chriſt*, when ſeparated from his Body, went down into thoſe *lower* Parts, which are the proper and peculiar Habitations of Devils, and deviliſh Spirits, either to triumph over Satan, or to [z] *preach to the Spirits in Priſon*, or to releaſe ſome Souls, and carry them along with him into Glory. But, [a] beſides that the Days, which follow after Death, were never made for Opportunities to a better Life, and human Souls were never caſt into infernal Torments in order to be releaſed, and delivered from them; the Triumph of *Chriſt* over *Principalities and Powers* is aſcribed, [b] by St *Paul*, to his Croſs: It was the Effect and Reſult of his Death; and therefore leaves no Reaſon for his going down to *preach* unto them, who, dying in Diſobedience, and being in Torments for their Sins, could, in no Senſe, be proper Objects of ſuch a Diſpenſation. [c] The Phraſe therefore of *preaching to the Spirits in Priſon*, though confeſſedly *abſtruſe*, muſt certainly refer to ſome other Thing, and may well enough bear this Signification—— "That Jeſus Chriſt, after he was returned to Life again, "did, by the Spirit of God, which he communicated to his Apoſtles, preach his "Doctrine to the *Gentiles*, who were ſhut up in Idolatry, as People in a Priſon:" For, of what Uſe, what Advantage would it have been, to preach *the glad Tidings of the Goſpel* to Perſons under an irreverſible Doom? [d] The *rich Man*, whom we find in this Condition, deſired that one might be ſent *from the Dead*, to preach to his Brethren, then alive, leſt they alſo ſhould come into that Place of Torment; but we find no Hopes he had, that any ſhould come from them, who were alive, to preach to him; for, if the Living, who heard not *Moſes* and the Prophets, would not be perſuaded, *though one roſe from the Dead*, ſurely thoſe, who had been diſobedient to *Moſes* and the Prophets, could never have been perſuaded, after they were dead.

The moſt probable Senſe.

ONCE more, by *Hell* may be meant [e] that unſeen Place, to which departed Souls are carried, after their Separation from the Body. For though the *Greek* Word [ᾅδης]

[t] Si ad inferos deſcendiſſe dicitur, nihil mirum eſt, quum eam mortem pertulerit, quæ ſceleratis ab irato Deo infligitur. *Calv. Inſtit. Lib. ii. c.* 16. [u] *Burnet*, on the Articles. * *Pearſon*, on the Creed.
[x] Iſa. liii. 10, 11. [y] *Athanaſius*, *Epiphanius*, *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, *Origen*, and ſome other *Greek* Fathers.
[z] 1 Pet, iii. 19. [a] *Pearſon*, ibid. [b] Col. ii. 15. [c] It muſt not be concealed however, that, in the fourth Year of *Edward* the VIth, this Article was received with this Explication; "That the Body of Chriſt lay "in the Grave until his Reſurrection, but his Spirit, which he *gave up*, was with the Spirits, which were detained in Priſon, and *preached to them*, as the Place of St *Peter* teſtifieth:" But in the *Synod*, ten Years after, in the Days of Queen *Elizabeth*, the Articles, which continue ſtill in Force, deliver the ſame Deſcent, but without any the leaſt Explication, or Reference to any particular Place of Scripture, in theſe Words: *As Chriſt died for us, and was buried, ſo alſo it is to be believed, that he went down into Hell.* *Pearſon*, ibid. [d] *Pearſon*, ibid.

[e] Though we have nothing in our modern *Engliſh*, nor, by what I could ever underſtand, in any other of the preſent *European* Tongues, to expreſs the Word ᾅδης by; yet, in the old *Engliſh* Dialect, the Word *Hell* came up to its Signification, *viz.* "That of an inviſible Place, wherein all ſeparated Souls, whether good or bad, were received "and contained." For it is derived from the old *Saxon* Word *Hel*, which ſignifies to *hide*, or from the Participle thereof *Helled*, which is *hidden*, or *covered*, as in the *weſtern* Parts of *England*, at this very Day, to *Hele* over any Thing, ſignifies, among the common People, to *cover* it; and he that covereth an Houſe with Tile or Slate, is called an *Hellier*. From whence it appears, that the Word *Hell*, according to its primitive Notion, anſwers exactly to the *Greek* Word ᾅδης; ſo called *quaſi* ἀϊδὴς τόπος, becauſe it is an *unſeen Place*, removed from the Sight and View of the Living; and very fitly ſo called, becauſe of our Uncertainty of the Places, where departed Souls go, and of their *Inviſibility* to us. Lord *King's* Critical Hiſtory of the Apoſtles Creed.

[ᾅδης] ſo rendered, does now commonly ſignify the *Place of the Damned*, and, for ſome Ages, has been ſo underſtood; yet that, both among [f] *Greek*, [g] *Latin*, [h] *Jewiſh*, and [i] *Chriſtian* Authors, it was uſed *indifferently* for the *general Receptacle* of all departed Souls, whether good or bad, needs no large or curious Proof; [k] ſince the leaſt Peruſer of their Writings muſt, without doubt, have obſerved this to have been their general Opinion; —— That, as, upon the Death of all Men, whether juſt or unjuſt, their Bodies were committed to the Grave; ſo their Souls were *tranſlated* into *Hell*, or a Place appointed for their Reception; which *Tranſlation*, in Compliance to the common Form of Speech, is called a *Deſcent*, becauſe it was the generally received Opinion, that the *Manſions* of departed Souls were *under* the Earth, or in the *Bowels* of it: An Opinion, which might probably receive ſome Confirmation from our Saviour's Words, that are generally applied to his Soul, during its Separation from the Body; [l] *as* Jonas *was three Days and three Nights in the Whale's Belly, ſo ſhould the Son of Man be three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth.*

2. If this Interpretation (which ſeems to be the beſt, as grounded upon [m] the general Opinion of the Church, and the moſt natural Expoſition of the Propheſy of the *Pſalmiſt*) be admitted, then will the Meaning of our Lord's *Deſcent into Hell* be no other than this; "That his Soul, being ſeparated from his Body, did, by a real "Tranſition, and local Motion, go into the inviſible Region of Spirits, where, ac- "cording to the Laws of Death, it remained, among other pious and religious "Souls, till the Reſurrection of his Body." [n] Hereby our Lord ſubmitted to the Condition of a *dead* Man, as well as of a *living*; for, as his Body was laid in the Grave, as ordinarily the Bodies of dead Men are; ſo his Soul was conveyed into ſuch Receptacles, as the Souls of other Perſons uſed to be: For, ſince he [o] *became our High-Prieſt*, to redeem and ſave us, it *behoved him, in all Things, to be made like unto us, Sin only excepted.* [p] Hereby he performed a principal and neceſſary Part of his Humiliation; for, though his Soul was, as the Souls of all good Men are, in a Place of Bliſs and Happineſs; yet, ſo long as they continue in their State of *Separation*, they are ſuffering under the Effects of Sin, and have the Mark of God's Diſpleaſure on them, the Want of their Bodies, from which they ſhall not be delivered until the Reſurrection-Day. Hereby he *ſanctified* and ſweetened the State of our Separation; to abate its Dread and Terror, and to make it more comfortable to us, in that our *Head* and Saviour endured it before: And hereby he gave an Earneſt and Aſſurance to all his Followers, that, as himſelf looſed the Bands of Death, [q] *becauſe it was impoſſible for him to be holden of it*; ſo, at the appointed Time for their Reſurrection, their Souls ſhall be reſcued by his *Almighty* Power, and, in a joyful

The Ends of Chriſt's Death,

[f] Thus *Homer*, in the *eleventh* Book of his *Odyſſey*, brings in *Ulyſſes*, giving an Account of his Deſcent into *Hades*, or *Hell*, which he repreſents as the common Place of Souls ſeparated from the Body, and where he met with ſeveral of his own Acquaintance, and others, of whom he had heard both a good and a bad Character.

[g] Thus *Virgil*, in Imitation of *Homer*, makes his Hero *Æneas* go down to *Hell*, or the Habitation of departed Souls, where he ſaw, not only the proud *Giants*, who attempted to pull *Jupiter* from Heaven, and many other great and abominable Sinners, in the moſt inconceivable and tremendous Torments, but a Multitude of worthy Souls, recreating themſelves amidſt a full Confluence of every Thing, that could make them happy.

——— Pulcherrima Proles,
Magnanimi Heroes, nati melioribus Annis. Æn. VI.

[h] From the *Jews*, and the Books of the *Old Teſtament*, (as St *Ambroſe* [*de bono mortis*] affirms) the *Pagans* ſtole the Notion of the State of departed Souls, and he wiſhes, that they had not mingled other ſuperſtitious and unprofitable Conceits therewith, but would have been contented with that ſingle Opinion, ——— That Souls, delivered from their Bodies, go to *Hades*, or Hell, *i. e.* a Place not ſeen, called by the *Latins*, *Infernum*. And therefore, the modern *Jews* (as we are told by the learned *Huetius*, in his Notes upon the Commentaries of *Origen*) diſtinguiſh between the *ſuperior* Paradiſe or Heaven, which is prepared for the glorified Souls, and Bodies of the Saints, after the Day of Reſurrection; and the *inferior* Paradiſe, which is uſually called by them, the *Garden of Eden*, and appointed to be the Habitation of holy Souls, during the Time of their Separation from their Bodies.

[i] That the Primitive Chriſtians were of the ſame Opinion with the *Heathen*, and *Jews*, in this Particular, accounting *Hell* the common Receptacle of all departed Souls, we have the Teſtimony of *Irenæus*, who, in this Manner, relates the Order of the Reſurrection and Glorification of all Chriſtians,—That, upon the Diſunion of their two eſſential Parts by Death, their Souls ſhall go to *Hell*, or to an inviſible Place, appointed them by God, where they ſhall tarry, till the Reſurrection, in a continued Expectation of it: After which, receiving their Bodies, and riſing perfectly, they ſhall come into the Preſence of God. And not much unlike to this is that, which *Juſtin Martyr* [*Dial. cum Tryphone*] affirms, ——— That all Souls did not die, but that thoſe of the godly remained in a better Place, and thoſe of the ungodly in a worſe, expecting the Day of Judgment. *King*'s Critical Hiſtory of the Apoſtles Creed.

[k] *King*, ibid. [l] Matth. xii. 40. [m] The learned Biſhop *Pearſon* has proved this to be the general Opinion of the Church, by a copious Introduction of the Teſtimonies of thoſe ancient Writers, who lived ſucceſſively, and wrote in ſeveral Ages, and delivered this Expoſition in ſuch expreſs Terms, as are not capable of any other Interpretation. *On the Creed*, *p.* 262. [n] *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [o] Heb. ii. 17.

[p] *King*, ibid. [q] Acts ii. 24.

Re-union with their Bodies, tranſlated together into *heavenly* Places, have their *perfect Conſummation and Bliſs.*

and Uſes of it. [r] THERE is no Notion, under which we contemplate Death with more Fear and *Reluctance*, than as it is *an Enterance upon a new and unknown State of Life.* The Scene, we conceive, upon our Diſſolution, muſt needs be ſurpriſing: What Company we ſhall find, what Company we ſhall make, when we ſtep into the World of Spirits, we cannot tell; and it even confounds and amazes us, to think of going out of our Bodies, we know not whither. Now, it may be of ſome Uſe, I hope, to allay the *Immoderation* of any ſuch Fear, to conſider, that though *it be appointed for all Men once to die,* [s] yet we are only to go to that Place, where our Saviour hath been before us, hath ſecured our Paſſage, and will preſerve us in Safety, until the *Reſtitution of all Things*; that we are not to travel in a *Path*, that is dark and deſolate, and through which none of our Friends have paſſed before, but ſhall go in the ſame, which our dear Redeemer has viſited, and in which his Diſciples, and all good Men, in all Ages before us, have followed; and that we are to arrive at a Place, where Patriarchs, Prophets, Martyrs, and the Spirits of all juſt Men, waiting for their Lord's Return from Heaven, and the Glories of their own Reſurrection, pleaſe themſelves with the Memory of a *well-ſpent Life*, which gives them Aſſurance of a joyful Eternity; where Enjoyments ſhall be commenſurate to our Faculties; every Thing, that can give Pleaſure to our ſeparate Souls, ſet before them; and every Pleaſure and Joy of this Kind continually augmented with a ſure and certain Expectation of greater Joys to come. When therefore our Souls are *ſhivering* upon the Brink of Eternity, and ready to take their *Flight* into the inviſible World of Spirits, here is a Proſpect, (if preſented duly to the Eye of *Faith*) that will overcome the Reluctance of Nature, and make us, [t] with St *Paul*, *deſire to depart.* The Hope that is ſet before us *on the farther Shore*, founded upon the Conſciouſneſs of an holy and religious Life *on this*, will allay the Terrors of our Paſſage, make us with Chearfulneſs reſign our laſt Breath, and therewith [u] *commit the Keeping of our Souls to God*, as into the Hands *of a faithful Creator.*

[r] *Sherlock*, on Death. [s] *Boyſe*, on the Articles. [t] Phil. i. 23. [u] 1 Pet. iv. 19.

CHAP. III.

Of CHRIST's *Exaltation.*

Chriſt's *Reſurrection.* HITHERTO we have beheld our Mediator and Redeemer in the low Eſtate of his *Humanity*, through the ſeveral Steps of his *Humiliation*, Home to the laſt and moſt abaſing Inſtance of it, *viz.* the *Separation* of his Soul and Body by Death, and the Detention of one in the *Manſions* of departed Souls, and of the other in the Grave. [a] His *Exaltation* follows next; and that *Sun of Righteouſneſs*, which ſet in ſo much Obſcurity, ariſes now with Light and Splendor: For, the *Earth* being not able to detain his Body, nor *Hell*, his Soul, they both, after a determinate Time, are re-united, and conſtitute the ſame compleat Man and Perſon, that he was before. This I take to be the true Notion of a proper Reſurrection: And becauſe our *Saviour*'s Reſurrection is the *great* and *fundamental Article* of the *Chriſtian* Religion, that, which himſelf appeals to, and that, whereon we lay the main Streſs of his Divine Miſſion and Authority, it may not be improper,

I. To evince the Truth and Certainty of it by ſuch Arguments as the Nature of the Thing requires; and then,

II. To obſerve in what Manner, and for what Purpoſes it was effected.

I. [b] Now,

[a] *King*'s Hiſtory.

The Nature of its Proof.

I. [b] NOW, our *Saviour's* Reſurrection being a *Matter of Fact*, which happened ſo many hundred Years ago, it cannot be ſuppoſed, either that the *Teſtimony* of Senſe, or ſtrict and proper *Demonſtration* (as Demonſtration is underſtood by *Logicians* and *Mathematicians*) ſhould be produced in Confirmation of its Truth. All that can be expected in this Caſe is *moral Evidence*, and moral Evidence is what, upon the Principles of Reaſon, we are bound to aſſent to. For, ſince one great Uſe of Reaſon is to examine and aſſent to Truth, when the *Arguments*, or *Objections*, which are *for* or *againſt* any *moral* Truth, being both impartially weighed and conſidered, our Reaſon does not only more powerfully perſuade us to the Truth of the Thing propoſed, than the Objections can poſſibly diſſuade us from it, but alſo produces a Kind of *pleaſing Tranquillity* and Satisfaction in our Minds, when we acquieſce in it, and, on the contrary, cannot diſſent from it, without Reluctancy, and oppoſing the univerſal Opinion of Mankind; if we ſhut our Eyes againſt ſo clear a Light, and refuſe our Aſſent, becauſe the Thing is not capable of a ſtrict Demonſtration, we ſin againſt the Law of Reaſon in our Minds, and endeavour to depoſe that *ſovereign Faculty*, which God has made a Judge and Ruler over us. Now, ſince a great Part of moral Evidence conſiſts in the Teſtimony of others, there are ſome infallible Rules, whereby we may be *morally* certain of the Truth of all ſuch Matters of Facts, as are recommended to us by ſuch Teſtimony; and theſe may be reduced to three:

The Conditions of a proper Teſtimony.

1. A SUFFICIENT Number of *credible* Witneſſes.

2. A MORAL Aſſurance, that they could not have offered to impoſe a Falſhood upon us, without being detected. And,

3. A TACIT, or expreſs Acknowledgment of Enemies, that they do teſtify the Truth.

1. [c] WHEN therefore a *great Number* of Men, of unqueſtioned *Virtue* and *Probity*, unanimouſly agree to teſtify a Thing to be true, which they *ſaw* with their own Eyes; when they declare it in the moſt publick and ſolemn Manner, and appeal to God for the Truth and Veracity of what they ſay; when they aſſert Things which are *contrary* to the Prejudice of their Education, and the known Laws of worldly Intereſt; when they *expoſe* themſelves to ſuch Sufferings, in Support of their Teſtimony, as Fleſh and Blood would carefully avoid; and when the Religion, which they endeavour to prove and recommend by it, expreſſly condemns all *Lyars* to everlaſting Puniſhments in the World to come; it is evident, that ſuch a Teſtimony is ſo *circumſtantiated*, as to give us a very good *moral* Security of the Truth of that Action.

2. [d] WHEN a few *deſpiſed* and *illiterate* Men ſet themſelves up as Witneſſes of a ſurpriſing Event, in Oppoſition to a *wiſe* and *powerful* Nation, and even a whole World of *inquiſitive* Men; when the Account, they give, is of ſo *great Importance* to Mankind, that their eternal Happineſs or Miſery are to depend upon their believing or denying the Truth of it; when all the Precautions, which human Wiſdom or Malice could deviſe, have been made uſe of to diſcover and find out the Fraud, if any ſuch had been uſed, or, if true, to hinder the Belief of it; but when, notwithſtanding all the Oppoſition, which the *Learning*, and *Wiſdom*, and *Power* of this World could make againſt it, the Fact was believed by the beſt and wiſeſt Part of Mankind then living, who, after the moſt diligent Search and Inquiry, could find no *Flaw* or *Defect* in it; it is plain to a Demonſtration, that the Thing was ſo, as it is repreſented to be, and ſucceeding Ages can have no Manner of Pretence for the leaſt Doubt or Scruple about it.

3. [e] ONCE more, when two Parties of Men ſtand in the higheſt Degree of Oppoſition to each other, and the one aſſerts and publiſhes a *Matter of Fact*, which is abſolutely deſtructive of the Intereſt of the other; when the one openly and publickly *accuſes* the other of Injuſtice, Cruelty, and Murther, naming the Time, the Place, the Manner, and other Circumſtances of its being committed; and the Party *accuſed* does not as publickly *refute* the Charge, or do ſomething in their own Vindication, more material than *bribing* falſe Witneſſes, to ſtifle the Story, or *threatening* their Accuſers, if they pretend to perſiſt in it; they then tacitly acknowledge the Truth of what the *accuſing* Party alledge againſt them; and ſo, by Conſequence, give up the Cauſe. And now to apply theſe Obſervations to the Teſtimony of the Apoſtles concerning the Reſurrection of our Saviour *Chriſt*.

1. THAT

[b] *Ditton*, on the Reſurrection of *Chriſt*. [c] *Cotes*'s Sermons. [d] *Cotes*, ibid. [e] *Ditton*, ibid.

Applied to the Apoſtles.

1. THAT the Apoſtles were Men of Truth and Probity, void of Ambition and Self-deſign, uniform in their Teſtimony, and unable to deviſe an *Impoſture*, is what we had Occaſion to prove [f], when their Characters and Qualifications fell under Conſideration before: And, [g] though the Number of Perſons, who are the Witneſſes of a Matter of Fact, abſtracted from all other Conſiderations, is not, *of itſelf*, abſolutely convincing and concluſive; yet it carries this Perſuaſion along with it, that, though an *Impoſture* may lie concealed for a while in a few Hands, it is next to impoſſible, that it ſhould lie undiſcovered in a great many. Now, to what a Number of Witneſſes our *Saviour* appeared after his Reſurrection, the Apoſtle to the *Corinthians* has given us this Enumeration: [h] *I delivered unto you, firſt of all,* ſays he, *that which I alſo received, how that Chriſt died for our Sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he roſe again the third Day, according to the Scriptures; and that he was ſeen of Cephas* [i], *then of the Twelve* [k], *after that, he was ſeen of above five hundred* [l] *Brethren at once, of whom the greater Part remain at preſent: Beſides this, he was ſeen of James* [m], *then of the Apoſtles* [n]. *And, laſt of all, he was ſeen of me* [o], *as of one born out of due Time.*

A ſufficient Number of Witneſſes.

Had proper Opportunities.

HERE is a competent Number of Witneſſes; and that they had ſufficient *Means* and *Opportunities* to know, and to be informed of the Truth, of what they reported to the World, is undeniable. They converſed with him *familiarly*, though not perpetually, for *forty Days*; they *eat* and *drank* with him; they ſaw him do many wonderous Works, and received *Orders* and *Inſtructions* from him about the Inſtitution and Government of his *Church:* They declare that, to convince them of the Truth of his Reſurrection, he ſhewed them *his Hands*, and *his Feet*, and, to *one*, more incredulous than the reſt, he indulged the Liberty of feeling the very *Prints*, that the Nails had made in them; that he *upbraided them with Unbelief*, in not giving *Credence* to a Matter ſo well atteſted; ſhewed them the Reaſons of his Reſurrection, and expounded the Scriptures to them concerning this very *Article*, with ſo peculiar an *Energy*, that they felt their Hearts ſet on Fire, even when they did not perceive that it was he. In ſhort, they declare that, at his Departure, he bleſſed them, and comforted them, and took his Leave of them; and that, after they had received his laſt Commands and Directions, they ſaw him actually taken up from them, and aſcend into Heaven. Here was no Room for any *Dream* or Deception. Men could never fancy, that they ſaw a Perſon, for ſo many Weeks together; that he

[f] See page 39. [g] *Ditton*, on the Reſurrection of *Chriſt*. [h] 1 Cor. xv. 3, *&c.*

[i] St *Paul* takes no Notice here of *Chriſt*'s firſt Appearance to the *devout Women*, who brought Spices and Ointments to the Sepulchre, *Mary Magdalene*, and *Joanna*, and *Mary*, the Mother of *James*, and other Women, (as we have it in *Luke* xxiv. 10.) The Reaſon of which ſeems to be this, —— That theſe Women, being not to be Witneſſes of their Saviour's Reſurrection to the World, but only to carry the firſt News of it to his Apoſtles; this Appearance, in Conſideration of their Piety and Affection to him, was only for the private Confirmation of their Faith, and therefore not particularly taken Notice of by St *Paul*, among the publick Evidences of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection. *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. III.

[k] The College of Apoſtles, becauſe their Number was *twelve* by our Saviour's Inſtitution, are moſt frequently called *the Twelve*, though, at ſome Meetings, ſome one, or more of them might chance to be abſent. By the Miſcarriage of *Judas*, there was a ſhort Interruption, from the Time of our Saviour's Apprehenſion to his Aſcenſion, and then they are called *the Eleven*; and are called ſo [*Mark* xvi. 14.] though *Thomas*, one of the *Eleven*, was abſent. And indeed in this Text of St *Paul*, both St *Ambroſe*, and the vulgar Tranſlation, which certainly follows a very ancient Copy, inſtead of *Twelve*, render it *Eleven*. *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. III.

[l] This was the moſt ſolemn Appearance of all, mentioned *Matthew* xxviii. 10. and *John* xxi. 1. But then there is this Difficulty concerning the Greatneſs of this Number, *viz.* that, at our Saviour's Aſcenſion from Mount *Olivet*, the *Number of the Names together was but an hundred and twenty*, whereas, at this Meeting, they are computed *five Hundred*; and yet we can hardly conceive, that any of the Number, who had ſeen him after his Reſurrection, had revolted from him. Now, for the clear Solution of this, it is to be conſidered, that the great Meeting of *five Hundred* was in *Galilee*, the Place of our Saviour's Reſidence, and moſt conſtant Preaching, and where, very probably, the Number of his Diſciples was greateſt; for which Reaſon he might appoint that Place for their general Meeting: After which, the Apoſtles, who went thither by our Lord's Appointment, together with others, who accompanied them from *Jeruſalem*, returned back, but his Followers, who lived in *Galilee*, remained there. So that there might very well be *five Hundred* at the Meeting in *Galilee*, and but an *Hundred and twenty* at *Jeruſalem*. *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. III.

[m] This particular Appearance to St *James*, the Brother of our Lord, is no where mentioned in the Evangeliſts. St *Paul* probably had it from the common Tradition, mentioned by St *Jerom*, out of the *Hebrew* Goſpel of the *Nazarenes*, in which are ſeveral Paſſages, omitted by St *Matthew*; and this for one, "That our Lord, "immediately after he had riſen, went and appeared to *James:* For *James* had vowed, that Hour that he drank of "the *Cup of the Lord* (*viz.* in the Sacrament) he would not eat Bread, until he ſaw him riſen from the Dead. The "Lord, when he appeared to him, ſaid, Bring hither Bread and a Table; and he took the Bread, and bleſſed it, "and brake it, and gave it to *James* the *Juſt*, and ſaid to him, *My Brother, eat thy Bread*; for the Son of Man *is* "*riſen from among them that ſleep.*"

[n] *i. e.* By *Thomas*, as well as the reſt, as this was the ſecond Appearance to the Apoſtles together, whereof St *Luke* gives us an Account, Chap. xxiv. 5. and St. *John*, Chap. xx. 19. [o] This he ſpeaks of our Lord's Appearance to him, in his Way to *Damaſcus*, whereby he was in a very powerful and extraordinary Manner, on a ſudden, converted to *Chriſtianity*. *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. III.

[p] *Ditton*, on the Reſurrection of *Chriſt*.

he eat and drank in their Preſence; that he argued and expounded the Scriptures to them; convinced them of ſeveral Errors and Miſtakes; gave them Promiſes, Rules, and Inſtructions for their own Comfort, and the Government of a Church; and, after all, went up into Heaven in their Sight, whilſt Angels ſtood by, and told them, [q] *that he, who was taken up into Heaven, ſhould come in like Manner again, as they had ſeen him go into Heaven:* This, I ſay, could not be a Dream or Deception of their own, and therefore if their Teſtimony was falſe, it muſt have proceeded from a malevolent Deſign to *abuſe* Mankind with a *downright Forgery.*

Could not impoſe a Fraud without Detection.

2. BUT now, ſuppoſing them *wicked* enough to engage in ſo villainous a Deſign, yet where would they have had *Abilities* to execute it? [r] They were not bred up in *Courts*, or engaged in ſuch a Way of Living, wherein the Arts and *Intrigues* of the World were either taught or practiſed; they were no Men of polite Converſation, that, by the Helps of Philoſophy, and Elegance of Speech, were able to *inſinuate* a Fondneſs, and raiſe an Eſteem of themſelves in the reſt of Mankind; but their *Diſcourſes* were *plain* and *homely*, as well as their Education and Condition in the World ſuch, as could neither prompt their Ambition, nor qualify them for great *Attempts:* They were, in ſhort, poor, *illiterate Fiſhermen*, and therefore not in much Likelihood to entertain ſo great a Thought, as putting an *Impoſture* upon the whole World. But, admitting they had *Cunning* and Courage enough to ſet about it, yet how could they poſſibly promiſe themſelves *Succeſs*, when the profeſſed Enemies of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection had ſo many urgent and weighty Reaſons to induce them to uſe their utmoſt Efforts to prove it falſe; when they had as much Time and Opportunity, as they could deſire, in order to diſcover the *Impoſture*; and had Power in their Hands to enable them to examine ſuch Perſons and Things, as might conduce to the *Diſcovery?* Nay, put the Caſe, that they were ſo *ſubtle*, as to contrive, and ſo *fortunate*, as to conceal the Impoſture; yet ſtill we are to conſider them as *Men*, and conſequently, of the ſame Paſſions and Deſires with other Men; and being ſo, [s] that they ſhould relinquiſh all the darling Pleaſures, Profits, and Accommodations of Life, and voluntarily expoſe themſelves to Scorn, to Tortures, to Perſecutions, and even Death itſelf, only to propagate a *Story*, which they themſelves knew to be a *Lye*, and that an abſurd, inſipid, incredible Lye, (if a Lye at all) is a Thing natural, and *morally* impoſſible.

'Tis abſurd to believe they could.

THE Truth is, [t] he, who can believe, that, without any Kind of human Means, or the Divine Aſſiſtance, they could impoſe upon all Mankind, in an Affair of the higheſt Importance to them; that ſo notorious an Impoſture could encounter, vanquiſh, and triumph over Truth, in ſpite of all the Oppoſition, which Heaven and Earth could make againſt it; that Perſons, otherwiſe ſtrictly *blameleſs* in their Lives, and rigidly *virtuous*, ſhould ſo zealouſly labour to maintain a Lye, and freely expoſe themſelves to the Fury of Earth, and Flames of Hell, for the ſake of it; that they ſhould ſacrifice their Lives and Souls themſelves to the *Ghoſt* of a crucified and reputed *Malefactor*; and, laſtly, that God, who is Truth itſelf, ſhould, by enabling them to perform *miraculous* Works, give *authentic* Teſtimony to Error and Falſhood. He, I ſay, who denies the Reſurrection, and can believe ſuch Abſurdities as theſe, refuſes his Aſſent to the *beſt-atteſted* Fact in the World, and yields it to another, which, of all *Legends*, is the moſt unlikely and improbable. For (to continue the Thread of theſe *Abſurdities*) [u] he *muſt believe, that Men*, otherwiſe ſtrict in their Lives and Converſations, whom we find appealing to their *Proſelytes*, how holily, how juſtly, how uprightly they had behaved themſelves among them, ſhould nevertheleſs, againſt the cleareſt Dictates of Conſcience, be guilty of ſuch an enormous Villainy as this *Impoſture* implies: *That Men*, who, in all their Speeches and Actions, ſeemed to aim at nothing ſo much, as the Advancement of God's Glory, and the Promotion of Goodneſs, ſhould, in their Hearts, defy God, and deteſt all Goodneſs, as they needs muſt do, if they were wilful *Cheats*; and *that Men*, who, both in their Writings, and in the Succeſs of their Attempt, ſhewed no Want of Wiſdom, ſhould drive on a vain and ſenſeleſs Project, and, with more unwearied Induſtry, labour to maintain and diſperſe a Lye, than any Men beſides did ever employ for the Confirmation of the greateſt Truth. [x] *He muſt believe*, that a deſpicable Company of wilful Impoſtors, of an hated Nation and Religion, without Learning or Diſcipline, without Skill or Experience, without any of the Arts of pleaſing, or recommending themſelves to Mankind, ſhould run down all the Wit, and Power, and

[q] Acts i. 11.
[r] *Ditton*, on the Reſurrection of *Chriſt*.
[s] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. V.
[t] *Cotes*'s Sermons.
[u] *Whitby*'s General Preface, Vol. I.
[x] *Ditton*, ibid.

Policy of the World, and, preaching an incredible, and ſeemingly ridiculous Doctrine, directly contrary to all the worldly Intereſt and Humours of Men, to their Religion and Cuſtoms, and to their Reaſon and Philoſophy too, ſhould be able to propagate the Belief of it *far and wide through the Earth.* Nay *he muſt believe*, that a few rude untaught *Mechanicks* were not only able, without any Sort of Aſſiſtance, to compaſs that vaſt Deſign of making the World ſtoop to the Laws, which they impoſed; but alſo that they laid their *Plot* ſo deep, that the Effect of it was permanent and laſting; ſo very *deep*, that none of all the penetrating and inquiſitive *Heads* in the World, for a Succeſſion of ſo many Centuries, and after the deepeſt Reſearches and Examinations, ſhould find it poſſible to diſcover the leaſt Fault or Flaw in the Contrivance. *He muſt believe*, that theſe Men, cunning as they were, had nevertheleſs diveſted themſelves of all the Principles of Self-Love and Tenderneſs, of Care and Regard to their own Preſervation; that they deſpiſed all the Comforts and Enjoyments of Life; that they ventured upon Poverty and Miſery, upon Shame and Obloquy, upon Perſecution and Torments, upon Death and Damnation itſelf in the next World, and all for nothing, for no End or Purpoſe, that can be imagined or thought on; but bid Defiance to all that human Nature dreads and ſhuns, without having any Deſign in View, or any Grounds and Reaſons for what they did. And, laſtly, *he muſt believe*, that theſe Cheats and Impoſtors, as vile and wicked, as ſilly and ſenſeleſs as they were, did, notwithſtanding, furniſh Mankind with the moſt exact *Syſtem* of Morality that ever was, and taught ſuch Rules of Living, as were never to be expected from all the Schools of Philoſophy: That *they*, whoſe Purpoſe it was to *abuſe* the World, laid the ſureſt Foundations of Peace and Happineſs; *they*, who were notorious *Hypocrites*, took indefatigable Pains to make other Men *upright* and ſincere; *they*, who themſelves believed nothing of a God, did impart the moſt rational and becoming Notions of him to the reſt of Mankind; and by no other Principles, but thoſe of pure *Atheiſm* and Irreligion, kindled a *Flame* of Deſire in the Hearts of Men to ſerve and obey, to worſhip and adore him. But theſe are *Abſurdities* too groſs to be ſwallowed; and yet every one, who diſbelieves the *Veracity* of the Apoſtles aſſerting our Lord's Reſurrection, muſt, in Conſequence, believe all this.

The Apoſtles far from being credulous.

[y] MEN indeed are often very poſitive in Things, that afterwards prove falſe, and might have been detected ſooner, had they but had either Judgment or Patience to examine them more ſtrictly; eſpecially too, if there be any Intereſt depending; for a great Step towards the believing a Thing to be true is the *wiſhing* it were ſo: But, in the Caſe now before us, the Diſciples were ſo far from being *over-eager*, that we may juſtly wonder, how they could poſſibly be ſo *backward* to believe, did we not know, that God, in his great Wiſdom, ſo ordered the Matter, that their *Incredulity* ſhould be our *Confirmation*. The Certainty of a Reſurrection in general our Lord had frequently foretold, and that [z] *all, who were in the Grave, ſhould* one Day *hear his Voice, and come forth.* The Neceſſity of his own Reſurrection, and the ſtated Time of it, he had expreſſly declared; and when he gave them Warning, at any Time, of his approaching Death, he never failed to ſupport them withal by an Aſſurance, that he would *riſe again the third Day*; and yet, notwithſtanding all theſe Warnings, [a] the Women who returned from the Sepulchre, and related their Viſion of Angels, were but indifferently received: [b] *Mary Magdalen*, who brought the News that ſhe had actually ſeen him, was not believed: The two Diſciples, who had a long Converſation with him, in their Way to a Village in the Country, met with no better Credit; nay, even when he appeared to the Apoſtles aſſembled together, [c] *they were terrified and affrighted, ſuppoſing that they had ſeen a Spirit:* When, to remove this Fear, he commanded them to handle him, and ſo ſatisfy themſelves, that he was no empty Apparition, they ſtill ſeem to be *amazed*, rather than *convinced*; and one carried his Cautiouſneſs to ſuch a Degree, that, without [d] *thruſting his Hand into his Side, which the Spear had pierced, and his Fingers into the Print of the Nails*, that faſtened him to the Croſs, he would not believe, and in this our Saviour gratified him. Now, when the Diſciples were ſo far from inclining to the Belief of our Saviour's Reſurrection, as to be rather obſtinately bent againſt it; when they would neither credit one another, nor their own ſelves, but cavilled at every freſh Inſtance, and raiſed new Scruples and new Difficulties perpetually; and yet,

[y] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II. [z] John v. 28, 29. [a] Luke xxiv. 11.
[b] Mark xvi. 10. [c] Luke xxiv. 37. [d] John xx. 25.

yet, when afterwards, these very Men were so firmly persuaded of this Matter, that they staked down their Lives in Attestation of it; these must needs be Considerations of great Weight to establish their Credit; they free them from all Imputations of *Easiness* and *Partiality*, since they proceeded so warily, and doubted every Circumstance, till their Conviction was full, and no Pretence left for their doubting any longer.

3. THERE is a further Consideration, not to be neglected in the Case now before us, and that is [e] the Testimony of others, as well as his Disciples, to confirm the Truth of our Saviour's Resurrection. The Soldiers, who watched at the Sepulchre, to secure his Body from the Hands of the Apostles; they, who felt the Earth trembling under them, who saw the Countenance of [f] *an Angel like Lightning*, and upon that Sight did *shake, and became as dead Men*; even some of these *came into the City, and shewed unto the Chief Priests all the Things that were done.* Nay, the very *Jews* themselves, by advancing so incredible a Story, as that of *his Disciples stealing him away*, do, in Effect, confess and corroborate a Truth, which they so very *weakly* endeavour to destroy. For can we imagine that the *Romans*, whose *military* Discipline was so exceedingly *strict*, should neglect their Post, upon so extraordinary an Emergency? Can we imagine that the great Stone, which lay at the Door of the Sepulchre, could be rolled away without any Noise or Disturbance? Or that a Company of Men should enter the Place, strip our Saviour of his Grave-Cloaths, take up his Body, and carry it away, (all which must require some considerable Time) and in the *Interim* not one of the *Watch* awake? But, supposing them *all asleep*, can we suppose that his poor dejected Disciples would ever undertake so bold an Attempt? Are not these the very Men, that, upon the first Assault in the Garden, all forsook him and fled? * They durst not stand by him even then, when he declared it in his Power to *call for twelve Legions of Angels* to his Rescue; and have they now the Confidence to come in a Body, and bear away his Corps? They had but *two Swords* among them all before, and he, who had the Courage to make Use of one of them, durst not afterwards so much as own any Knowledge of his Master? And is the Case now so mightily changed, that these poor, naked, and dispirited Creatures should attempt a Detachment of armed Men, whose Order and Business was to expect, and be provided for them? Is this a likely Thing, that they, who durst not so much as appear in Publick, but assembled themselves *privately*, and shut up their Doors, *for Fear of the* Jews, should, all on a sudden, grow valiant, or rather fool-hardy to this Degree, when he, in whom they trusted, was dead, and when the stoutest of them all trembled at the Voice of a *silly Maid*, and abjured him shamefully, while he was alive, to avoid the Danger of an inquisitive Tongue? These are Difficulties never to be got over; such as will never suffer any Man, who considers them, to believe that crude and idle Pretence, which the *Jews* made Use of, to disprove our Saviour's Resurrection; and these are such Arguments, as are commonly produced to *illustrate* the Account, which the Apostle gives us of this great Article of our Christian Faith; † *whom they slew, and hanged on a Tree, him God raised up the third Day, and shewed him openly, not to all the People, but unto Witnesses, chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him, after he rose from the Dead.*

The Testimony of Enemies.

" BUT if the Resurrection of *Christ* was so necessary to prove the Truth of his " Divine *Mission*, why was it not attested after such a Manner, as to leave no pos- " sible Room for Doubt and Scruple concerning the Certainty of it? Why did not " he, [g] instead of leaving his Persecutors and Crucifiers to be satisfied by the Testi- " mony of his Apostles, make an open and triumphant Entry into *Jerusalem*, after " he was risen; appear in the Temple, and every Place of publick Concourse, that " every Eye might see him, and every Heart receive full Conviction? *Herod* and " *Pilate*, *Annas* and *Caiaphas*, the Priests and Elders of the *Sanhedrim*, *&c.* had " been the *irrefragable* Witnesses of his Resurrection; and indeed more fit and cre- " dible, than the Apostles themselves, who were his Friends and Followers: For " who would not have been satisfied with the Testimony of his Enemies? Since " then this Way of convincing the World would have been most *effectual*, it seems " reasonable to suppose, that, had Jesus been Christ, and risen from the Dead, he " would, without Controversy, have made it his Option, but since we find he did " not,

An Objection,

[e] *Pearson*, on the Creed. [f] Matth. xxviii. 2, *&c.* * *Stanhope*, on the Epistles and Gospels, Vol. II.
† Acts x. 39, *&c.* [g] *Clagget*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

Answered. "not, we have some Reason to suspect him." Now, [h] though the Will and good Pleasure of God be a sufficient Reason to us for all his Actions, yet there is something peculiar in this Dispensation of his Resurrection, which made it not so proper for him to appear commonly, after he was risen from the Dead. For being now to act according to the *Majesty* of the *Divine* Nature, and not according to the *Infirmities* and Condescension of the *Human*, it did not so well comport with the Dignity he had assumed, to converse publickly, or to submit himself to the Censures and fresh Affronts of his Enemies. But suppose it had been consistent with his Honour and Dignity, yet [i] the unbelieving *Jews*, especially the *Chief Priests* and *Rulers*, were of all Men most unworthy, to whom God should afford so extraordinary a Way of Conviction. They had already despised the Evidence, that was given them; and not only so, but maliciously imputed the plainest Miracles, that ever were wrought, to the Power and Operation of the Devil. Now, if any Thing can render Men incapable of the Favour of farther Conviction, such a malicious Resistance of the Evidence, which our Saviour's Miracles carried along with them, would probably do it; especially if we consider, that the greatest of all the Miracles, which he wrought in his Life-time, (I mean the raising *Lazarus* from the Grave, after he had been dead four Days) was so far from convincing them, that, though they could not deny the Thing, yet from thence [k] they took Occasion to resolve to put him to Death. And therefore what Reason was there, that Christ should appear to them for their Conviction, who had conspired to compass his Death, even because they knew that he had raised one from the Dead?

Such a publick Appearance inconsistent with Christ's Honour.

What the Jews deserve not.

What would not have convinc'd them,

[l] HAD Christ, after he was risen, appeared so publickly to the *Jews*, as the Objection here requires, it is not to be questioned, but that they would have offered to lay violent Hands upon him, as they had before designed to kill *Lazarus*, and that for the same Reason. In which Case, had our Saviour *vanished out of their Sight* and Hands, (as doubtless he would) what would the *Jews* have concluded from hence, but that they had seen a *Ghost*, *a Spectre*, *or Apparition*? And what Conviction would that have wrought in them; but that their Senses had been imposed upon by some *magical* Illusion? And what Effect could this have had upon their Minds, towards bringing them to a Belief, that *Christ was truly risen*, and much less, that he was the *true Messiah*? None at all. Many of the *Jews* (among whom we may suppose the *Chief-Priests* and *Elders*, who hired the Soldiers to stifle the Belief of *Christ*'s Resurrection with a false Story of their own Invention) were given up to *Hardness of Heart*, and would not have believed, or, if they believed, would not have testified, that they had ever seen *Christ* after his Resurrection.

nor help the Cause of Christianity.

[m] THEY, that are wicked enough to deny what they believe, will, at a Pinch, deny also what they know to be true. Supposing then, that our Lord had shewed himself to all his Enemies, and to *all the People*, and but some of them, especially of the great Men in Authority, had denied that ever they saw him after his Resurrection, this would have exceedingly weakened the Testimony of those, that had vouched and confessed it. For he, that appeals to the Knowledge of another for the Truth of a Matter of Fact, is so far from gaining, that he loses Credit by the Appeal, if that other Person denies that he knows any Thing of it. If therefore our Lord had appeared to his Persecutors, (it being likely that his Disciples would have appealed to their Knowledge) his Persecutors, by protesting the contrary, would have made a terrible Advantage against the Christians upon that Appeal. So that the Wisdom of Christ Jesus, our Lord, in making Choice of particular Witnesses, *viz.* such Persons only, as would be so far from dissembling their own Knowledge, that they would always be ready to *seal* their Testimony with their Blood, is very conspicuous; inasmuch, as he hath settled the Christian Faith upon a better Foundation this Way, than if he had appeared in the Temple, or in the Midst of *Jerusalem*, to the whole People of the *Jews*. [n] It is not the *Number* of the Witnesses, but the *Character*, and Qualifications of the Persons, and the *Evidence* itself, in its full Force and Circumstances, which are chiefly to be regarded in Matters of this Nature. If but a few Men can, as the Apostles did, by undeniable Miracles, make it sufficiently appear, that what they can say is true, and that God himself confirms the Truth of it, they can appeal to every Man's own Senses, before whom they work

[h] *Jenkins*'s Reasonableness of the Christian Religion, Vol. II. [i] *Tillotson*'s Sermons, Vol. III. [k] John xi. 47, 53. [l] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. V. [m] *Clagget*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [n] *Jenkins*, ibid.

work Miracles, and make every one, that ſees them, a Witneſs to the Truth of their Doctrines. In this Caſe, God himſelf bears Witneſs to it, and what the High-Prieſt ſaid upon a very *different* one, every Stander-by finds himſelf conſtrained to declare, [p] *What Need have we of any farther Witneſſes? For we ourſelves have heard, out of their own Mouths,* (in the miraculous Gift of Tongues) or ſeen with our own Eyes the many wonderful Works, which were wrought, in the moſt publick Manner, in Teſtimony of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection.

The Subſtance of the Anſwer.

IF then it was not ſo conſiſtent with the Dignity of *Chriſt*, after his Reſurrection, to converſe *publickly*, and the *Jews*, leaſt of all, deſerved ſuch a Favour and Vouchſafement for their Conviction: If, in all Probability, they would not have been convinced by this Method; or, if convinced, would not have made open Declarations of what they knew to the World, but perhaps prejudiced the Cauſe of *Chriſt*, by an obſtinate Denial of it; the Caſe is plain, that in chuſing a ſmaller Number of *proper* Witneſſes, and in ſupporting them with *miraculous* Gifts, to aſſert the Truth of their Teſtimony, God provided better for the Manifeſtation of his Son's Reſurrection, as the firm Eſtabliſhment of his holy Religion, than if he had collected never ſo many of the greateſt, the wiſeſt, the ſubtileſt Heads in all *Judea*, for that Purpoſe; ſince the weaker and more contemptible the Inſtruments were, the more conſpicuous was the Power and Wiſdom of God, in bringing about an Event ſo ſtupendous. For herein is the Wiſdom of God magnified, when [q] *he chuſes the fooliſh Things of the World to confound the Wiſe*, and herein his Power made viſible, when he *chuſes the weak Things of the World to confound the Things that are mighty*. And ſo we proceed,

The Manner of Chriſt's Reſurrection.

II. TO obſerve in what Manner, and for what Purpoſes, this Reſurrection of *Chriſt* was effected. And here [r] it will be of no great Uſe to enquire, whether our Saviour's Body, from the Time of his Death to his Reſurrection, was kept in a compleat *Organization*, that ſo, by this Miracle, it might be preſerved in a natural State for his Soul to re-enter; or whether, by the Courſe of Nature, the vaſt Number of inward *Veſſels*, that are in the Body, were ſtopped, and, all on a ſudden, when the Time of the Reſurrection came, put into a *vital* State again, in order to be animated by his Soul: Either Way there muſt be a Miracle; though, in the former, the Words of the *Pſalmiſt* ſeem to be better anſwered, *thou wilt not ſuffer thy Holy One to ſee Corruption*. To as little Purpoſe is it to enquire, how our Saviour's new Body was ſupplied with Blood, ſince the greateſt Part of it was loſt upon the Croſs; whether, by the Power of God, it was brought back again into his Veins, or a Supply of *new* Blood made and injected by a Miracle: Or, to inquire, whether his Body, that was then in the Nature of a glorified Body, though yet on Earth, needed the *Supplies* of Blood, to furniſh new Spirits for the Service of the natural Functions. This in general is certain, that the ſame Soul returned back to the ſame Body, ſo that the ſame Man, who actually died, actually roſe again; that this was effected by a Divine Power, which Power was in himſelf; [s] *for as the firſt Man* Adam *was made a living Soul, ſo the laſt was made a quickening Spirit*; and, laſtly, that this was effected, [t] at a convenient Diſtance of Time; for *Chriſt* continued in

[p] Matth. xxvi. 65. [q] 1 Cor. i. 27. [r] *Burnet*, on the Articles. [s] 1 Cor. xv. 45.

[t] *Barrow*, on the Creed. Ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, *in the third Day*, ſays the Creed, and not after the third Day: For, as St *Auſtin* remarks, our Lord was not three whole Days in the Grave, but only the entire *ſecond* Day, and Part of the *firſt* and laſt. Now, according to the Language of the Scriptures, if Chriſt was ſlain, and roſe the third Day, the Day in which he died is *one*; and the Day on which he roſe is *another*; and, conſequently, there could be but one Day and two Nights between the Day of his Death and his Reſurrection, The ſame is to be obſerved in the Caſe of *Circumciſion*. The Male Child of eight Days old was to be circumciſed: In which eight Days, the Day, wherein the Child was born, was one, and that, wherein it was circumciſed, was another; and ſo, there was but ſix compleat Days between the Day of his Birth and the Day of his Circumciſion. If then it ſhould be aſked, how our Saviour could ſay of his own Reſurrection, that, *as* Jonas *was three Days and three Nights in the Whale's Belly, ſo ſhould the Son of Man be three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth*: There is nothing more uſual, we muſt know, both in the *Greek* and *Hebrew* Languages, than, by the common Figure *Synecdoche*, to uſe Part of the Day or Night to denote the *whole* Day or Night, as our learned *Pearſon* abundantly ſhews, where he produces *Leo the Great*, [*de Reſurrect. Domini, Ser.* 1.] giving this Reaſon for our Savjour's abbreviating the Time of his Interment; *Ne turbatos Diſcipulorum animos longa Mœſtitudo cruciaret, denunciatam tridui moram tam mirâ celeritate breviavit, ut dum ad integrum ſecundum diem pars primi noviſſima, & pars tertii prima, concurrit, & aliquantum temporis ſpatio decideret, & nihil dierum numero deperiret. Vid. Pearſon*, on Art. V. Though therefore Chriſt foretold, that he ſhould be *in the Heart of the Earth* three Days and three Nights; yet, if he was pleaſed to be there a ſhorter Time, it was no Violation of his Word, but rather is to be accounted a ſingular Kindneſs done to his Diſciples, that they might the ſooner be comforted and refreſhed by his Return to them. It is apparent from Scripture, that God hath ſhortened the Time of ſome Propheſies and Predictions, to comfort and encourage his People; nay, that this ſhall be true of the very Day of Judgment, and that, *for the Elect's Sake*, as our Saviour himſelf tells us; and therefore, if our Saviour roſe *ſooner*, than what the Words may ſeem to import, his Promiſe is certainly made good, nay *bettered* by this early Riſing: For, if a Friend acquaints me, that,

in his Grave ſo long, that all People might be certain he was really dead, beyond all Poſſibility of Recovery by natural Means; and he deferred his Reſurrection no longer, becauſe it was fitting, that, while Mens Memories were freſh, their Paſſions warm, and their Mouths open in Diſcourſe of his Death; while the Watch was ſet, and the Witneſſes preſent, and both Friends and Enemies attending the Event; it was then moſt fitting, I ſay, that he, who was *made of the Seed of* David, *according to the Fleſh*, ſhould *declare himſelf to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holineſs, by the Reſurrection from the Dead*: And this ſuggeſts one Purpoſe ſerved by this great Event, *viz.*

The Purpoſes of it. A Vindication of Chriſt's Perſon and Performances.

1. THE Vindication of the Dignity of our Saviour's Perſon, as well as the Efficacy of his Performances. [u] For, if the Meanneſs of his Birth and Parentage, the low Eſtate and Condition of his Life, and the bitter Sorrows and Diſgraces of his Death, ſhould breed any Suſpicion concerning the Man Chriſt Jeſus, whether he were indeed (as he pretended to be) the Son of God, the Saviour of Mankind, and the Judge of all the World; if ſuch homely Circumſtances, as attended him, I ſay, and ſuch ſad Accidents as befel his Perſon, ſhould, in the Eyes of thoſe, who look not beyond *outward Appearances*, tend to his Diſparagement; the wonderful Power and Favour of God, demonſtrated in his Reſurrection, not only wipes off this Diſgrace, but adds a freſh Luſtre and Glory to the Sacredneſs of his Perſon. For if God's yielding him to Death looked like a Diſregard, his raiſing him to Life again much more denotes a tender Relation and Affection to him; ſince *That* might proceed from different Grounds, but *This* can admit of no other Interpretation. [*] For if God raiſed him up from the Dead, who was condemned and put to Death for calling himſelf *the Son of God*, this is a Demonſtration, beyond all Contradiction, that he was in Reality what he pretended to be; unleſs we could ſuppoſe, (what is *mental* Blaſphemy to ſuppoſe) that God would countenance an *Impoſtor*, and ſet the *broad Seal* of Heaven to a Falſhood.

AND as the Reſurrection of *Chriſt* ſhews the great Worth and Divinity of his Perſon, ſo is it of great Service to confirm our Faith in the Efficacy of his Performances. [x] When Man had, by tranſgreſſing the Laws of his Maker, forfeited that Life, which was, at firſt, beſtowed upon him by the free Gift of God, and which he held upon the Tenure of his Obedience; *Chriſt* was pleaſed to lay down his own Life, in order to reſcue him from the Power and Dominion of Death. This was a Work of the laſt Conſequence to Mankind, [y] but wherein they could have no Satisfaction, ſo long as they ſaw Death (the known Wages of Sin) maintain its full Force and Power over him, who pretended to *conquer* it, and holding him, like an obnoxious Perſon, in Durance and Captivity. But now that they ſee their Saviour riſen, and the Price which he paid for their Redemption, declared by his Reſurrection, to be accepted by God; [z] ſince he hath acknowledged a full *Satisfaction* done to his Juſtice, by diſcharging their *Surety* from Priſon, [a] *who ſhall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that juſtifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea, rather that is riſen again.*

The Proof of the Truth of his Religion.

2. ANOTHER End and Uſe, ſerved in our Saviour's Reſurrection, is to prove and aſcertain the Truth and Divine Authority of his moſt holy Religion. [b] If Chriſt had not riſen from the Dead, but for ever been detained in the Grave, notwithſtanding all that might be urged from the Goodneſs of his Doctrine, the Innocence of his Life, and the Multitude of his Miracles, for the Proof of the Truth of Chriſtianity, (though very ſtrong and concluſive Proofs they be) I very much queſtion, whether it would have met with the ſame ready Entertainment in the World, that we find it has. His *Doctrine* might have been thought a *Compilation* from ancient *Syſtems*, and not beyond the Reach and Invention of other *Philoſophers*: His many *great Works* and Miracles might have been imputed to his Skill in *Magick*, or a Familiarity with the Devil: And the *Virtue* and Innocence of his Life accounted nothing more than a ſtale Trick and Artifice to impoſe upon the eaſy and credulous World. But now, when it appears, that this Jeſus, who taught this holy Religion, who did thoſe miraculous Works, and lived that virtuous Life, after he was put to a cruel Death,

that, after three Days are paſſed, he will beſtow ſuch a Favour upon me, and yet ſhall think fit to do it within a Day after his Promiſe; it would be unreaſonable to complain, that my Friend kept not his Word, when I had ſo much Reaſon to thank him for haſtening his Courteſy. The Similitude is very eaſy to be applied to the preſent Purpoſe. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

[u] *Barrow*, on the Creed. [*] *Cotes*'s Sermons. [x] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [y] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. III. [z] *Barrow*, ibid. [a] Rom. viii. 33, 34. [b] *Sharpe*'s Sermons.

Death, did riſe to Life again, and converſed upon Earth *for forty Days* together, and, after that, in the Preſence of many Spectators, did viſibly aſcend into Heaven; here is no Room left for any Suſpicion of this Nature, but all Pretences of Impoſture do perfectly vaniſh: Inſomuch, that, it is impoſſible for any Man to believe *Chriſt's Reſurrection*, and, at the ſame Time, harbour any Doubt of the Truth of his *Religion*.

FOR let us thus reaſon. *Chriſt* over and over again told his Apoſtles, [a] that he ſhould be put to Death; but that, within three Days, he would riſe again: Nay, this he told, not only to his Diſciples, but to all the People; and [b] gave it as a Token, whereby they might know, and be convinced, whether he was (what he pretended to be) the Son of God, and that *Great Prophet*, which was to come into the World: Nay, he gave it as the *laſt* and greateſt Evidence, he had to give; and ſuch, as if it failed of convincing them, they were to expect no other from his Hands. Our Saviour now laying ſuch a *Streſs* upon this Point of his Reſurrection, and putting his *whole Cauſe* (as it were) upon this Iſſue, I aſk, how is it poſſible to imagine, that God Almighty ſhould make theſe Predictions of his good, if he was not really what he pretended to be?

IF *Chriſt* had been an *Impoſtor*, it had been the eaſieſt Matter in the World to have ſtifled all his Pretences for ever. It had but been to have let him mouldered away to Duſt in his Grave, as all other Men do, and as he, without the Help of *Omnipotence*, would have done; and then all the World would have ſeen that he was a *Deceiver*. But now, when, inſtead of periſhing in the Grave, he was, after three Days, reſtored to Life again, as he had foretold the People; what are we to conclude from hence? Did not God, in this, appear with a Witneſs as a Voucher and Approver of his Cauſe? Was not this a Demonſtration to all the World, that *Jeſus Chriſt* was no *Deceiver*, but that he *came from God*, and that whatever he delivered, was the Truth of God, and to be received as the *Oracles of God*? Certainly it was. For that any Man ſhould be raiſed from the Dead, by any other Power, than the Power of God, all the World knows to be impoſſible: But then, to ſuppoſe, that God ſhould employ his Power to give Teſtimony to a *Falſhood*, is ſuch a Thing, as no Man, who has any Notion of the ſacred Attributes of God, and thinks it inconſiſtent with his Faithfulneſs and Truth to lay an invincible Temptation and Snare before all Mankind to believe an impious Lye, can poſſibly imagine.

THUS the Reſurrection of *Chriſt* reſolves itſelf into God's *Veracity*, and may very juſtly be eſteemed the *Baſis* and Foundation, on which the whole *Fabrick* of our Religion ſtands, the Sum and Abridgment of the *Chriſtian* Faith, and the one Thing neceſſary to be believed by us in order to our Salvation; for [c] *if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy Mouth*, ſays the Apoſtle, *the Lord Jeſus, and believe with thine Heart, that God hath raiſed him from the Dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved.*

3. ANOTHER Deſign of our Saviour's Reſurrection was to confirm our Faith and Hope, by giving us a certain Pledge of *our own*. [f] The Reſurrection of any one Man proves a Reſurrection to be poſſible; but the Reſurrection of *Jeſus Chriſt* proves the Reſurrection of all Men to be infallible. For *Chriſt* did affirm of himſelf, that he would raiſe the Dead; and, in Proof of the Truth of that Aſſertion, he raiſed himſelf from the Dead: There cannot therefore remain any Room to doubt, whether he can make good that Promiſe to us, after he hath already accompliſhed, in his own Perſon, what he hath promiſed to fulfil in *ours*. Hath he raiſed up his own Body out of the Grave, and ſhall he not raiſe up ours alſo? Hath he effected what is more difficult, and can he want Ability to do what is far eaſier? Were there no Mention made in Scripture of his raiſing the Dead; were the Exerciſe of this Act of *Omnipotence* no where in direct Terms aſcribed to him; yet, ſince whatever Powers belong to the Father, do alſo belong to the Son, we might, from the *Identity* of the Father and Son both in Attributes and Operations, ſafely infer the Efficacy of the Son, in raiſing the Dead: But now, when the Scriptures affirm, that [g] *as the Father raiſeth up the Dead, and quickeneth them, ſo the Son of Man quickeneth* and raiſeth *whom he will*; when they exhibit him as the common Repreſentative of Mankind, and thereupon declare, that [h] *as in Adam all die, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive*; when they ſtile him [i] *the Head of the Body, the Church*, and *the*

A Pledge of our own Reſurrection.

[a] Matth. xvi. 21. John xvi. 16. [b] John ii. 19. [c] Matth. xii. 39, 40. [d] *Cotes's* Sermons. [e] Rom. x. 9. [f] *Smalridge's* Sermons. [g] John v. 21. [h] 1 Cor. xv. 22. [i] Col. i. 18.

the Firſt-Born from the Dead; and thereupon give us Aſſurance, that we, who are his *Members*, are to follow; and that ſince [k] *our Life is hid with him in God, when he, who is our Life, ſhall appear, then ſhall we alſo appear with him*; and laſtly, when they call him [l] *the Firſt-Fruits of them that ſleep*, in Alluſion to a Cuſtom among the *Jews*, where a little Quantity of Corn, be it but a *Sheaf*, or Handful, conſecrated, *i. e.* offered to God, as the Firſt-Fruits of the Year, derived a Bleſſing upon the reſt, and was the Earneſt of a compleat Harveſt: When theſe, and ſuch-like Alluſions and Compariſons, theſe, and ſuch-like Declarations and Promiſes, do everywhere meet us in Scripture, we have all the Aſſurance imaginable, that the Reſurrection of our Saviour is a certain *Pledge* of the Reſurrection of all Mankind; that *his* is the firſt and leading Step toward that univerſal Triumph over Death and the Grave, which *ours*, in due Time, will compleat; and that, [m] *if the Spirit of him, who raiſed up Jeſus from the Dead, dwelleth in us, he, that raiſed up Jeſus from the Dead, will alſo quicken our mortal Bodies,* [n] *that they may be made like unto his glorious Body, according to the mighty Working, whereby he is able to ſubdue all Things to himſelf.* And therefore [o] *bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who, according to his abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the Dead, to an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for us.*

An Obligation to Virtue and Godlineſs.

4. ANOTHER Deſign of our Saviour's Reſurrection is, to lay *Chriſtians* under a ſtrong Obligation to *Virtue* and *Holineſs:* For this we may obſerve, that the Writers of the New Teſtament do all along deliver the Doctrine of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection, as a *practical* Doctrine, and make it an *Emblem* of our *ſpiritual* riſing from the Grave of Sin. [p] Their Manner of arguing is thus: —— "If *Chriſt* was crucified for our "Sins, then ought we to crucify them in our Members; and if *Chriſt* roſe again the "third Day, then are we engaged, in Conformity to him, to riſe again to *Newneſs* "*of Life*, and to lead a ſpiritual, divine, and heavenly Life, ſuch a Life as he now "lives with God." The Apoſtle to the *Romans*, in a very appoſite and elegant Similitude, taken from the Form of *Baptiſm*, has taught us this Uſe of our Saviour's Reſurrection: [q] *We are buried*, ſays he, *with Chriſt by Baptiſm into Death, that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in Newneſs of Life. For, if we have been planted together in the Likeneſs of his Death, we ſhall be alſo in the Likeneſs of his Reſurrection:* And therefore *reckon ye yourſelves to be dead indeed unto Sin, but alive unto God, through Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord.* And, indeed, if we conſider the Nature of the Thing itſelf, nothing can ſupply us with more powerful *Motives* to live well, than the Contemplation of our Lord's Reſurrection. [r] For, when we reflect upon the full *Satisfaction* which he hath made for Sin, what can be a greater Encouragement to a virtuous Life, than the Senſe of a *pacified* God, looking graciouſly upon us, and accepting our ſincere, though imperfect Endeavours, for the Sake of his Son's prevailing Merits? When we reflect on our own *Weakneſs* and Inability to do good, and perceive, at the ſame Time, that, by our Saviour's riſing from the Grave, he is able to aſſiſt us, and *we may do all Things through him, that ſtrengthens us*; this gives us great Courage and Reſolution in our ſpiritual Warfare. When we reflect, that *Chriſt*, having overcome Death, is ſeated at the Right-Hand of God, and there offers up his own Merits, joined with the Prayers of all Believers; this ſurely ſhould engage us to *draw near to the Throne of Grace, with full Aſſurance of Faith*, and to take great Heed, that all our Supplications and Prayers proceed from a pure and upright Conſcience. Once more, when we reflect on *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection, and fix this Contemplation in our Minds, that our *Proxy*, our Head, our Redeemer, our Saviour, has left Earth for Heaven, and is there incircled with ineffable Glory; how can it be, but that this Conſideration ſhould prevail with us to deſpiſe the World, and breathe after Heaven, and to deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, who is inthroned *there* already? For, can we have ſo mean an Affection for our Saviour, as to be content to ſtay behind him? Can we think of Happineſs, and of the Author of it, both in Heaven, and not earneſtly deſire to be *there*, loſt and ſwallowed up in the Contemplation and Fruition of our Lord? Theſe are ſome of the Conſequences of this Doctrine: And therefore, to conclude with the Apoſtle's Exhortation; [s] *If then ye be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe Things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the Right-Hand of God:*

[k] Col. iii. 3, 4. [l] 1 Cor. xv. 20. [m] Rom. viii. 11. [n] Phil. iii. 21. [o] 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. [p] *Sharpe*'s Sermons. [q] Rom. vi. 4, *&c.* [r] *Edwardi*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [s] Col. iii. 1.

God, and ſet your Affection on Things above, and not on Things on the Earth, for ye are dead, and your Life is hid with Chriſt, in God.

OUR bleſſed Saviour, after his Reſurrection from the Dead, took great Care to give his Diſciples a ſpeedy Information of it, by the Women, who ſaw the Viſion of Angels; by *Mary Magdalen*, who ſaw our Lord himſelf; by the *two Brethren*, with whom he travelled and converſed; and by his own appearing to ten of them, and giving them all the Demonſtrations, they could deſire. So full and authentick a Teſtimony, from ſo many different People, at ſo many different Times, might have been enough, one would think, to convince any one, that was not unreaſonably ſcrupulous. But *Thomas*, who happened to be abſent at the Time of our Saviour's Appearance, was ſo far from crediting the Report of his Brethren, that he declares his Reſolution not to be convinced, without the utmoſt Evidence, that all his Senſes, capable of judging of ſuch a Matter, could receive; [t] *except I ſhall ſee in his Hands the Print of the Nails, and put my Finger into the Print of the Nails, and thruſt my Hand into his Side, I will not believe.* Thomas's *Unbelief.*

1. TO find out the Character of this *Apoſtle*, we muſt take a little Notice of the ſeveral Paſſages, wherein Mention is made of him in the Goſpel. [u] Our Saviour, forewarning his Diſciples of his approaching Death, tells them very kindly, * *In my Father's Houſe are many Manſions — I go to prepare a Place for you, and whither I go, you know, and the Way you know:* To which *Thomas* anſwers very peremptorily, *Lord, we know not whither thou goeſt, and how ſhould we know the Way:* As if he had ſaid, "Lord, thou ſayeſt, thou art going to thy Father's Houſe, to provide Man-"ſions for us: Now we know thy Father's Houſe, according to *natural Generation*, "is that of *Joſeph* and *Mary*, in which many *Manſions* are not to be had: But if "thou meaneſt a Father of any other Kind of Generation, or any other Inheritance, "to which thou haſt a Title to recommend us, this is what we do not underſtand, "and what we do not underſtand, it is impoſſible for us to believe." *The Nature,*

WHILE our Saviour was in *Galilee*, and, upon the News of *Lazarus*'s Sickneſs, propoſed to go into *Judea*, and viſit him, his Diſciples endeavoured to divert him, by telling him; [x] *Maſter, the Jews of late ſought to ſtone thee, and goeſt thou thither again?* But he ſtill perſiſting in his Reſolution, and telling them withal, that *Lazarus* was dead, *Thomas* turns to his Fellow-Diſciples, and ſays, *Let us alſo go, that we may die with him:* As if he ſhould ſay, "*Lazarus* is dead, and all his Pains and Fears are "at an End, and better it were for us, if ours were ſo too. The *Jews* Malice is "bent upon the Deſtruction of us all, and if our Maſter could not ſave his *princi-*"*pal* Friend from Death, what Hope is there of his ſaving us? Let us go then, and "meet our Doom as patiently as we can."

THE laſt Mention of this Apoſtle is in the Inſtance of the Reſurrection. [y] He had been told that our Saviour was riſen from the Dead, and the Truth of it had been atteſted to him by Evidences beyond Exception. Several Companies had ſeen him, and converſed with him ſeveral Times, to whom he had expoſed the Sight and Feeling of his Wounds; to whom he had expounded the Scriptures concerning himſelf, and with whom he had broken the *Sacramental* Bread, *&c.* All theſe People, with all theſe convincing Tokens, had told *Thomas* that *Chriſt was riſen*; and yet *Thomas* (in pure Wiſdom) would not believe, and might perhaps reaſon himſelf into this Conduct, by ſome ſuch Arguments as theſe; [z] "*Jeſus of Nazareth was put to Death upon the* "*Croſs*; and, being dead, was laid, and ſealed up in his Sepulchre, ſtrictly watched "with a Guard of Soldiers: But I am told, and required to believe, that, notwith-"ſtanding all this, he is riſen, and is indeed alive. Now ſurely Things, ſuitable to "the ſtated Courſe of Nature, ſhould be believed, before *ſuch*, as are quite beſide "it: For a dead Man to return to Life is *preternatural*; but that thoſe, who report "this, may be miſtaken, is very *natural* and *uſual*. Dead I ſaw him; but that he is "riſen, I only hear: In what I ſee with mine Eyes, I cannot eaſily be deceived; but "in what I only hear, I may, and often am. Here being two Things then propo-"ſed to my Belief, my Reaſon tells me, that I ought to chuſe that, which is more "credible: But it ſeems more credible, that a ſmall Number of Witneſſes, fright-"ened and diſturbed as they are, may be *deceived*, or (as honeſt as once they were) "may be drawn into Confederacy to *deceive* me, than that one ſhould riſe from the "Dead: Becauſe this cannot be done without a Miracle, and wiſe Men will never "have Recourſe to Miracles, ſo long as *Nature* can ſolve the Appearance."

[t] John xx. 25. [u] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. * John xiv. 2, *&c.* [x] Ibid. xi. 8, *&c.*
[y] *Young*, ibid. [z] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. V.

THIS ſeems to have been the ſilent Reaſoning of *Thomas*'s Mind, when called upon by his Brethren to believe the Report of their Lord's Reſurrection; and, from theſe ſeveral Paſſages put together, we may conclude, that he was a Man of a ſlow and *timorous* Temper; free enough indeed in arguing, but extremely *nice* and ſcrupulous in believing; full of Doubts and Heſitations, and loth to embrace any Thing for a Truth, that he did not rightly underſtand, without the fulleſt Conviction and Demonſtration. This is what is called his *Unbelief*, or Hardneſs to be perſuaded; and how culpable it was, in the Caſe before us, we ſhall, in the next Place, endeavour to ſhew.

and Aggravations of it.

2. A [a] RESURRECTION from the Dead, it is confeſſed, was *new* and a ſtrange Event, which the Generality of Mankind held altogether incredible; but, in th Caſe of *Jeſus*, and the Circumſtances of *Thomas*, the Diſbelief of it ſeems incapable of Excuſe. The ancient Propheſies concerning the *Meſſias* had ſpoken ſo fully to this Point, [b] *That thus it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer, and to riſe from the Dead the third Day*, that our Lord, in his Converſation with the two Travellers to *Emmaus*, charges them with *Folly* and *Slowneſs of Heart*, for not being convinced upon this Teſtimony alone. He had frequently, during his Abode upon Earth, given the Apoſtles Warning of it: He had told the *Jews*, that, whenever they ſhould [c] *deſtroy the Temple* of his Body, in the Compaſs *of three Days he would raiſe it up again.* He never [d] mentioned the Sufferings, appointed for him *to accompliſh at Jeruſalem*, without remembering to cloſe that *melancholy* Subject with the comfortable Promiſe of returning to Life again; and this Promiſe, great and ſurpriſing as it was, *Thomas* could not but be ſatisfied, that he was able to perform, by the many Miracles, which he ſaw daily wrought by him; his reviving *Jairus*'s Daughter, which he could not but know, and eſpecially his raiſing *Lazarus* ſo lately, of which himſelf was an Eye-Witneſs. What more now could be expected in Reaſon, but competent *Evidence*, that a Thing, ſo often promiſed, ſo clearly foretold, and what *Jeſus* had proved himſelf ſo capable of doing, was actually performed? And were not the Women, who had ſeen him, and the Viſion of Angels; the two Travellers, who had heard him diſcourſe, and expound the Scriptures to them; and [e] the unanimous Aſſertions of the *ten Brethren*, recounting to him all the Paſſages of our Saviour's Appearance to them, ſufficient for this Purpoſe? What reaſonable Suſpicion could he have of their being under any Temptation to deceive him, or under any Infatuation to be deceived themſelves? Their long and Intimate Acquaintance with *Jeſus* was ſufficient to diſtinguiſh him from any other Perſon, and abundant Care was taken to ſatisfy them, that this was not an *airy* Form in his Shape, by having his Hands and his Feet handled. Nay, his very Diſcourſe denoted what he was, the calling his own former Sayings to Remembrance, the opening their Underſtandings, the expounding and arguing out of Scripture, ſavoured of that *peculiar Authority*, with which he always taught; and [f] *the breathing upon them*, giving them the Holy Ghoſt, and Commiſſion to preach and act in his, and his Father's Name, were Characters as plain, that this Perſon was their own Maſter, the very *Chriſt of God.*

THESE are the Aggravations of *Thomas*'s Unbelief, which are ſtill heightened by this Conſideration, that, when he refuſed to admit Conviction from the Senſe and Atteſtation of ſo many credible Witneſſes, he at the ſame Time declared it reaſonable to be determined by the *Verdict* of his own Senſe; never conſidering what an haughty Piece of Injuſtice it was, to ſuppoſe that his own ſingle Senſe was leſs fallible, than the joint Experience of ſuch a Number. But, to do Juſtice to the Memory of this Apoſtle, it muſt not be forgot, that, after our Saviour had vouchſafed him the Conviction he deſired, (which he did not do, becauſe the former Evidences had been inſufficient, or to warrant the Rejection of them in others, but out of infinite Goodneſs, and particular Condeſcenſion to his preſent Infirmity) we find him making an ample Compenſation for his former Diſtruſt, by a moſt noble Confeſſion; [g] *for he anſwered and ſaid, My Lord, and my God*: I call it a noble Confeſſion, becauſe the beſt Interpreters of Scripture have underſtood by it, that *Thomas* did not only recognize *Jeſus* for the *Meſſiah*, the very ſame Lord, to whom he had been a Servant and Companion during the Space of his Miniſtry; but that he moreover owned his *Divine*

[a] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. IV. [b] Luke xxiv. 46. [c] John ii. 19, 21.
[d] Matth. xvi. 21. xx. 19. [e] John xx. 25. [f] Ibid. *ver.* 22. [g] Ibid. *ver.* 28.

Divine Nature, and, from the Power exerted in his Reſurrection, drew this Conſequence, that he muſt neceſſarily be the Son of God. So mighty, ſo ſudden a Change do we find in this Apoſtle, that the Perſon, who ſo lately he could not be prevailed upon to account any other, than a dead Man, loſt to all Hopes and Poſſibility of returning, he now *adores* and *admires*, as the Almighty and Ever-living God.

3. AND from hence we may poſſibly conjecture right, that the chief Reaſon, why God permitted this Apoſtle to be ſo ſcrupulous and doubtful, in the Point of his Son's Reſurrection, was for the fuller Confirmation of our Belief of it. It might indeed be urged before, that our Lord had not given all the Proofs of his Reſurrection, that the Nature of the Thing was capable of: * But now, when nothing was left unaſked, that the moſt *ſceptical* Doubts could pretend to deſire; when the very Apoſtles themſelves had *one* of their Number, that held out a conſiderable Time, and then preached not his Doctrine, till his Scruples were entirely removed; when even this *Doubter* himſelf was no leſs vigorous and poſitive afterwards, in aſſerting the Truth of a Point, which nothing but a Demonſtration could make him believe; this takes off all Imputation of *Credulity* and *Eaſineſs*: It ſhews, that the Apoſtles proceeded with great Caution, before they embarked in the Cauſe of Chriſtianity; but at the ſame Time it makes the Doubts of others more inexcuſable. This Diſciple doubted, and was ſatisfied for us all: His former Unbelief adds ſuch Strength to the Cauſe he pleads, and makes him a Witneſs ſo much above Exception, that the Scruples, which in him were *Weakneſs*, in thoſe that follow him, and know his Story, will be *Wilfulneſs* and reſolved Infidelity. Let us then obſerve, and thankfully admire the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of our God and Saviour, who converted the Failings of an eminent Servant to ſuch excellent Advantage, that not only his own Mind was better eſtabliſhed from his Doubts, but even *Gainſayers* likewiſe are more effectually put to Silence, and, out of his Weakneſs, all ſucceeding *Believers* are made ſtrong; learning, from his Example, to lay aſide our Scruples upon ſufficient Conviction; and to make ſome Amends, by our After-Acts, for any Offence, which theſe Scruples might have given, while we continued in them.

The Reaſons of God's permitting it.

SECT. I.

Of CHRIST's *Aſcenſion.*

THE Space from our Saviour's *Reſurrection* to his *Aſcenſion* into Heaven, at leaſt, that *laſt* and *ſignal* Aſcenſion, at which ſo great a Number of his Diſciples were preſent, we are told in the ſacred Records, was *forty Days*; but whether he continued all that while on Earth, in the Company and Converſation of his Diſciples, or more conſtantly reſided in Heaven, and appeared to them *occaſionally* only, and as oft as was neceſſary for their Conviction and Inſtruction, *i. e.* whether, at the End of theſe *forty Days*, he aſcended *once for all*, or, during the Space of that Time, had *ſeveral Removes* to Heaven, is of late become a Matter of Diſpute among the Learned. The common Notion indeed has been for a *conſtant* Stay upon Earth, and a *ſole* Aſcenſion after forty Days: And, for the Support of this Opinion, ſome are apt to ſuppoſe, [h] that *Chriſt* intended to keep a Proportion between the *Goſpel* and the Law of *Moſes*; that, as he ſuffered at the Time of the killing of the *Paſſover*, ſo the Effuſion of the Holy Ghoſt, being fixed to the Day of *Pentecoſt*, whereon the Law was given, he determined to ſtay on Earth, until that Time was near, that he might not put his Apoſtles upon too long an Expectation without his Preſence, which might be neceſſary to animate them, till they ſhould be *endued with Power from on High*. They produce likewiſe the Authority of the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*, who tells us expreſſly, that [i] *neither by the Blood of Goats or Calves, but by his own Blood, Chriſt entered in* ONCE *into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal Redemption for us*; and, from the *immenſe Diſtance* between Earth and Heaven, they are at a Loſs, they ſay, to conceive how frequent *Aſcents* and *Deſcents* could be practicable. Our Saviour indeed cautions *Mary Magdalen*, falling at his Feet, in order to worſhip

Whether Chriſt *aſcended more than once.*

Arguments for the Negative.

* *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. IV.

[h] *Burnet*, on the Articles.

[i] Heb. ix. 12.

worſhip and embrace him, as we may preſume; [k] *touch me not; for I have not yet aſcended to my Father:* But theſe Words may not imply, that he was then going to aſcend; on the contrary, [l] by a *Figure*, common enough among *Grammarians*, who frequently change one *Tenſe* for another, they may denote, that he was not then about to aſcend, but to ſtay many Days upon Earth; ſo that *Mary* might have Space and Opportunity enough to pay her Acknowledgements and Adorations to him.

Arguments for the Affirmative.

NOW though it cannot be denied, that there are Inſtances enough, both in *ſacred* and *profane* Writers, where one *Tenſe* may be put for another, and make a great Alteration in the Senſe of the Words; yet, that in this Place there is no Neceſſity for ſuch *Mutation*, but, on the contrary, a very great one, that the Words ſhould abide in their natural Signification, is evident from hence; "That we can hardly de-"viſe any Reaſon, why our bleſſed Saviour ſhould ſo ſtrictly forbid *Mary* to touch "him, becauſe he *was not yet aſcended*; and yet, that very Evening, [m] *walk*, and "*diſcourſe*, and *eat* with the two Diſciples, travelling to *Emmaus*, and [n] *ſhew* to the "Aſſembly of his Apoſtles *his Hands* and *his Feet*, deſiring them to *handle him*; un-"leſs his firſt Aſcenſion was *intermediate*, and preſently after this *Interview* with "*Mary*." To make this more obvious, we muſt remember, that, a little before his Paſſion, our Saviour foretold his Apoſtles his ſudden Aſcent to his Father, and as ſudden Deſcent to them again: [o] *Yet a little while*, ſays he, *and ye ſhall not ſee me, and again a little while, and ye ſhall ſee me; becauſe I go to my Father:* And afterwards, upon his Diſciples Surmiſe and Diſputation about the Meaning of the Expreſſion; [p] *Jeſus ſaid unto them, Do ye enquire among yourſelves of what I ſaid, a little while, and ye ſhall not ſee me, and again a little while, and ye ſhall ſee me? Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, that ye ſhall weep and lament, but the World ſhall rejoice; and ye ſhall be ſorrowful, but your Sorrow ſhall be turned into Joy*, &c. Now if we compare this Prediction with the Event, [q] how ſad and diſconſolate the Diſciples were upon our Saviour's Death, and how refreſhed and joyful they were, ſoon after his Reſurrection, and conſider withal, that this Sorrow was to laſt *till Chriſt had been with the Father*, and then their Joy to commence; we ſhall be inclined to believe, that what our Lord would be underſtood to ſay, is, that he was to go to his Father immediately after his Reſurrection, and then, very ſoon, to return to his Apoſtles again, even the very ſame Day in the Evening.

That Chriſt *aſcended the Morning of his Reſurrection.*

AND indeed, conſidering that Chriſt was our *High-Prieſt*, it was neceſſary for him to aſcend into Heaven, as ſoon as his Sufferings were finiſhed. [r] For, as the Prieſt under the Law was not only to ſlay the Sacrifice, but to carry the Blood *that Moment* within the *Sanctuary*, and there preſent it before God, to complete the Atonement, and make Interceſſion for the People; ſo *Chriſt*, having ſhed his Blood, and offered his Body on the Altar of the Croſs, was immediately to aſcend into the *heavenly Sanctuary*, and there obtain for us the Remiſſion of our Sins, and all other Benefits of his Paſſion. Nor is this all. That our Saviour is inveſted with a *regal*, as well as a *ſacerdotal* Character, is what the Scriptures teach us, and what [s] we have ſufficiently explained already: But now, [t] if he could not exerciſe any ſupreme Authority, until he was exalted to his heavenly Kingdom; if he could not [u] *give Gifts unto Men*, until *he had aſcended on high*; *nor* [x] *ſend his Holy Spirit* upon his Diſciples, *until he was glorified*, and had, by his Interceſſion, [y] *obtained that* great *Promiſe of the Father:* If he could not, I ſay, adminiſter the Affairs of his *mediatorial* Kingdom, until he had conquered Death and the Devil by his Reſurrection, and preſented himſelf, as a ſlain Sacrifice, and Propitiation for the Sins of the World, before the Preſence of the Divine Majeſty; then is it evident, that, on the very Day of his Reſurrection, he muſt have aſcended up to Heaven; becauſe, in the *Evening* of that Day, we find him [z] giving a Commiſſion and Inſtruction to his Apoſtles; promiſing them *the Miſſion of the Holy Ghoſt*; [a] *bleſſing them* in a ſolemn Manner; [b] *ſending them as his Father had ſent him*; [c] giving them the Power of *remitting* and *retaining Sins*; and afterwards, in *Galilee*, aſſerting that [d] all Power was *given him*, and that *in Heaven*, as well *as Earth*; and therefore commanding his Apoſtles *to go*, and *teach*, and *baptize all Nations*, promiſing his powerful Preſence with them, till *the End of the World*. Certainly theſe Exerciſes of *royal* and ſupreme Power, according

[k] John xx. 17. [l] *Whitby*, on John xx. [m] Luke xxiv. 13. [n] Ibid. *ver.* 39. [o] John xvi. 16. [p] Ibid. *ver* 19, &c. [q] *Whiſton*'s Eſſays. [r] *Whitby*, on John xx. 17. [s] *Vid.* Page 597. [t] *Whiſton*, ibid. [u] Eph. iv. 8. [x] John vii. 39. [y] Acts ii. 33. [z] Mark xvi. 15, &c. [a] Luke xxiv. 50. [b] John xx. 21. [c] Ibid. *ver.* 23. [d] Matth. xxviii. 18, &c.

according to the Scripture-Account of Things, could hardly belong to our Saviour, until his *Exaltation*: And if ſo, then have we Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that, in the *Morning* of his Reſurrection, he aſcended *privately* up to Heaven; and that, in the Evening of the ſame Day, he likewiſe aſcended *viſibly*, we have ſtill ſtronger Preſumption to believe.

St *MARK*, who is the firſt of the *Evangeliſts*, who makes Mention of any of our Lord's Aſcenſions, having inſtanced in ſeveral Perſons, to whom he had appeared on the Day of his Reſurrection, comes at laſt to the Apoſtles, and tells us, that [f] *afterward he appeared to the Eleven, as they ſat at Meat, and upbraided them with their Unbelief, becauſe they believed not them, who had ſeen him after he was riſen.* The very Words plainly imply, that the Apoſtles had not, as yet, been aſſured by their Senſes, which yet, we are told, they were on the *Evening* of his Reſurrection. So that this muſt be the firſt *Interview*, that paſſed between *Chriſt* and them; and yet the Evangeliſt informs us, that, after he had given them ſome Directions concerning their future Preaching of the Goſpel, *&c.* [g] *he was received up into Heaven, and ſat on the Right-Hand of God*, that very ſame *Evening*, as it will appear by what follows. St *Luke*, who is the next, and indeed the only *Evangeliſt* beſides, who mentions our Lord's Aſcenſion at all, [h] having given us the Hiſtory of his Reſurrection, of the Angels appearing to the Women, of the Women relating it to the Apoſtles, and of two of the Apoſtles running to the Sepulchre, to ſatisfy themſelves, [i] goes on with a more particular Account of the two Diſciples, travelling [k] the very ſame Day to *Emmaus*; how our Lord appeared and diſcourſed to them; how they came to know him, and in what Manner he diſappeared; whereupon he tells us, that [l] *they aroſe, the ſame Hour, and returned to Jeruſalem*, and came to the Aſſembly of the Apoſtles, and told them the Particulars of what they had juſt before heard and ſeen; [m] and, as they *were ſpeaking of theſe Things, Jeſus ſtood in the Midſt*, and diſcourſed with them; and, as ſoon as his Diſcourſe was over, [n] *he led them out as far as Bethany, where, while he was bleſſing them, he was parted from them, and carried up to Heaven.* Nothing certainly can be plainer, and more convincing, than this Narration. Let us now ſee what Account it is, that the ſame Author gives us of our Saviour's *final* Aſcenſion.

and the Evening.

Now the Circumſtances, in which he clothes his Account, are theſe; [o] *When the Apoſtles were come together, they aſked him, ſaying, Lord, wilt thou, at this Time, reſtore again the Kingdom to Iſrael? And he ſaid unto them, it is not for you to know the Times, or the Seaſons, which the Father hath put in his own Power; but ye ſhall receive Power, after that the Holy Ghoſt is come upon you: And ye ſhall be Witneſſes unto me, both in Jeruſalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermoſt Parts of the Earth. And when he had ſpoken theſe Things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a Cloud received him out of their Sight; and while they looked ſtedfaſtly toward Heaven, as he went up, behold two Men ſtood by them in white Apparel, which alſo ſaid, Ye Men of Galilee, why ſtand ye gazing up into Heaven? This ſame Jeſus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, ſhall ſo come in like Manner, as ye have ſeen him go into Heaven.* Here we may perceive different Actions, different Diſcourſes, different Circumſtances, from what we find in St *Luke*'s Goſpel; and therefore can hardly imagine, that Accounts, ſo little alike, wrote by the ſame Perſon, can have any Manner of Relation to one and the ſame *Event*. In his *Goſpel*, the Place, from whence *Chriſt* is ſaid to aſcend, [p] is *Bethany*, fourteen Furlongs from *Jeruſalem*; in his Book of *Acts*, [q] *Mount Olivet*, no more than five. In the *Goſpel*, the Company, which ſaw him aſcend, [r] ſeem to be the Apoſtles, and not many more; in the *Acts*, [s] *the Number of the Names together were about an hundred and twenty.* No Mention is made in the *Acts* of his *lifting up his Hands*, and *bleſſing them*; no Notice is taken in the *Goſpel* of the *Cloud which received him out of their Sight*, or of the *two Angels*, which aſſured them, that he was to come down, in the laſt Day, in the ſame viſible Manner, that they ſaw him aſcend.

THESE Things make it reaſonable to believe, that the different Relations of St *Luke* deſcribe two different Aſcenſions: And if we can fairly prove *two*, there is no Reaſon why we may not ſuppoſe *many more*; as many indeed, as his Reſidence in Heaven, and the neceſſary Affair of his inſtructing his Apoſtles on Earth, *alternately*

and frequently at other Times.

[f] Mark xvi. 14. [g] Ibid. *ver.* 19. [h] Luke xxiv. 1, *&c.* [i] Ibid. *ver.* 13, *&c.*
[k] *Vid.* Luke xxiv. 13. *compared with* John xx. 19. [l] Ibid. *ver.* 33. [m] Ibid. *ver.* 36.
[n] Ibid. *ver.* 50, 51. [o] Acts i. 6, *&c.* [p] Luke xxiv. 50. [q] Acts i. 12.
[r] Luke xxiv. 33. [s] Acts i. 15.

might require; ſince the Diſtance of Place, be it what it will, (conſidering the Power and Purity of Chriſt's *celeſtial* Body, to which the Divine Spirit is united) can be no Manner of Objection. But then, if we ſuppoſe, with ſome learned Men, (and as the Scripture-Language in many Inſtances gives us Reaſon to ſuppoſe) that the Place, which we call *Heaven*, where God's *majeſtick* Preſence appears, and Chriſt's *Humanity* is aſcended, where Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, Arch-angels, and Angels, have their Abodes, every one, in their ſeveral Degrees and Orders, is no other, than the vaſt Expanſion of the Air; and that the utmoſt Height of this Air, as appears from the beſt Obſervations, is but about 45 or 50 Miles from the Earth; it will appear no ſtrange Thing, that our Lord ſhould aſcend and deſcend more than once, during that *forty Days* Interval between his Reſurrection and *final* Aſcenſion; which, in ſome Meaſure, accounts for the Manner, in which was ſpent the *intermediate* Time, whereof the *Evangeliſts*, putting them all together, give us but a ſlender Detail.

The Matter of our Saviour's Diſcourſes after his Reſurrection.

THE Evangeliſts however have acquainted us in general, that the Conferences, which he then had with his Diſciples, turned chiefly upon theſe two Points: 1. His expounding unto them, [u] *out of the Prophets, and all the Scriptures, the Things concerning himſelf*: And [*] *his ſpeaking of the Things pertaining to the Kingdom of God*; and therefore we may not improperly conjecture; 1. What were the moſt *material* Paſſages in the Prophets, relating to his Paſſion and Reſurrection, which *Chriſt* might explain to his Diſciples. And, 2. What were the moſt *material* Topics, *relating to his Kingdom*, that he may be ſuppoſed to have inſiſted on, at this Time. The Scripture indeed has not told us what Propheſies our Saviour explained to his Diſciples; [x] but I cannot think it unreaſonable to preſume, that the Diſciples endeavoured to convince others by the ſame Scriptures, to which they owed their own Conviction; and therefore ſuch, as we find them, either relating to, as quoted from our Saviour before his Death, or elſe urging upon the *Jews*, in their own Perſons afterwards; ſuch, I think we may preſume, had a Place in our Lord's Expoſition; ſince it is not to be doubted, but that, in the Explications of the *Old Teſtament*, they followed the Interpretation, which he had given them.

1. As to the Sufferings and Death of *Chriſt* then, the Propheſies produced in Scripture are ſo very many, that they reach every material Circumſtance of them. His being betrayed by a particular Friend [y] *David* foretold, as [z] *Jeſus* himſelf remarks: That Traitor's miſerable End, and Loſs of his Apoſtleſhip, [a] St *Peter* has obſerved from [b] the ſame Author: The Fear and Confuſion of his Diſciples [c] our Lord refers to a Paſſage in [d] the Prophet *Zechariah*: The infamous Manner, and profligate Companions of his Death, [e] St *Mark* collects from another [f] in *Iſaiah*: The Barbarity of his Enemies, in taunting and reviling him, even in his dying Agonies, [g] St *John* has produced out of [h] the *Royal* Pſalmiſt: And the invincible Meekneſs and Patience, wherewith he bore it all, [i] St *Peter* has quoted out of the [k] *Evangelical* Prophet.

IN like Manner, as to the Reſurrection of *Chriſt*, God having promiſed to *Abraham*, that [l] *in his Seed all the Nations of the World ſhould be bleſſed*; [m] *This Seed*, St *Paul* affirms to the *Galatians*, *is Chriſt, who redeemed us from the Curſe of the Law, being made a Curſe for us, that the Bleſſing of* Abraham *might come upon the Gentiles, through Jeſus Chriſt*. *David*, magnifying the Mercy of God in his Son's Exaltation to the Throne, has theſe Words; [n] *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee*; which [†] St *Paul*, in his Sermon in the Synagogue at *Antioch*, [o] applies to *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection. The ſame Royal Prophet, in a Rapture of Truſt, and holy Hope, expreſſes himſelf thus; [p] *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou ſuffer thine holy One to ſee Corruption*; which [q] St *Peter*, in his Sermon on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, refers to the ſame Purpoſe; and [r] *Iſaiah* having mentioned *the ſure Mercies of* David, by which is underſtood a ſpiritual and eternal Kingdom, [s] St *Paul* makes

[t] *Whiſton*'s Eſſays. [u] Luke xxiv. 27. [*] Acts i. 3. [x] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. II. [y] Pſal. xli. 9. [z] John xiii. 18. [a] Acts i. 16. [b] Pſal. lxix. and cix. [c] Matth. xxvi. 31. [d] Zech. xiii. 7. [e] Mark xv. 27. [f] Iſa. liii. 12. [g] John xix. [h] Pſal. xxii. [i] 1 Pet. ii. 24. [k] Iſa. liii. [l] Gen. xii. 3. [m] Gal. iii. 13, *&c.* [n] Pſal. ii. 7. [†] Acts xiii. 32, 33. [o] When the Apoſtle applies theſe Words, *This Day have I begotten thee*, to our Saviour's Reſurrection, he does but ſpeak the Language of the *Hebrew* Writers, who call the Earth our Mother, the Grave her Womb, and Mens riſing from it being *born again*: And the *Jews*, who own that this Pſalm belongs to the Meſſiah, have no Reaſon to complain, that thoſe Words ſhould be applied to his Reſurrection. *Kidder*'s Demonſtration. [p] Pſal. xvi. 10. [q] Acts ii. 29, *&c.* [r] Iſa. lv. 3. [s] Acts xiii. 34.

makes the Application of them to *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection, who is now become a King, and *no more to return to Corruption.*

THESE are ſome of the principal Prophecies, which relate to our Lord's *Paſſion* and Reſurrection, the two great Points, he was to clear up to his Diſciples; and what very probably he made the Subject of his Conferences, for the Time he was with them after his Reſurrection. And, in like Manner,

2. THE *Things pertaining to the Kingdom of God* may not unlikely be reſolved into ſuch *Topics*, as theſe — [t] "That ſince he had choſen them to be Witneſſes of "his Doctrine, Death, and Reſurrection, they were to preach the Goſpel over the "Face of the whole Earth, and uſe all Diligence, that no Nation might be unac- "quainted with it: That ſuch Perſons, as liſtened to their Preaching, and were "willing to embrace their new Religion, they were to admit into the Church by "the appointed Form *of Baptiſm*; and ſuch, as ſhould chance to fall from their "Integrity at any Time, and through the *Deceitfulneſs of Sin*, or Violence of any "ſudden Temptation, be induced to violate their *Baptiſmal* Vow; theſe they ſhould "renew and confirm by the other Sacrament *of his Supper*: That the Benefits to "ſuch, as believed and obeyed their Doctrine, ſhould be infinite; the Condemna- "tion to thoſe, who ſlighted the kind Offers of God, intolerable: That, in exe- "cuting this their Charge, they were to expect Labours and Difficulties, Perils and "Perſecutions innumerable; but, in Balance to theſe, might depend on his conti- "nual Preſence with them, the Comforts and Supports of his bleſſed Spirit, and the "Almighty Hand of God, attending their Miniſtry, and enabling them to work all "Kinds of Miracles in Confirmation of it: That, through theſe Aſſiſtances, they "ſhould ſee the Work of God *proſper in their Hands*; ſee People of all Nations "converted to the Faith; and, when they themſelves had finiſhed their Courſe, "ſhould receive the Reward of their Labour and Fidelity, Crowns of Glory in the "Manſions of Bliſs, and live for ever in the Joy of their Lord. In the mean Time, "wherever the Chriſtian Religion prevailed, that there they ſhould ſettle *Elders* in "the Church; admit them, by a ſolemn and regular Ordination; conſecrate a Day "in Memory of his Reſurrection; appoint a Liturgy, for the Help of publick De- "votion; Impoſition of Hands, for the Confirmation of the Adult; Cenſures, for "the Vicious; Honours, for the Diligent; and every Thing, that the Spirit of "Truth ſhould direct them to, *for the Uſe of edifying.*"

Concerning his Church.

THESE, and ſuch-like Topics (as they relate to the Eſtabliſhment and good Government of his Church) ſeem to have made up the Subject of our Saviour's Diſcourſes, in the ſeveral Times, that he viſited his Diſciples, after his Reſurrection; all along intermixing Lectures of Comfort and Conſolation; Promiſes of his Divine Preſence and Protection; and Aſſurances of his ſending the Holy Ghoſt, to be their conſtant Guide and Counſellor; till being now about to take his final Leave of them, he led them out to [u] the Mount *Olivet*, the Mount, where he had preached and prayed, where he was transfigured and crucified ſo lately, and there, while he was giving *Inſtructions*, and imparting *Benedictions* to them, St *Luke* acquaints us, * *he was taken up into Heaven, and a Cloud received him out of their Sight.*

THAT our bleſſed Lord, [x] by a true and *local*, not a ſeeming or *metaphorical* Tranſlation, in the ſame Humanity, which he had on Earth, with the ſame Body, which died, and was buried, and was raiſed again, and the ſame Human Soul, which by Death was ſeparated from his Body, and, at his Reſurrection, re-united by the Power of his Divine Spirit, did, in the publick View of many Spectators, riſe from the Earth, and *gradually* aſcend to Heaven, is evident from the Teſtimony of thoſe, who were preſent at this Tranſaction: Which Teſtimony is therefore to be credited; becauſe, as we ſhewed in the Article of his Reſurrection, they were Men of too good Underſtanding, to be deceived by themſelves, and of too much Veracity, to impoſe upon others, in a Matter of Fact, ſubmitted to the Senſes of ſuch a Number of Witneſſes. They were the ſame Perſons indeed, that bore Teſtimony of his *Reſurrection*, but herein it was not ſo neceſſary that they ſhould be Eye-Witneſſes, as in the Act of his *Aſcenſion*. [y] It was enough in that Caſe, if they ſaw *him*, whom a little

The Reality of Chriſt's Aſcenſion.

[t] *Whitby*, on Acts i. and *Barrow*, on the Creed. [u] St *Jerome* [*de Locis Heb.*] and *Sulpitius Severus* [*Hiſt. Sacra, Lib.* ii.] both tell us, that the exact Print of our Saviour's Feet remained in their Time, on this Mountain, not to be effaced; and that over it, *Helena*, the Mother of *Conſtantine the Great*, erected a Chapel, called the *Chapel of Aſcenſion*; wherewith the modern Travellers, not only of the *Roman* Communion, but even of a contrary Perſuaſion, (among whom *Sandys, in the third Book of his Travels*, is one) do agree, aſſuring us, *that theſe ſacred Footſteps are to be ſeen in that Place, and not to be obliterated.* *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. * Acts i. 9. [x] *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [y] *Pearſon* bid.

a little before they knew to be dead, alive again; for whatever was a Proof of his Life after Death, was a Demonſtration of his Reſurrection: But ſince they were not to ſee him in Heaven, and, by the Weakneſs of their Eye-ſight, were hindered from beholding his *Reception* and *Seſſion* on high; it was neceſſary, that, for the Confirmation of their own, and other Mens Faith in this particular, they ſhould be *actual Spectators* of his Paſſage and Tranſition thither, as far as their Eyes would reach; and, when theſe could follow him no farther, [a] then to have the Inhabitants of the Place come, and inform them of the reſt.

The Manner of it.

HEAVEN indeed is a Term, that admits of divers Significations in holy Scripture: The lower Region *under* the Clouds, the middle Region *among* the Clouds, and the higher Region *above* the Clouds, fall all under the ſame Denomination; but ſince our Saviour is ſaid, in Scripture, [b] *to have been made higher than the Heavens*, [c] to *have paſſed into the Heavens*, and [d] *aſcended far above the Heavens*, &c. there is good Reaſon why we ſhould underſtand Heaven here in its moſt exalted Senſe, *viz.* for that Place, where God has choſen to diſcover the immediate and glorious Effects of his Preſence, the Seat appointed by him for the Reſidence of Angels, and *the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*. How far diſtant this Habitation of the Almighty may be from this *terraqueous Globe*, whereon we live, is above the Power of *Aſtronomy* to compute or imagine; but, let the Space be ſuppoſed never ſo great, it can be no valid Objection againſt the Poſſibility of *Chriſt*'s Aſcenſion, [e] conſidering the Nature of his glorious and ſpiritual Body, ſtrong and active, and perfectly obſequious to all the Motions of the Soul; conſidering the Nature of his glorified Soul, tending upwards, and moving towards Heaven, as its proper *Center*; and conſidering the Union of both with his *Divinity*, which, as it originally gave, and ſtill continues Motion to all Bodies, can undoubtedly make them move in what Meaſure and Degree of Celerity it pleaſes.

With the ſame Body.

[e] WITH what peculiar Qualities the Body of *Chriſt*, which aſcended, is now in its glorified State, endowed; whether it ſubſiſts by any acceſſary Renovation of Parts; after what Manner any Loſs or Acceſſion of Parts happen to it, and of what Kind thoſe Parts may be, are Queſtions ſavouring of too much Subtlety to be purſued. It ſeems probable, from what St *Paul* ſays, that [f] *Fleſh and Blood ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven* (which relates to our glorified Bodies, when we ſhall *bear the Image of the heavenly* Adam,) [g] that *Chriſt*'s Body has no more the *Modifications* of Fleſh and Blood in it, and that the Glory of the *celeſtial* Body is of another *Nature* and *Texture*, than that of the *terreſtrial*. It is eaſy however to imagine how this may be, and yet the Body remain *numerically* the ſame: For all Matter being uniform, and capable of all Sorts of Motion, and, by Conſequence, of being either much groſſer or much purer; the ſame Portion of Matter, which made a thick or heavy Body here below, though not changed in its *eſſential* Parts, may be *ſublimated* into ſuch Purity and Fineneſs, as to be no longer a fit Inhabitant for this Earth, or in a Condition to breathe this Air, but *meet* to be tranſlated into the Regions above.

The Ends of his Aſcenſion.

HOWEVER this be, [h] what it principally concerns us to know in Relation to our Lord's Aſcenſion is, that his human Soul, by a *local* and true Tranſlation, in Union with his Body, was conveyed from Earth, through the Regions of Air, to the higheſt Heaven, the Seat and Reſidence of the Divine Majeſty; that there, as himſelf expreſſes it, he [i] *might prepare a Place for us*, and take Poſſeſſion of thoſe *celeſtial Manſions*, which he had purchaſed by his meritorious Paſſion; that, as our [k] *Advocate*, he might preſent our Supplications, and, in our Behalf, interpoſe his Intereſt and Authority at *the Throne of Grace*; that, as our *King*, he might govern us in a Place, where Myriads of bright and [l] *flaming Miniſters* are ready at all Times to obſerve his Beck; that, as our Royal *Benefactor*, [m] he might diſtribute from thence, at the Inauguration to his Sovereign Dignity, [n] *the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt*; and laſtly, that having [o] *finiſhed the Work, which his Father gave him to do*, he might, in Reward of his Obedience, [p] *ſit down at his Right-Hand in heavenly Places, far above all Principalities and Powers, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name, that is named, not only in this World, but in that which is to come.*

SECT.

[a] Acts i. 10, 11. [b] Heb. vii. 26. [c] Ibid. iv. 14. [d] Eph. iv. 10. [e] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [f] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [g] 1 Cor. xv. 50. [h] *Burnet*, on the Articles. [i] *Fiddes*, ibid. [k] John xiv. 2. [l] 1 John ii. 1. [m] Heb. i. 14. [n] Eph. iv. 10. [o] John xvi. 7. [p] Ibid. xvii. 4. [q] Eph. i. 20.

SECT. II.

Of CHRIST's *Seſſion at* GOD's *Right-Hand.*

Chriſt's Seſſion.

TO *ſit at God's Right-Hand*, is one of thoſe Expreſſions, wherein the Holy Ghoſt condeſcends to our *Capacities*, by attributing to God the Parts and Geſtures of an human Body. [q] *The Hand* is the chief Inſtrument of exerting our Strength, and therefore often uſed to denote the Power of God: *The Right-Hand* is the uſual Place of Honour and Reſpect, and therefore this denotes the higheſt Dignity; and, as the moſt Honourable upon Earth are diſtinguiſhed by the neareſt Approaches to the Perſon of the King, ſo it was the Ambition of the Sons of *Zebedee*, [r] *to ſit, one on Chriſt's Right-Hand, and the other on the Left in his Kingdom.* In like Manner, by *ſitting*, in the Caſe before us, is not intended any *Poſture* of the Body, but the Things uſually implied by that Poſture. Thus the Prophet intimates the *profound Peace* and Tranquillity of his People, by promiſing that they ſhould *ſit every Man under his own Vine:* In Analogy to which, our Saviour is ſaid to *ſit down at the Right-Hand of God*, as he now hath ceaſed from the Labours and Sufferings undergone [s] *in the Days of his Fleſh*, and enjoys perfect Repoſe and Happineſs with his Father in Heaven. *Sitting*, again, implies *Continuance* in the ſame Place, from whence the Tribes, whoſe Lot, in the Diviſion of the Land, fell out ſo, are ſaid [t] *to ſit by the Sea-Shore:* And thus our Saviour's *ſitting at God's Right-Hand* denotes his conſtant Abode in thoſe Regions of Bliſs and Glory; or, in the Words of St *Peter*, [u] *that the Heavens muſt receive him, until the Times of Reſtitution*, or final Conſummation *all Things. Sitting*, once more, imports *Authority* and *Dominion*; hence Kings are repreſented in this Poſture on their Thrones, and Magiſtrates uſe it in Courts of Juſtice: And, for this Reaſon * more eſpecially, *Chriſt* is deſcribed *ſitting on the Right-Hand of God*, to intimate that *mediatorial* Kingdom and Power, which he is to exerciſe, until the great Day of Judgment be paſſed, and [x] *then ſhall he deliver the Kingdom to God, even the Father.* According to this Interpretation of the Words, *Chriſt's ſitting at God's Right-Hand* muſt denote —— " That the ſame Bliſs, and Glory, and Power, which the Son of God did, before " his Incarnation, enjoy with his Father from all Eternity, his Human Nature is " made Partaker of, in the higheſt Heavens: That this God-Man is inveſted with " an abſolute Authority, and boundleſs Dominion, and does now, in both Na- " tures, rule, as he ſhall one Day judge the whole World." [y] *For all Power is given to him*, both *in Heaven and Earth*, [z] *i. e.* God hath committed the Government of the World into his Hands, for the Benefit and Advantage of his Church in this Life, and for the diſpenſing of Rewards and Puniſhments to good and bad Men in the next.

The Meaning of it.

[a] THE Apoſtles indeed could not be Witneſſes of this their Lord's Advancement and Exaltation *at the Right-Hand of God*; but ſtill they had, and ſo have we, ſufficient Aſſurance of it, both by what our Saviour declared before his Aſcenſion, and by the Effects which followed after. *Before he aſcended*, he told them whither he was going, what Power and Dignity would be conferred upon him; and that, as an Evidence of ſuch Power and Dignity, he would, in a few Days, ſend down *the Holy Ghoſt* upon them, in a ſenſible Manner, and, in great and ſenſible Effects, enable them to ſpeak with Tongues, and to work all Sorts of Miracles. After this he was, in their Sight, taken up from them, and carried towards Heaven; and ten Days after, the Holy Ghoſt, according to his Promiſe, came down upon them in miraculous Powers and Gifts. So that here was abundant Evidence to them of his Exaltation in Heaven, they having ſeen him taken up, and carried *thitherward*, and, after this, finding the wonderful Effects of his being there, and of the Power, which was conferred upon him. And, to confirm our Faith ſtill more and more, the infallible Records acquaint us, [b] that the bleſſed Martyr, St *Stephen*, while he was on

The Truth of it.

[q] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III. and *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [r] Matth. xx. 21. [s] Heb. v. 7. [t] Judg. v. 17. [u] Acts iii. 21. * Vid. *King's* Critical Hiſtory of the Creed, *p.* 279. [x] 1 Cor. xv. 24. [y] Matth. xxviii. 18. [z] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. III. [a] *Tillotſon*, ibid. [b] Acts vii. 55.

Earth, ſaw *the Heavens open, and Jeſus ſtanding at the Right-Hand of God*; even St *Paul* and St *John* ſaw him inthroned in his heavenly Majeſty, though they themſelves were not entered into Glory. Such is the Nature and Evidence of *Chriſt*'s Exaltation: And hence,

What we may obſerve from Chriſt's *Exaltation.*

1. WE cannot but obſerve and admire the wonderful Wiſdom and *Equity* of God, in receiving the human Nature of his bleſſed Son to his Right-Hand in Heaven. [c] It is indeed a moſt glorious Privilege for Fleſh and Blood to ſit in *heavenly Places*; but when we remember, that this was the Fleſh and Blood, which the eternal Son of God condeſcended to honour with his perſonal Reſidence; that *in this* he laboured under all the Wants and Infirmities, the contumelious Treatment, and bitter Agonies, which he ſubmitted to, but could not undergo, except as *Man*; we then may eaſily diſcern great Reaſon for a Recompence as extraordinary, as the Sufferings had been; and cannot ſuppoſe any Amends too much, for ſuch exquiſite Tortures, and barbarous Indignities. As no *Sorrow was like unto his Sorrow*, ſo was no Joy ever ſo full, no Honour ever ſo high and excellent; for, [d] *being found in Faſhion as a Man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Croſs; wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhould bow; of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth; and that every Tongue ſhould confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.* So that the Scandal of the Croſs is effectually removed, by ſeating the Body *crucified* upon the Throne on High, and conſtituting that once Mock-King, and ſuppoſed *Malefactor*, the Lord and Judge of the whole Earth. Hence,

God's Juſtice.

A future State of Happineſs.

2. WE cannot but obſerve the *Aſſurance*, God hath given us, in Relation to the Happineſs we hope for in the next World. No Religion ever gave Man ſo ſenſible a Demonſtration of a future Life, and bleſſed Immortality hereafter, as the *Chriſtian* Religion hath done, by the Reſurrection of our bleſſed Lord from the Dead, and his viſible Aſcenſion into Heaven: [e] The Reaſonings of Philoſophers concerning the Immortality of the Soul, and a future State after this Life, beſides the Uncertainty of them, have alſo this Diſadvantage, that they are only calculated for the more refined and ſpeculative Part of Mankind; but every Man is capable of the Force of this Argument,——That he, who publiſhed and declared to the World another Life after this, and the happy Condition of good Men in it, was himſelf raiſed from the Dead, and viſibly taken up into Heaven; from whence the Inference is obvious, that God will, in like Manner, raiſe and advance us to Glory and Happineſs, if ſo be we take Care to prepare ourſelves for it; becauſe this Aſcent and Advancement of *Chriſt* is to be conſidered, not merely as a *private* and *perſonal* Advantage, but as a Thing performed under that *publick Character*, which he ſuſtained, in the Quality of our great *High-Prieſt*. To this Purpoſe the Author to the *Hebrews*, in Alluſion to the *Sacerdotal* Office, tells us, that he is entered into *the Holy Place*, [f] *to appear in the Preſence of God for us*, and that [g] *he is entered for us within the Vail, as our Forerunner*. Now, a Forerunner is a relative Term, and of Neceſſity implies ſome Perſons following behind, and therefore his Meaning muſt be, that *Chriſt*, by entering into Heaven before us, has, in our Nature, taken Poſſeſſion of the Manſions of Bliſs, not for himſelf only, but for all good *Chriſtians*, that ſhall come after him. For which Reaſon the great Apoſtle St *Paul*, by Way of Anticipation, concludes good *Chriſtians* already poſſeſſed of what their Proxy enjoys; for this is the Tenor of his Argument: As [h] *God hath quickened us together with Chriſt*, and has *raiſed us up together*, by Virtue of his Reſurrection; ſo *hath he*, by Virtue of his Glorification, *made us ſit together with him in heavenly Places, that, in the Ages to come, he might ſhew the exceeding Riches of his Grace, in his Kindneſs to us, through Jeſus Chriſt*. Hence,

Comfort in Troubles.

3. WE cannot but obſerve, of what great *Comfort* and Encouragement it is, in all the Trials and Afflictions that can befal us, to conſider, that we are under the Patronage and Protection of one, who ſits at the Right-Hand of God; who, highly exalted though he be, is nearly related to us, and has that Nature about him, in which he ſuffered more than any of us can do, and, from the Experience of his own Sufferings, retains ſtill a quick Senſe of the Frailties and Infirmities of Mortality. Do we then *ſuffer for Righteouſneſs-Sake?* * *Seeing we have an High-Prieſt, that is* now *paſſed*

[c] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III. [d] Phil. ii. 8. [e] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. III.
[f] Heb. ix. 24. [g] Ibid. vi. 19, 20. [h] Eph. ii. 5, &c. * Heb. iv. 14, 15.

paſſed into Heaven, but *was* once *tempted in all Points, like as we are, let us hold faſt our Profeſſion* without Wavering, being fully perſuaded, [l] *that if we die with him, we ſhall alſo live with him, and if we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him.* Are we diſquieted for the Loſs or Want of the good Things of this Life? [k] The Iſſues of Providence and the Diſpenſations of the Bleſſings of God are repoſited in our Saviour's Hands, who *knoweth that we have Need of theſe Things*, and therefore, if they would conduce to his Glory, and our Welfare, we may be ſatisfied he would not detain them from us; and that, if he does, he with-holds them for our Good, and has better Things abundantly in Reſerve for us. Are we uneaſy at the Apprehenſions of Death? The Conſideration that our gracious Lord [l] *is gone before, to prepare a Place for us, that where he is, we may be alſo*; and that, while we are detained in the Body, we are *abſent* from him, [m] *in whoſe Preſence is Fulneſs of Joy, and at whoſe Right-Hand are Pleaſures for evermore*, is enough to out-balance the Reluctance of Nature, and make a wiſe Man even deſire to die. Are we fearful, and in Danger of falling by the Weight of Temptations, that we ſee coming upon us? He that ſitteth on High, was more than once in the ſame Circumſtances, [n] *and in that himſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted.* In a Word, be our Trials and Afflictions what they will, yet the Triumph of our Champion over all our Enemies, the great Advancement of our Nature in him, and the tranſporting Satisfaction of having ſo good a Friend in ſo high a Place, and in ſo great Power, on whoſe Help we may depend, and under whoſe Patronage we may be ſecure, in every State, at all Times, and in all Places, is enough to pacify our Minds, and to put in Practice that wiſe and ſalutary Advice of the Apoſtle; [o] *Be careful for nothing; but in every Thing, by Prayer and Supplication, with Thankſgiving, let your Requeſts be made known unto God.* Hence,

The Neceſſity of Heavenly-mindedneſs.

4. LASTLY, we cannot but obſerve the great Obligation we all lie under, both as Men, and Chriſtians, [p] *to ſet our Affection, not on Things on the Earth*, but *on Things in Heaven*; ſince our Nature and our Saviour both are aſcended thither. [q] A *carnal* ſenſual Life, that is wholly immerſed in earthly Concerns, and intends no farther *Acqueſt*, than the good Things of this World, is evidently the greateſt Contradiction to the Exaltation of our Nature with *Chriſt* in Heaven: For if *Humanity* be raiſed, how can they be ſaid to live *like Men* now, who are loſt in Senſe, and buried in the Sink of brutal Pleaſures? And if *Chriſt* be *aſcended*, and *ſet on God's Right-Hand in Heaven*, how can they be ſaid to be his *Followers*, who are ſtill wandering and bewildering themſelves, at the fartheſt Diſtance from him on Earth, where he is not; and will not ſo much as lift up an Eye after him to Heaven, where he is? Let us then remember, that our Lord and Leader is gone far above out of our Sight; that we are ſtill able to follow him with the Eye of Faith; that our true Bleſſedneſs conſiſts in being with him; that our main Concern lies in another Country; and that the Affairs of this, in which we now *ſojourn*, are allowed, in ſome Meaſure, to employ our Pains, but, by no Means, muſt engroſs our Affections; and, in the Strength of this Perſuaſion, let us *in Heart and Mind aſcend to him*, and with him conſtantly dwell, [r] *uſing this World, as not abuſing it, for the Faſhion of this World paſſeth away.*

[l] 2 Tim. ii. 12. [k] Les Oeuvres poſth. de M. Claude, Tom. III. [l] John xiv. 2. [m] Pſal. xvi. 11. [n] Heb. ii. 18. [o] Phil. iv. 6. [p] Col. iii. 2. [q] *Newcombe's* Sermons, Vol. I. [r] 1 Cor. vii. 31.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Our JESUS *the true Meſſias.*

The Word Meſſias, *what it means.*

WE have hitherto followed our bleſſed Saviour, through the different *Stages* of his Life, from the Time of his Conception and Birth, to that of his *Aſcenſion* into Heaven, and *Exaltation* to the Hight-Hand of God; and ſhall now look into the *ſacred Records*, in order to perceive, whether the State and Condition, in which he appeared, his perſonal Qualities and Performances, what he did, ſuffered, and received, be agreeable to the *Characters*, which the Prophets gave of that great and *eminent* Perſon, who was to come into the World; and conſequently, whether this *Jeſus of Nazareth*, to whom we have given up our Names in *Baptiſm*, whom the *Jews* indeed crucified, but whom we rely on for the Salvation of our Souls, was in Reality the *promiſed Meſſias*. Only, before we come to that, we would briefly obſerve, that the Word *Meſſias*, which, in *Greek*, is rendered *Chriſt*, ſtrictly ſignifies the ſame with *Anointed*, and here properly denotes a Perſon ſet apart and *conſecrated* to ſome great Office and Employment. [a] For, in the *Eaſtern* Countries, which abounded with *Oil*, and odoriferous Spices, the Cuſtom was to *anoint* with an Ointment, compoſed of theſe Ingredients, the Perſons appointed to ſuch high Offices, as is evident in the Caſe of Kings and Prieſts, if not Prophets, among the *Jews*. This was probably done to ſignify the plentiful Effuſion of *Gifts* and Graces, neceſſary to qualify them for their Employment, as well as the good and beneficial Effects, which the Office, they were advanced to, might enable them to diſpenſe. [b] Upon theſe Occaſions, the Cuſtom of anointing was ſo general, that, in Alluſion thereunto, Perſons appointed by God to any eminent Office and Employment, are often ſaid to be *the Lord's anointed*, even though they were not conſecrated by any *material* Unction: For ſo is [c] *Cyrus* ſtiled, whom God ordained for the Deſtruction of *Babylon*, and the Reſtoration of *Iſrael*; and ſo is *Jeſus*, [d] *whom God anointed with the Holy Ghoſt*, whereof the Oil was but a faint *Type* and *Shadow*, *and with Power*, enabling him to perform the high Charge and Office, whereunto he had appointed him.

THE Word *Meſſias*, or *Chriſt*, therefore denotes a Perſon, in a ſignal and ſpecial Manner, ordained and appointed by God to ſome great Charge or Function; whoſe Qualities and Performances were to be extraordinary, and highly beneficial to Mankind. And, in order to prove that *Jeſus of Nazareth*, the Saviour in whom we truſt, was this *extraordinary* Perſon, we ſhall endeavour to ſhew from the ſacred Writings,

I. THAT God had, all along, promiſed a *Meſſias* to the World, and under what *Characters* he deſcribed him.

II. THAT, at the Time of our Saviour's coming into the World, the Expectation of the *Meſſias* was *univerſal*.

III. THAT the Time, within which the *Meſſias* was to come, is long ſince *elapſed*. And,

IV. THAT, by all concurrent *Signs* and *Characters*, our *Jeſus* is the true *Meſſias*.

Scripture-Promiſes and Characters of the Meſſias.

I. [e] THAT there are, in the *Old Teſtament*, many Intimations, and ſome direct Propheſies and Predictions, that all the great *Promiſes* of God, made to his true Worſhippers,

[a] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. III. [b] *Kidder*'s Demonſtration. [c] Iſa. xlv. 1, &c. [d] Acts x. 38.
[e] *Clarke*'s Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion.

Worſhippers, ſhould receive their final *Accompliſhment*, by Means of *a particular Perſon*, anointed of God for that Purpoſe, and who, after the Reduction of all Adverſaries, ſhould ſet up an everlaſting Kingdom, is what any common Reader cannot but obſerve. [g] *The Seed of the Woman*, which was to *bruiſe the Serpent's Head*, and [h] *the Seed of Abraham*, in which *all the Nations of the Earth were to be bleſſed*, might originally be underſtood to ſignify, what [i] St *Paul* afterwards aſſerts they did, in the *ſingular* Senſe, a *particular Perſon*; as well as in the *plural*, a Number of Perſons. The [k] *Shiloh*, which was to come, and *to whom the Gathering of the People was to be*, muſt naturally denote a *ſingle Perſon*, who was to reign, and (by the Gradation of the Words in the Text) of a Character ſomewhat ſuperior to that of a *Sceptre*, and a *Law-giver*. The Words of *Balaam*, [l] *I ſhall ſee him, but not now; I ſhall behold him, but not nigh; there ſhall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre ſhall riſe out of Iſrael*, are put in his Mouth, to deſcribe very obviouſly a greater Perſon, than one, who ſhould *ſmite the Corners of Moab, and deſtroy all the Children of Seth*. The Words of *Moſes*, [m] *The Lord thy God will raiſe up unto thee a* Prophet, *from the Midſt of thee, like unto me; unto him ſhalt thou hearken; and it ſhall come to paſs, that whoſoever will not hearken to my Words, which he ſhall ſpeak in my Name, I will require it of him*; plainly deſcribe a very *extraordinary* Prophet, ſome Time to come, who ſhould reſemble *Moſes*; and, conſequently, accompliſh high Deſigns, reveal God's Will, promulge a new *Law*, and eſtabliſh a new *Covenant*. The Words of *Iſaiah*, [n] *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government ſhall be upon his Shoulders, and his Name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace: Of the Increaſe of his Government and Peace there ſhall be no End; upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with Judgment, and with Juſtice, from henceforth, even for ever*: Thoſe of *Jeremiah*, [o] *I will raiſe unto David a righteous Branch, and a King ſhall reign and proſper, and ſhall execute Judgment and Juſtice; and this is the Name whereby he ſhall be called*, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS; and thoſe of *Daniel*, [p] *I ſaw in the Night Viſions, and behold one, like the* [q] *Son of Man, came with the Clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and there was given unto him Dominion, and Glory, and a Kingdom; that all People, and Nations, and Languages ſhould ſerve him: His Dominion is an everlaſting Dominion, which ſhall not paſs away, and his Kingdom, that which ſhall not be deſtroyed:* All theſe Paſſages, I ſay, do plainly denote, that this illuſtrious Perſon ſhould be a mighty Prince and Governor, [r] *whoſe Dominion*, as *Zechary* deſcribes it, *ſhould be from Sea even to Sea, and from the River, even unto the Ends of the Earth*; and who is called, by *David*, [s] *the everlaſting Prieſt*; by *Ezekiel*, [t] *the one Shepherd*; by *Haggai*, [u] *the Deſire of all Nations*; by *Malachi*, * *the Meſſenger of the Covenant*; and, in another Place of *Daniel*, expreſſly, [x] *the Meſſiah the Prince*.

II. THESE are ſome of the Predictions and Promiſes, which God was pleaſed to make in Scripture, of an extraordinary Perſon, inveſted with great Power and Authority, and who, in the Exerciſe of it, was to give a general Bleſſing to Mankind, whom the Prophets diſtinguiſhed by a *Variety* of Appellations, which the *Jews* have *comprized* in the general Stile of *Chriſt*, or *Meſſias*: And that, under this Name and Notion, they expected a Perſon, at the Time of our Saviour's Coming, who ſhould be endowed with Qualities, and perform Actions ſuitable to the Character, whereby he is deſcribed, *is manifeſt* from the Woman of *Samaria*'s ready Reply, [y] *I know that the Meſſiah cometh, and, when he cometh, he will teach us all Things*; from the [z] *People's expecting, and muſing in their Hearts of* John, *whether he was the Chriſt, or not*; and their deputing, from their *Sanhedrim*, [a] *ſome Prieſts and Levites*, to go and *enquire* of him concerning this Matter: *Is manifeſt*, from [b] the *People's thinking*, when they ſaw our Saviour's Works, *that the Kingdom of God would immediately appear*; from their queſtioning, among themſelves, [c] *When Chriſt comes, will he do greater Miracles than this Man has done?* And, at another Time, openly declaring, [d] *This is in Truth the Prophet, who was to come into the World:* Is manifeſt, laſtly, from the

That, at the Time of our Saviour's Coming, he was expected by the Jews,

[g] Gen. iii. 15. [h] Ibid. xii. 3. [i] Gal. iii. 16. [k] Gen. xlix. 10. [l] Numb. xxiv. 17, &c.
[m] Deut. xviii. 15, 18, 19. [n] Iſa. ix. 6, &c. [o] Jer. xxiii. 5, &c. [p] Dan. vii. 13, &c.
[q] With Reference to this it is, that *Chriſt*, in the Goſpel, perpetually ſtiles himſelf *the Son of Man*, and once *the Son of Man, which is in* (which, in the Propheſy is deſcribed as coming in the Clouds of) *Heaven*, John iii. 13.
[r] Zech. ix. 10. [s] Pſal. cx. 4. [t] Ezek. xxxiv. 23. [u] Haggai ii. 7. * Mal. iii. 1.
[x] Dan. ix. 25. [y] John iv. 25. [z] Luke iii. 15. [a] John i. 19. [b] Luke xvii. 20.
[c] John vii. 31. [d] Ibid. vi. 14.

great Jealouſy, which *Herod* had concerning *the King of the Jews*, who was expected to be born about that Time; and from the remarkable Teſtimony of [e] *Joſephus*, who tells us, that the chief Thing, which incited the *Jews* to rebel againſt the *Romans*, was a *doubtful Propheſy*, as he calls it, found in the Holy Scriptures, that, about that Time, a great Prince ſhould be born among them, who was to be Monarch of the whole World. However this be, 'tis certain, that, from this general Expectation, [f] falſe Chriſts and falſe Prophets, in Abundance, took Occaſion to deceive the People, who were eaſy enough to be deluded, and to be drawn into Ruin, upon the Perſuaſion, that their *Meſſias*, and *univerſal King*, their *Reſtorer*, and wonderful *Deliverer*, was then to appear in the World.

and Gentiles. NOR was this the Expectation of the *Jewiſh* Nation only, but, even among *Heathens*, the Notion did prevail, that ſome great and extraordinary Perſon was to appear in the World, in the Age wherein our Saviour lived. For, beſides the Authorities of *Suetonius* and *Tacitus*, which we had Occaſion to produce before, the Oracles of the *Sibyls*, which were kept among the *Archives* at *Rome*, plainly foretold the Coming of *Chriſt*, and pointed out the very Time, which made the *Romans* have a watchful Eye upon the *Jews*. The ſame Year that *Pompey* took *Jeruſalem*, one of theſe Oracles, *viz. That Nature was about to bring forth a King to the Romans*, made ſo great a Noiſe, and terrified the Senate ſo, that they made a Decree, [g] that none, who were born that Year, ſhould be brought up; but, by the Intereſt of thoſe great Men, whoſe Wives were then with Child, and thereupon applied the Propheſy to themſelves, the Decree was hindered from being made publick. *Virgil*, [h] in the famous IVth *Eclogue*, wrote about the Beginning of *Herod the Great*, compliments

[e] De Bello Jud.

[f] It may not be amiſs, in this Place, to make mention of ſome of the falſe Chriſts, againſt whom our Saviour [*Matth.* xxiv. 24, &c.] cautions his Followers, who, in different Ages of the World, aſſumed that *Character*, and impoſed upon the People; in order to ſhew the Reader the Succeſſion of Deluſion in the *Jews*. The two, whom we read of in Scripture, before our Saviour's Appearance, were *Theudas*, and *Judas* of *Galilee*, who drew ſome People after them, but were ſoon *both ſlain*, and *all, as many as obeyed them, were ſcattered, and brought to nought*, Acts v. 36, 37. *Joſephus* [Antiq. Lib. XXVIII. c. vii.] about that Time, mentions another, who led the *Jews* into the Wilderneſs, and promiſed them Deliverance, but was deſtroyed by *Feſtus*, together with all his Followers. About forty Years after the Birth of *Chriſt*, two Brothers, *Aſinæus* and *Avileus*, both *Weavers*, had mighty Succeſs, but were, at laſt, deſtroyed, and occaſioned the Ruin of many of their Followers; and, about ſeventy-four Years after that, another *Weaver*, named *Jonathan*, led many *Jews* after him into the Wilderneſs, but was taken, and burnt alive, and Multitudes of the *Jews* maſſacred about *Cyrene*. In the Reign of *Trajan*, *A. C.* 114, the *Jews* ſet up one *Andrew*, who occaſioned the Deſtruction of many Thouſands of them; and, in the Reign of *Adrian*, another, whom they called *Bar Cochab*, i. e. *the Son of a Star*, alluding to the Star of *Jacob*, Numb. xxiv. 17. But, when they diſcovered the Impoſture, they changed his Name to *Bar Coſibàh*, i. e. *the Son of a Lye*. In the Reign of *Theodoſius the Younger*, *A. C.* 434, another falſe *Chriſt* aroſe in the Iſland of *Crete*, pretending that he was ſent from Heaven to carry the *Jews* off that Iſland, on dry Ground, through the Sea, and thereupon perſuaded ſeveral to throw themſelves in. In 520, another, called *Dunaan*, aroſe in *Arabia*, and, with the *Jews*, who followed him, ſet upon the Biſhops and Chriſtians in the City of *Nigræ*, and committed great Outrages, till he was deſtroyed. In 529, the *Jews* and *Samaritans* in *Paleſtine* were ſeduced into Rebellion by one *Julian*, a falſe *Meſſias*, which occaſioned the Deſtruction of many of them. In 620, when *Mahomet* appeared, as he, at firſt, pretended to be the *Meſſias*, the *Jews* flocked to him; till, as ſome ſay, they ſaw him eat Camel's Blood, and upon that Account forſook him. In 721, they followed a certain *Syrian*, who ſaid he was *Chriſt*. In 1137, they followed another in *France*, which occaſioned their Baniſhment from that Country. In 1138, they took up Arms with another in *Perſia*, which brought great Miſchief upon them. In 1157, they made an Inſurrection with another in *Spain*, and had almoſt all been cut off. In 1167, they ſuffered very much under another in the Kingdom of *Fez*; and, in the ſame Year, under another in *Arabia*, who gave for a Sign, that, after his Head was cut off by the King of *Arabia*, he would riſe to Life again, by which Fiction he eſcaped a more cruel Death. About the Year 1174, another aroſe in *Perſia*, and led the *Jews* into Rebellion, which occaſioned great Deſtruction among them; and, about 1199, another famous one, called *David el David*, alias *David Alroi*, who was a great *Magician*, and deluded many *Jews*. In 1222, many of them followed a falſe *Chriſt* in *Germany*, whom they called the Son of *David*; and the ſame Year expected their Meſſias to be born of a Woman, then with Child, at *Worms*, but it proved a *Girl*. In 1465, when the *Saracens* made ſuch Inroads upon *Chriſtendom*, the *Jews* thought their Meſſias was coming to fight their Battles; and, the ſame Year, *R. Abraham Avenaris*, a *Jewiſh* Aſtrologer, from the Conjunction of *Jupiter* and *Saturn* in the Sign *Piſces*, foretold the Coming of their Meſſias to be at Hand. In 1497, the *Jews* were deceived by *Iſhmael Sophus*, who, having got together an Army of vile and profligate Men, gained many Victories, but, at laſt, cheated them, and ſet up a new Sect for *Mahomet*. In 1503, *R. Aſcher Lemla* appeared in *Germany*, pretending that he was the Meſſias's Forerunner, who, he promiſed, ſhould come and reſtore the *Jews* to the Land of *Canaan* that ſame Year. In 1534, a new Meſſias aroſe in *Spain*, who was burnt by *Charles* V. The ſame Year, another at *Mantua*, who came to Life again, as many of the *Jews* believed, after he was burnt. In 1615, another *Pſeudo-Meſſias* appeared in the *Eaſt-Indies*, and was followed by the *Portugueze Jews*. In 1624, another in *Holland*. In 1666, a famous one, called *Sabethai Levi*, who, after all the Expectation of the People of the *Jews*, turned, at laſt, *Mahometan*, to ſave his Life; and, no longer ago than 1682, another, named *R. Mardochai*, a *German Jew*, whom all the *Jews* in *Italy*, and many in *Germany*, owned, but, like wiſe Men, they concealed it, with due Reſpect to the *Inquiſition* and Self-Preſervation. Thus the *Jews* have been perpetually ſetting up falſe Meſſiahs, one after another, from the Time of our Saviour's Coming, even to our Days; which is enough, one would think, after ſo many Diſappointments, to make them bethink themſelves. *Vid. Kidder*'s Demonſtration, and *Leſlie*'s Short Method with the *Jews*.

[g] Suetonius, in Vitâ Auguſt.

[h] Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas,
Magnus ab integro ſæc'lorum naſcitur ordo:

Jam

compliments the Conſul *Pollio* with his *Propheſy*, by ſuppoſing it might refer to his Son *Salonius*, then newly born; but the Words are too great to be verified in mere mortal Man; the *Golden Age*, and *Renovation of all Things*, cannot be fulfilled in the Reign of any *earthly* King; and therefore we may obſerve, that the *Poet* expreſſes it, almoſt in the very Words [i] of the holy Scriptures, wherein they tell of the *glorious* Age of the *Meſſias*, of *new Heavens, and a new Earth*, then to begin, and to be finally compleated at the End of the World. After this, he runs a Diviſion upon the peaceable State of that Reign, which is perfectly a Paraphraſe [k] upon Part of that Chapter of *Iſaiah*, *where the Wolf is to dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard lie down with the Kid, and the Calf, and the young Lion, and the Fatling together*; and where all *noxious* Animals are no longer to *hurt or deſtroy, in all God's holy Mountain*. So univerſal was the Expectation, both in *Jews* and *Gentiles*, of ſome great and wonderful Perſon to come into the World, in the Age when our Saviour appeared; and,

III. THAT the Time of his Coming is long ſince paſt, we ſhall now endeavour to evince, by ſuch Marks and Diſcoveries, as the holy Scriptures furniſh us with.

1. IN the Words of *Jacob*, we have a notable Prediction of the Time, when the Meſſias was to come; [l] *The Sceptre ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him ſhall the Gathering of the People be.* Theſe Words we had Occaſion to explain before; but, for the preſent Uſe and Purpoſe of them, we deſire it may be conſidered, [m] that the firſt Promiſe of the Meſſias was made to *Adam*, as [n] *the Seed of the Woman*, which *ſhould break the Serpent's Head*, and from thence derived to *Shem*, the Son of *Noah*, *Japhet* and *Ham* being paſſed by; that from *Shem* it was deduced to *Abraham*, the other Sons of *Terah* not being conſidered; that from *Abraham* it was conveyed to *Iſaac*, *Eſau* being omitted; and from him to *Jacob*, the Author of this Prediction, who, being now about to leave the World, called his Sons, and bleſſed them, and by the *Prophetick* Spirit, that was then upon him, told them ſeveral Things, *which ſhould happen in the laſt Days*; and, among others, when *Shiloh*, who is the *Meſſias*, (according to [o] the ancient *Jews* themſelves) and who was to deſcend from the Tribe of *Judah*, ſhould come, *viz.* before the *Jews* ſhould become a *conquered* Nation, deprived of all Rule and Authority of their own, and ſubjected to a foreign Yoke. Since then it is acknowledged, that by *Shiloh* we are to underſtand the *Meſſias*, and that God, by the Mouth of the *Patriarch*, promiſed, that the Government of *Iſrael* ſhould not fail, until *Shiloh* came; the Government of *Iſrael* having now manifeſtly failed, and there being not one Country in the World, where the *Jews* are either a *Kingdom*, or *Republick*, or *Body Politick*, it inevitably follows, that the *Meſſias* is already come.

2. THE Words of the Angel *Gabriel*, in the Prophet *Daniel*, [p] are more particular in this Affair; for therein he names the *Meſſias the Prince*, and fixes the Time of

Jam nova Progenies cœlo dimittitur alto——
Tu modo naſcenti puero, quo ferrea primum
Deſinet, & toto ſurget gens aurea mundo. VIRG. Ec. IV.

[i] Iſa. lxv. 17. 2 Pet. iii. 13.

[k] Iſa. xi. 6. ——Non magnos metuent armenta Leones,
Occidet & ſerpens, & fallax herba veneni
Occidet - - - - - - - - - - - - Ibid.

[l] Gen. xlix. 10. [m] *Kidder*'s Demonſtration. [n] Gen. iii. 15.

[o] The *Chaldee* and ancient *Jewiſh* Interpreters did always underſtand it in this Senſe: But the Sceptre being long ſince departed from *Judah*, and no other Meſſias come, but our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt, to whom the Gathering of the Nations* or *Gentiles has been*, the Rabbies of the *Jews* have, ſince his Coming, ſtrained their Wits to invent Salvo's, and Evaſions for this Propheſy. Some of them ſay, that, by *Shiloh* here, was not meant the *Meſſias*, but *Moſes*; while others maintain, that it was the Tabernacle at *Shiloh*. Others, allowing it to be meant of the *Meſſias*, have ſuppoſed the Sceptre to be a *Rod*, not of Rule, but of Correction, which ſhould not depart from *Judah*, until the Meſſias came; whilſt others, not liking this, allow it to be a *Sceptre of Government*, but then they turn it this Way, *viz.* that the Sceptre ſhould not *finally*, or for ever, depart from *Judah*, becauſe the *Meſſias* ſhould come, that is, to reſtore it: But this being an *Alteration*, rather than an *Expoſition* of the Text, others have adventured upon a bolder Way to ſatisfy it, *viz.* by affirming, that the Sceptre or Dominion is not yet departed, *i. e.* not totally gone, becauſe ſome of the Tribe of *Judah* have, ſome where or other, ſome Share or other of Government or Juriſdiction. more or leſs; at leaſt, that ſome of the preſent *Potentates* of the World have, one Way or other, deſcended from that Tribe, though it may not be known how. But theſe Pretences need no diſproving: They carry Guilt in their Face, and, being all contradictory to one another, ſhew to what Confuſion the *Jews* are brought, in forcing their Way through the plain Predictions of the Meſſias. *Leſlie*'s ſhort Method with the *Jews*.

[p] This Propheſy comes ſo cloſe to the Point, that the modern *Jews*, to avoid it, would endeavour to diſcredit the whole Book of *Daniel*. For, above an hundred Years after *Chriſt*, making a new Diſtinction of the Books of

of his appearing. [q] *Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy People, and upon thy holy City, to finish the Transgression, and to make an End of Sin, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness, and to seal up the Vision and Prophesy, and to anoint the most Holy,* &c. We have before explained this Prophesy at large, and, upon this Occasion, need only take Notice, that *Daniel*, computing that the *seventy Years* of *Judah*'s Captivity, which were foretold by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, were now drawing to an End, earnestly prayed to God, to grant his People a *Restoration* to their native Land: Whereupon he is assured in a Vision, not only of a *temporal* Deliverance from the *Babylonish* Captivity, but of a much greater *Redemption* from their *spiritual* Bondage under Sin and Satan, which God would vouchsafe them by the Hands of the *Messiah*, their Prince, in such a determinate Time. For if, according to the *Prophetick* Computation, we reckon each Day of these *Weeks* for a Year, the Term of *seventy Weeks* will just amount to four Hundred and ninety Years; which, commencing at the Time when the Commandment, or Decree, was given *Ezra* to restore and rebuild *Jerusalem*, (and this was given in the seventh Year of *Artaxerxes*) must have expired many hundred Years ago; and, according to the best Calculation, much about the Time, when *Jesus of Nazareth* was *cut off, not for himself*, but *to finish the Transgression, and make an End of Sin, and a Reconciliation for Iniquity*, as the Angel expresses the blessed Effects of his *meritorious* Passion.

3. THE Prophet *Haggai* is still more express upon the Subject of the *Messiah*'s Coming, [s] and limits it to a Time, wherein we cannot be mistaken: *I will shake all Nations, and the Desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this House with Glory, saith the Lord of Hosts. The Silver is mine, and the Gold is mine; the Glory of this latter House shall be greater, than that of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts.* This Prophesy likewise we have explained before; and for the present therefore need only observe, that as the *former Temple* was much more illustrious, * not only for its Riches and Magnificence of Building, but for the many great Tokens of God's special Favour, (whereof we have made Mention elsewhere) the latter Temple could not possibly excel it in any other Respect, but this,——That during its Standing, the Messias, here called *the Delight of all Nations*, should appear, and honour the Place more by his Presence in it, than all those other Things did, which were but Types and Shadows of him, [t] *who was to be the Brightness of his Father's Glory, the express Image of his Person, and* [u] *in whom the Fulness of his Godhead was to dwell bodily.* Since therefore the *second Temple*, so far inferior to the former, both in external Ornaments, and signal Manifestations of the Divine Grace and Power in it, was, according to God's Promise and Prediction, to become *more glorious* than the other, which could only arise from the *personal* Appearance of the *Messias* in it; the *Messias* must necessarily appear, before the Destruction of this *second Temple* happened: And since the Destruction of it is now considerably more, than sixteen hundred Years ago,

the Old Testament into Ἁγιόγραφα, or *Holy Writings*, and *inspired* and *canonical* Scriptures, they thrust down the Book of *Daniel* into this *Class*, at the End of the Prophets, which before was placed in the Middle of them. It is to be observed however, that if this Book of *Daniel* be not *inspired* in the *highest Degree*, it cannot stand among the Number of *Holy Writings*, but must be accounted *false* and *blasphemous*; because it all along speaks of itself as immediately inspired by God: And if those Visions and Revelations, here related, be not true, then is it telling of Lyes *in the Name of the Lord*, which is the Height of *Blasphemy*. Since therefore the modern *Jews* dare not place the Book of *Daniel* lower, than among the *holy* and *pious Writings*, they confess it to be inspired and *canonical*, and have only discovered their own Guilt, by endeavouring to decline the Testimony of their *own* Prophets from our *Messias*. *Leslie*'s short Method with the *Jews*.

[q] Dan. ix. 24, &c. [r] *Prideaux*'s Connection.

[s] Some modern *Jews*, to avoid the Force of this Prophecy, pretend that the *latter House* is not to be meant of the *second* Temple, but of some other, to be built hereafter. But this is the most *extravagant* Conceit imaginable, inconsistent with the Context, with the Letter, and plain Meaning of the Text, with the Purpose of the Prophet, and, in Truth, with common Sense. For, that the Prophet, when speaking of an *House*, that was building, and encouraging the *Jews* to go on with it, should affirm, that by this House is meant an House hereafter to be built, is a Thing incongruous and incredible. See *Leslie*, ibid. Others tell us, that the Glory of the *second* House was greater, than that of the *first*, because it continued longer. *Solomon*'s Temple, *say they*, continued but 410 Years, before it was destroyed by the *Babylonians*; but this *second* Temple stood 420, before it was destroyed by the *Romans*; upon which Account the Glory of this *latter House* was greater. But is the Continuance of *ten* Years so mighty a Thing? Will this make a Compensation for the Defect above-mentioned? Does God say, he will shake the Heaven and the Earth for this only? Is this all that he designs and promises, when he says, *I will fill this House with Glory?* If the bare Continuance of a few Years longer be such an Addition of Glory, the Tabernacle of *Moses* was more glorious than the Temple of *Solomon*; and if the People of the Land could not know, how much the Temple they were building, was to stand longer than *Solomon*'s did, which they could not know, without a particular Prophesy, this never could have been used as an Encouragement for their vigorous Prosecution of the Work. *Kidder*'s Demonstration, Part III.

* *Kidder*, ibid. [t] Heb. i. 3. [u] Col. ii. 9.

ago, the Coming of the *Meſſias* cannot be of later Date, how much ſoever it may be ſooner.

THUS it appears, that, within the Compaſs of *Daniel*'s Weeks, and during the Standing of the ſecond Temple, and before the *Jewiſh* Polity was quite diſſolved, which all ſeem to point at one and the ſame Time, the *Meſſias* was to come, if we may rely on the Promiſes of God: "But theſe Promiſes, *may the Jews ſay*, are "not *abſolute*, but *conditional*: They depend upon the Temper and Diſpoſition of "the Perſons, to whom they are made. If they deſerve them, they ſhall be ful-"filled in due Time; but, if they are found unworthy of them, they ſhall be de-"layed. Now, though God has promiſed indeed to ſend us the *Meſſias*, at the Time "appointed by theſe Predictions; yet it is upon Condition, that we deſerve ſuch "an ineſtimable Bleſſing; whereas our *Back-ſlidings* have been ſo many, and our "Iniquities ſo grievous, that we muſt charge it upon our guilty Selves, and not "any Breach of the Divine Promiſes, that the Gift of God is *retarded*, and this long-"expected *Son of David* has not yet made his Appearance." *An Objection of the* Jews.

* IN the xxviiith Chapter of *Jeremiah*, we have, in ſome Meaſure, a Rule laid down, whereby we may judge of the Truth of a *Propheſy*, wherein the Good or Evil of any People is concerned. *Hananiah*, the Son of *Azur*, propheſied Good concerning the People of *Iſrael*, and a ſpeedy Deliverance from their Captivity in *Babylon*: But *Jeremiah*, having all along propheſied the quite contrary, addreſſes his *Opponent* in theſe Words: [x] *The Prophets, which have been before me, and before thee of old, propheſied both againſt many Countries, and againſt great Kingdoms, of War, and of Evil, and of Peſtilence; the Prophet, which propheſieth of Peace, when the Word of the Prophet ſhall come to paſs, then ſhall the Prophet be known, whether the Lord hath truly ſent him*: Whereby he intimates, that, as we cannot account him to be a *falſe* Prophet, who *threatens an Evil*, which does not come to paſs, becauſe Repentance may *intervene*, and ſtop God's avenging Hand; ſo we have no Cauſe to believe him, who *promiſes a Bleſſing*, to be a true Prophet, until the Bleſſing confirms the Truth of his Propheſy; becauſe there is not the like Reaſon for God's *deferring* his Promiſes, as there is for not *performing* his Threats. [y] If then the Coming of the *Meſſias* was an *Event*, in which, not the *Jews* only, but all the Nations of the World were to be bleſſed; to ſuppoſe, that he did not come at the Time appointed, is not only to reproach the Prophets, who foretold his Coming, but to impeach the *Veracity* likewiſe of that *Divine Spirit*, by which *theſe holy Men of old ſpake*, as they were directed. *Anſwered.*

WE grant indeed, that our Iniquities do frequently with-hold God's Bleſſings from us, but, in Relation to the Bleſſing we are now conſidering, they could not have that Effect, becauſe we have the Teſtimony of God himſelf, that, in this Reſpect, he would, upon no Conſideration, [z] *break his Covenant, nor alter the Thing that had gone out of his Lips: I have ſworn once by my Holineſs*, ſays he, *that I will not fail David*, concerning the Coming of the Meſſias of his Lineage and Deſcent; for ſo he goes on, *his Seed ſhall endure for ever, and his Seat is like the Sun before me; he ſhall ſtand faſt for evermore as the Moon, and as the faithful Witneſs in Heaven*: What then can the Sins and Tranſgreſſions of the *Jews* be, that they ſhould vacate and defeat ſuch ſolemn and expreſs Propheſies? [a] That old *Idolatry*, which was the Foundation of ſo much Miſchief to them, they have, ever ſince their Return from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, laid aſide: That *Contempt of the Law*, for which they were ſo frequently reproved by their Prophets, they have endeavoured to reform, and (abating one *melancholy* Conſideration) have no more Iniquities in Number, nor more heinous in their Nature to anſwer for, than other People; and yet they make their Sins their *Subterfuge* upon this Occaſion, and, in the Language of the Prophet, call themſelves [b] *a People laden with Iniquity, a Seed of Evil-doers, Children that are Corrupters, that have forſaken the Lord, and provoked the Holy One of Iſrael unto Anger*. But, allowing their Iniquities to be as great as they ſuppoſe them on this Occaſion, yet was not the *Meſſias* promiſed as a *Remedy* for Sin? Is not the declared Purpoſe of his Coming, [c] *to make an End of Sins, and to make a Reconciliation for Iniquity?* [d] *In that Day there ſhall be a Fountain opened*, ſays the Prophet, *to the Houſe of David, and to the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, for Sin and for Uncleanneſs*: And if ſo, then are the Sins of the *Jews* ſo far from being a Reaſon *The Sins of the* Jews *no Obſtruction.*

* Jer. xxviii. 9. [x] Ibid. *ver.* 8, 9. [y] *Kidder*'s Demonſtration, Part III. [z] Pſal. lxxxix. 31, &c. [a] *Kidder*, ibid. [b] Iſa. i. 4. [c] Dan. ix. 24. [d] Zech. xiii. 1.

for the *deferring* of his Coming, that they are rather an Argument for the *haſtening* it; that ſuch as were in Darkneſs, might ſee a marvellous Light, and to them, who ſat in the Shadow of Death, [h] *the Sun of Righteouſneſs might ariſe with Healing in his Wings.* Thus having ſhewn, that, notwithſtanding the *Jewiſh* Pretences for Delay, the Time of the Meſſiah's Coming is moſt certainly elapſed; we ſhall now endeavour to prove,

Jeſus proved to be the Meſſias.

IV. THAT our bleſſed Saviour, in whom we truſt, is that very *Meſſias*, whom the Scriptures characterize, and whom the *Jews*, in their Infidelity, vainly expect. And this we ſhall do, by obſerving, how all the *Predictions* of the *Prophets*, concerning *the one*, agree with the *Account*, which the *Evangeliſts* give us of *the other*.

From the Fulfilling of the Propheſies.

I. THE Propheſies require, that the *Meſſias* ſhould ariſe from the Nation of the *Jews*, from the Tribe of *Judah*, from the Family of *David*; be born of a Virgin, in the Town of *Bethlehem*, and have his conſtant Reſidence at *Nazareth of Galilee*. To this Purpoſe, we read in the Prophets, that [i] *in the Seed of Abraham*, the great Progenitor of the *Jews, all the Nations of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed*; that [k] *his Brethren ſhould praiſe Judah*, from whom *Shiloh* was to come, *and his Father's Children bow before him*; that God would [l] *raiſe unto David a righteous Branch, and a King to execute Judgment and Juſtice in the Earth*; that [m] *a Virgin ſhould conceive, and bear a Son, and ſhould call his Name Immanuel*; that [n] *out of Bethlehem, in the Land of Judah, ſhould come a Governor, who ſhould rule Iſrael*, and that [o] *in the Way of the Sea, beyond Jordan in Galilee of the Nations, the People, that walked in Darkneſs, ſhould ſee a great Light*; &c. And, to the ſame Purpoſe, we read in the *Evangeliſts*, what the *Genealogy* of our Lord and Saviour was; that by Birth he was a *Jew*, * deſcended *from the Tribe of Judah*, [p] *of the Houſe and Lineage of David*, [q] born of an immaculate Virgin †, by a ſpecial Providence, in the City of *David*, which is called *Bethlehem*; but brought up, with his reputed Father, in a Place of *Galilee*, named *Nazareth*.

THE Propheſies require, that this Meſſias ſhould not only be a *Prophet*, to *teach* and inſtruct, but a great Prince likewiſe, conſtituted by God, to *rule* and govern his People; to deliver them from Oppreſſion and Slavery; to ſubdue their Enemies, and reduce all Nations, both *Jew* and *Greek*, under his Dominion. But, notwithſtanding this, that he ſhould be a Prince of a *peculiar Character*, juſt and merciful in his *Adminiſtration*, meek and gentle in his *Diſpoſition*, mean and humble in his *Appearance*, living a poor inglorious Life, dying a cruel and ignominious Death, and yet bearing all with invincible Patience, and making his Sufferings *ultimately* redound to the Salvation of Mankind, by becoming an Atonement and Propitiation for Sin. To this Purpoſe, we read in the *Old Teſtament*, that [r] *God would raiſe up a Prophet, like unto Moſes, and put his Words in his Mouth*, and [s] *anoint him to preach good Tidings unto the Meek, and to bind up the Broken-hearted*; that he would [t] *ſet a King upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to eſtabliſh it, with Judgment and with Juſtice for ever*; who ſhould [u] *proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the Opening of the Priſon to them that are bound*; *who*, * *girding his Sword upon his Thigh*, ſhould go out *conquering and to conquer*, until he made [x] *the Inhabitants of the Wilderneſs kneel before him, and his Enemies lick the Duſt*; until *his Dominion ſhould be extended from one Sea to another, and from the Flood unto the World's End.* For [y] *from the Riſing of the Sun, even to the Going down of the ſame, his Name ſhall be great among the Gentiles, and, in every Place, Incenſe offered to his Name, and a pure Offering.* But, how powerful and victorious ſoever he might prove, yet ſtill he was to be the [z] *Prince of Peace*; [a] *Righteouſneſs* was to be *the Girdle of his Loins, and Faithfulneſs the Girdle of his Reins*; and, [b] *like a Shepherd*, was he to *feed his Flock, and gather the Lambs with his Arms, and carry them in his Boſom, and gently lead thoſe that were with Young*: For [c] *behold, thy King cometh unto thee, he is juſt, and having Salvation, lowly, and riding upon an Aſs*; [d] *he hath no Form or Comelineſs, and when thou ſhalt ſee him, there is no Beauty, that thou ſhouldſt deſire him: He ſhall be deſpiſed and rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*; and the World, *as it were, ſhall hide their Faces from him*; but, all this while,

[h] Mal. iv. 2. [i] Gen. xxii. 18. [k] Ibid. xlix. 8, 10. [l] Jer. xxiii. 5. [m] Iſa. vii. 14. [n] Mic. v. 2. [o] Iſa. ix. 1, 2. * John vii. 41, 42. [p] Luke ii. 4. [q] Matth. ii. 5, 6. Luke ii. 11. † Ibid. i. 34. [r] Deut. xviii. 18. [s] Iſa. lxi. 1. [t] Ibid. ix. 7. [u] Ibid. lxi. 1. * Pſal. xlv. 3. [x] Ibid. lxxii. 8, 9. [y] Mal. i. 11. [z] Iſa. ix. 6. [a] Ibid. xi. 5. [b] Ibid. xl. 11. * Zech. ix. 9. [d] Iſa. liii. 2.

while, [a] *he ſhall not cry, nor cauſe his Voice to be heard in the Street; like a Lamb,* ſhall he *be brought to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearers is dumb, ſo he ſhall not open his Mouth*; and, tho' he *be numbered with the Tranſgreſſors,* yet ſhall he *make his Soul an Offering for Sin, juſtify many,* and *bear their Iniquities, and make Interceſſion for the Tranſgreſſors.* To the ſame Purpoſe we read, in the New Teſtament, that, as a *Prophet,* he expounded and applied the Holy Scriptures ſo, [f] *that all, who heard him, were aſtoniſhed at his Underſtanding,* and [g] *wondered at the gracious Words which proceeded out of his Mouth:* And that, as a *King,* [h] *he deſtroyed him, who had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil, and delivered them, who, through Fear of Death, were all their Life-time ſubject unto Bondage.* Therein we read of the Spreading of the Goſpel, and the large Extent of his Kingdom, when [i] *Multitudes of Believers,* and [k] *devout Men of every Nation under Heaven,* leaving their Superſtition and Idolatry, embraced the Chriſtian Faith; and there we read too of the poor Figure and Appearance he made in the World, who, [l] *being in the Form of God, took upon him the Form of a Servant, and made himſelf of no Reputation:* We read of his quiet and peaceable Diſpoſition, in not attempting any Reſiſtance, or Revenge, upon Provocations of the greateſt Injuries and Affronts; of his exceeding Meekneſs and Charity, in pitying all Perſons in any Want or Diſtreſs, and even bewailing the Vengeance he foreſaw impendent on his Perſecutors; of his marvellous Humility, in ſhunning and rejecting Honours, and condeſcending to the meaneſt Offices and Employments; and his unparallelled Patience, in ſubmitting to what the Will and Providence of God laid upon him, Poverty and Diſgrace, bitter Pains and Anguiſhes, both of Body and Mind, and the moſt horrid and moſt opprobrious Death, chearfully and contentedly, without the leaſt Murmur or Regret: And, in ſhort, there we read of our Saviour's dying, not for his own Offences, but for ours, that, *from the Foundation of the World,* his Death was *ordained to be a Propitiation* for the Sins of Mankind, his Blood ſet forth [m] *to be a Sacrifice of a ſweet-ſmelling Savour unto God*; and that, [n] *if the Blood of Bulls and of Goats ſanctified to the purifying of the Fleſh, how much more ſhould the Blood of Chriſt, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himſelf without Spot to God, purge our Conſcience from dead Works, to ſerve the living God?*

ONCE more, the Propheſies are very exact in foretelling every little Circumſtance, relating to the Meſſiah's Death and Exaltation; and the Evangeliſts (as they go along) have obſerved, how each of theſe very ſtrangely concurred, and were accompliſhed in our Saviour's Crucifixion, and other ſubſequent Events. [o] That he, who was born, ſhould die, hath nothing of Wonder in it; but that *he* ſhould [p] *die on the Croſs,* who, by the Laws of the Country, had he been guilty, muſt have been *ſtoned*; that he, who had ſo many Enemies, ſhould yet be [q] betrayed by one of his Diſciples; that he, who had the Bag, and, one would think, not that Temptation to Corruption, ſhould betray him [r] for ſo vile a Price *as Thirty Pieces of Silver*; that this *Price of Blood* ſhould be employed in a Work of Mercy, to [s] buy *a Field* to *bury Strangers in*; that he ſhould die [t] among *Thieves* and *Malefactors,* who ſpent his Time in doing *Good*; and the Multitude, which were wont to pity dying Criminals, ſhould [u] deride him in his greateſt Miſeries; that he ſhould * drink Vinegar on the Croſs, inſtead of a *narcotick* Potion, as the Cuſtom was; and the Soldiers, after they [x] had parted his Garments, ſhould *caſt Lots* for his Coat; that they ſhould not [y] *break his Bones,* as the Manner was among them, but only [z] *pierce his Side with a Spear*; that he, who was crucified, ſhould be interred, contrary to the Practice of the *Romans,* who did not bury thoſe who died upon the Croſs, and [a] Perſons, of the higheſt Rank and Character, ſhould agree in the honourable Interment of one, who died ſo ignominious a Death; that, upon this Interment, he ſhould not, as other Mortals do, [b] *taſte of Corruption*; but, after a [c] ſhort Stay in the Grave, riſe again, and, in a proper Time, [d] aſcend into the higheſt Heavens, *leading Captivity captive,* and become himſelf [e] *the Author of eternal Salvation:* In a Word, that the ſame Perſon ſhould ſuffer and die, and yet reign and proſper; *ſuffer* like a vile Malefactor,

[a] Iſa. xlii. 2. [f] Luke ii. 47. [g] Ibid. iv. 22. [h] Heb. ii. 14, 15. [i] Acts v. 14. [k] Ibid. ii. 5. [l] Phil. ii. 6, 7. [m] Eph. v. 2. [n] Heb. ix. 13, 14. [o] *Kidder's* Demonſtration. [p] Pſal. xxii. 16. John xix. 25. [q] Pſal. xli. 9. Matth. xxvi. 47. [r] Zech. xi. 12. Matth. xxvi. 15. [s] Zech. xi. 13. Matth. xxvii. 7. [t] Mark xv. 27. [u] Pſal. xxii. 7, 8. Matth. xxvii. 39, 43. * Pſal. lxix. 21. John xix. 29, 30. [x] Pſal. xxii. 18. John xix. 23, 24. [y] Exod. xii. 46. John xix. 33. [z] Zech. xii. 10. John xix. 34. [a] Iſa. liii. 9. John xix. 38, 39. [b] Pſal. xvi. 10. Math. xxviii. 6. [c] Hoſea vi. 2. Matth. xii. 40. [d] Pſal. lviii. 18. Acts i. 9, 10. [e] Heb. v. 9.

factor, and yet *reign* like a triumphant Conqueror; these are Things so strange and so surprizing, so much beyond what any History besides affords us, that, if we believe but the Matter of Fact, which we have all the Reason in the World to believe, we cannot but find abundant Reason to adore the Wisdom and Goodness of God, who has so fully accomplished in our *Jesus*, what was so punctually foretold of the Messias many Ages before.

So far then as the *Word of Prophesy* is a *Light* to direct us unto *Christ*, we have all the Predictions of the Old Testament, relating to his Birth and Life, his Death and Resurrection, meeting together, as Rays in a Center, and pointing at our *Jesus*, as that great and eminent Person, ordained by God to come into the World, and promised as a mighty Blessing to his People.

An Objection. "But though these Prophesies remit you to *Christ*, *may the* Jews *reply*, yet may "you not be mistaken in their Interpretation, and apply that to him, which is pro- "perly meant of another? [f] A Kingdom of this World, and not of this World, "Contempt and Adoration, Poverty and Majesty, Persecution and Peace, Suffer- "ings and Triumphs, a Cross and a Throne, the scandalous Death of a private "Man, and the everlasting Dominion of an universal Monarch; these are Things "so inconsistent, so impossible to meet in the same *Subject*, that there is a great Pre- "sumption to believe you are not a little mistaken in the Application of those Pre- "dictions, which are produced to countenance your pretended Saviour's Humilia- "tion, and to apologize for his being put to an ignominious Death; whereas the "whole Tenor of the Prophesies, undoubtedly applicable to him, represent him as "a great and successful Conqueror." This is the Substance, I think, of what the *Jews* have to object against the Gospel-Account of our Saviour's Life and Transactions, and the different Stages of *Abasement* and *Exaltation*, through which he passed: And, to give it a plain and proper Solution, we shall,

1. ASSIGN some Reasons why many of the Prophesies, those relating to the *Messias* in particular, should be *obscure*, and liable to Misconstructions: And then,

2. MAKE it appear, that, notwithstanding this Obscurity, the Christian Interpretation of *Old Testament* Prophesies, concerning the Messias, is undoubtedly true.

Answered, by shewing why Prophesies are obscure. 1. NOW it cannot but be obvious to every common Reader, that, of all the Parts of Scripture, the *prophetick* Books abound most with *figurative* Schemes of Speech, which naturally produce a Difficulty in the Sense, and are not, without great Application, and some previous Knowledge, rightly to be understood. [g] "There are so many bold *Metaphors*, and *hyperbolical* Expressions, so many *Allegories* and *Parables*; such an Air of *Rapture*, such Flame, and Fire throughout; so many *Allusions* to particular Places, and Things, and Customs, of which, these Books themselves do give but dark Intimations; so frequent *Changes* of Persons spoken of; and so many, so sudden, and, to Readers less observant, seemingly *abrupt Transitions* from one Subject to another, that it is not at all to be wondered at, if the Interpreters of Scripture have fallen into a greater Variety of Opinions concerning this Part of it, than any other. *Figures* indeed in *some Places* are so obvious, that one cannot adhere to the *literal* Sense, without manifestly departing from the Mind of the Author: But, *in others*, it may be questioned, whether the *literal* or *figurative* Signification ought to be preferred, where both are true, both rational, and both agreeable to the Principles of sound *Faith*. In *Similitudes* and Parables, every Circumstance is sometimes significant, and to be taken notice of, in the Explanation of the Whole; and sometimes the greater Part of them serve chiefly for *Elegance* and *Ornament*, and the main Drift and Substance of the Whole is only to be attended to; but in *Transitions* the Prophet is still more uncertain; sometimes [h] he is speaking of *Events* near at Hand, when, all on a sudden, a strong Impulse of the holy Spirit carries him up on high to others, far more distant and noble; and afterwards, without any Warning to the Reader, he is brought back, and set down at the nearer and meaner Event, which, by some Analogy or other, gave Occasion for the Mention of the more remote and sublime. He speaks sometimes in his own, sometimes in *God*'s, sometimes in the *Church*'s Name; mentions the Person he speaks of, sometimes under his proper Character, sometimes under [i] the Name and Character of another, who bears some Resemblance to him; and many Times puts whole Countries, and Kingdoms, and Societies of Men, not for the Places and Persons only, whose Names

[f] *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures. [g] *Stanhope*, ibid. [h] Vid. Isa. vii. 10, to 18.
[i] Ibid. xliii. 44, 49. Jer. xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. Hos. iii. 5. Mal. iv. 5.

Names they bear, but for others, in After-Ages, that come up to a Similitude in the ſame Sins and Circumſtances.

Thoſe concerning the Meſſias more eſpecially. From the Greatneſs *of the Subject.*

UPON theſe, and ſeveral other Accounts, it cannot well be imagined, but that Propheſies *in general* muſt be *obſcure*; but then there are other Conſiderations, ariſing from the Nature of the Subject itſelf, which bring the Predictions concerning the *Meſſias* under a Neceſſity of being more involved in a great Variety of Figures, and daring *Flights*, than any other Predictions whatever. This the *Jews* themſelves make no Difficulty to allow; and ſome of their [k] greateſt Doctors have laid it down for a Rule, in interpreting the Prophets, [l] that they are not *literally* to be underſtood, by Reaſon of thoſe *metaphorical* Expreſſions; and therefore we need leſs wonder, that we meet with ſuch Figures and lofty Images, where the Benefits ſpoken of are of ſo *ſpiritual*, and ſo exalted a Nature, as to make the Pomp of Expreſſion the Effect of Neceſſity, which would, in other Caſes, paſs for choſen and artificial. Our Saviour, for Inſtance, is repreſented in Scripture, 1. as a [m] *Prophet*, far above the reſt, both for the Perfection and Succeſs of his Doctrine, and the ſtupendous Teſtimony given of it by his Miracles; 2. As a [n] *Prieſt*, not like thoſe of the *Aaronical* Succeſſion, who made Atonement for the People by offering other Creatures daily; but one of another Order, poſſeſſed of an *everlaſting Prieſthood*, and expiating the Sins of the World by the Sacrifice of himſelf; and, 3. As a [o] *King*, peaceful and glorious, veſted in a Kingdom different from all others, in that it is *ſpiritual* and *eternal*, a Dominion over the *Souls*, as well as the Bodies, and Fortunes of his Subjects, and a Government, of whoſe Stability and *Increaſe there ſhall be no End*. Now, in theſe ſeveral Capacities, every Thing was extraordinary; *all* ſo noble, as to require the moſt *towering Flights* even of inſpired Eloquence to deſcribe them worthily; and *ſome* ſo remote from Senſe and common Appearances, that there was a Neceſſity of *borrowed Reſemblances*, to give us any Idea of them at all. The Prophets, in this Caſe, I ſay, were obliged to take in ſenſible Images to make themſelves underſtood, and to form their Diſcourſes of *ſpiritual* and *inviſible* Bleſſings, upon ſuch *temporal* Advantages, as the People they were ſent to, were beſt acquainted, and moſt delighted with. And as the Loftineſs, ſo

The different Figures *in expreſſing it.*

2. THE ſeeming Difference of the Figures, wherein the Prophets repreſent the Perſon of the *Meſſias*, according to the different Characters he ſuſtained, is a great Addition to the Obſcurity of their Writings. Thus, when at ſome Times they call him [p] *a Worm and no Man, the Scorn of Men, and the Out-caſt of the People*; one, [q] *that was deſpiſed and rejected, ſmitten and afflicted, and* [r] *cut off from the Land of the Living*; and at other Times [s] *fairer than the Children of Men*, and [t] *ſitting at the Right-Hand of God*, the God, [u] *whoſe Throne is for ever and ever*, and the Lord, * *whoſe Name alone is excellent in all the World*, [x] *who laid the Foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Work of his Hands:* When they give ſuch diſtant and almoſt contradictory Characters of one and the ſame Perſon, and both, in different Reſpects, belonging to him, at one and the ſame Time too; theſe ſeeming *Incongruities* may well be allowed to create ſome Confuſion in Men, who are not careful to diſtinguiſh, and apply, and compare the Circumſtances of the Meſſias, and the Propheſies foretelling him, juſtly together; whereas to conſider him, both in his *Divine* and *human* Nature, ſometimes in his State of *Abaſement*, and ſometimes in his State of *Exaltation*, according as the Propheſy points, clears up this Obſcurity at once.

The different Offices *he ſuſtains.*

3. ANOTHER Cauſe of the Obſcurity of thoſe Propheſies, which particularly concern the Meſſias, may be aſcribed to thoſe different *Offices*, under which he is there repreſented, and the promiſcuous Mention of his *firſt* and *ſecond* Coming, which ſome are not careful enough to diſtinguiſh. The *Jews*, in this Reſpect, are very unhappy; for, being prepoſſeſſed with a Notion of *Chriſt's temporal* Grandeur, and, finding ſo many pompous Deſcriptions of the Glory and Triumphs of his Kingdom, they cannot reliſh any Part of his *Humiliation*; and therefore, whatever they meet with in Scripture, that has an Aſpect this Way, they immediately apply to

 ſome

[k] Maim. More Nevoch. *p.* 2. *c.* 30. Menaſ. Ben Iſrael, Qu. in Gen. xxx. [l] This appears to be their Method of interpreting ſeveral Paſſages of the *Old Teſtament*, acknowledged by themſelves to belong to the Meſſias, ſuch as the 72d Pſalm; the 11th, 35th, 65th, and 66th of *Iſaiah*; the 5th of *Micah*; the two laſt Chapters of *Zechariah*, and ſundry others. *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III. [m] Deut. xviii. 15, *&c.* Iſa. ii. 3. Mich. iv. 2. [n] Pſal. cx. 4. [o] Ibid. lxxii. lxxix. Iſa. ix. 6, 7. xi. xl. xlix. Hoſ. iii. Jer. xxx. Ezek. xxxiv. 24. and Zech. ix, *&c.* [p] Pſal. xxii. 6. [q] Iſa. liii. 3. [r] Dan. ix. 26. [s] Pſal. xlv. 2. [t] Ibid. cx. 1. [u] Ibid. xlv. 6. * Ibid. viii. 1. [x] Ibid. cii. 25.

ſome other Perſon, and ſo make one Part of the Propheſy incompatible with the other. Now, to remedy this Abuſe, it may not be improper to remind them, that the Meſſias, as we ſaid, is to be conſidered in the Capacity of a *Prophet* and *Prieſt*, as well as a *King*; and that though the Predictions relating to his *Royal* Authority be enlarged upon more copiouſly, as being the nobleſt Part of his Character, than either of the other; yet are they all *equally* eſſential to the Scheme of Man's Redemption, though not capable of being equally exerciſed, at one and the ſame Time, by one and the ſame Perſon.

THE *Prophet*'s Buſineſs was to *teach* the People: And ſince this great Prophet's Deſign was to raiſe Mens Affections and Deſires, by the cleareſt Revelation of Happineſs in a future, inviſible State; to ſupport them under Afflictions and Perſecutions, and to juſtify the Providence of God, in the Sufferings of good Men, for whom he hath an ineſtimable Recompence in Reſerve; It was no more than requiſite, that ſuch a *Preacher*'s Example ſhould bear Teſtimony to his Doctrine. In like Manner, the *Prieſt*'s Buſineſs chiefly conſiſted in making *Interceſſion* for the People by the Atonement of bloody Sacrifices; and therefore he, who was to ſanctify the People, by the Sacrifice of his own Blood, muſt of Neceſſity die: But now the ſolemn Adminiſtration of his *Kingly* Office could not be entered upon, until the two former were diſcharged, becauſe, in the Predictions of the Meſſias, his Promotion to a Kingdom is expreſsly mentioned, as the Reward of his Fidelity and Sufferings; [z] *becauſe my righteous Servant*, ſays God, *did bear the Iniquities of many*, and *poured out his Soul unto Death, I therefore will divide him a Portion with the Great, and he ſhall divide the Spoil with the Strong.* Since then, according to the Nature and Order of Things, *Chriſt* was to ſuffer, before he could *reign*; to anſwer his *prophetick* Character, in his Teaching and Practice, and his *ſacerdotal*, in his Death and Interceſſion, before he could be admitted to his *regal*, which he then only aſſumed, when, after his Reſurrection, he *aſcended up* on high, and was ſeated at God's Right-Hand; it muſt needs be a Deception, in the *Jews*, to have their Attention ſo ſet upon the Meſſiah's *regal* Character, as almoſt wholly to overlook the *prieſtly* and *prophetical*; and whoever is under the Influence of ſuch a Deception, is but in a bad Diſpoſition to interpret Scripture. And from theſe Conſiderations we proceed,

The Chriſtian Interpretation of Propheſies vindicated.

2. TO juſtify our own Interpretation, and to make it appear, that, notwithſtanding the Obſcurity of the Propheſies concerning the Meſſias, we *Chriſtians* are let into the Knowledge of expounding, and applying them right. That our bleſſed Saviour was a *Prophet* ſent from God, is evident, not only from the many miraculous Works which he did, but from the Confeſſion of his greateſt Enemies. For though they differed in their Sentiments, as to what Prophet it was that he perſonated, ſome thinking him [a] *to be one of the old Prophets riſen from the Dead*; others, *that he was the new Prophet* Elias; and others, *John the Baptiſt reſtored to Life again*; yet all agreed, that he was a Prophet, [b] *mighty in Word and Deed*; and, for this Reaſon, the chief Prieſts feared to lay Hands on him, [c] becauſe *the Multitude took him to be a Prophet.* Nay, they not only took him to be a Prophet, but to be that great and eminent *Prophet*, whom *Moſes* [d] had foretold; and therefore, upon his raiſing the Widow's Son at *Naim*, [e] *they glorified God, ſaying, that a great Prophet is riſen up among us*; as, upon another miraculous Occaſion, they declared openly, [f] *this is of a Truth the Prophet, that ſhould come into the World.*

[g] NOW one Part of this great Prophet's Office was, to explain the Senſe of the *Jewiſh* Scriptures, and to remove the Obſcurity that was to remain on many Propheſies, until his Coming. In this, the *Jews* were ſo generally perſuaded, that in every Difficulty, they could not explain, it was an uſual Thing for them to ſay, [h] *Elias will come and reveal all Things*; to the ſame Purpoſe, as the Woman of *Samaria* anſwered our Saviour, [i] *I know that Meſſias cometh, and, when he is come, he will teach us all Things.* Now, if our Saviour himſelf was a *Prophet*, it was impoſſible for him to have been miſtaken in the Interpretation of any Propheſy; becauſe he interpreted by the very ſame *Spirit*, wherewith the Prophets wrote; and if he communicated the ſame Spirit to his Apoſtles, (as the Day of *Pentecoſt* made it manifeſt he did) then muſt their Judgment too, whenever it paſſed upon any *Text*, be *deciſive*, even though it ſhould differ from the Senſe of the *Jewiſh* Doctors. But,

[y] *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures. [z] Iſa. liii. 11, 12. [a] Luke ix. 19. [b] Ibid. xxiv. 19. [c] Matth. xiv. 5. [d] Deut. xviii. 5. [e] Luke vii. 16. [f] John vi. 14. [g] Biſhop *Chandler*'s Defence of Chriſtianity. [h] *i. e.* All Obſcurities ſhall be removed under the Meſſias, whoſe Forerunner and Contemporary *Elias* was expected to be. [i] John iv. 25.

But, when it is more than probable, that their Interpretation agreed with the Senſe of theſe *Jewiſh* Doctors, (ſince to put a falſe, or controverted Senſe on Predictions, confeſſedly belonging to the Meſſias, had been both a bold and fruitleſs Attempt) this is ſtill a farther Confirmation of their Truth and Integrity, in applying the Texts, in the *Old Teſtament*, literally fulfilled in *Jeſus*, to the Proof of his being the true *Meſſias*.

'TIS well obſerved, by a great Man of our own, [k] that *the Jewiſh Traditions, contrary to the Law of God, have done leſs Hurt to Religion, than the Loſs of ſome* Jewiſh *Traditions, or Rules for interpreting Scripture, which had been received among the ancient* Hebrew [l] Rabbins, *but rejected by the later* Jewiſh Maſters, who, to get quit of all the Difficulties that do ſurround them, have deviſed the *Expedient* of *two Chriſts*, one *the Son of Joſeph*, and the other *the Son of David*; the former to *ſuffer* and *die*; the latter to *conquer* and *reign*: A bold, unheard-of Fiction, which their Anceſtors were Strangers to, and what the Word of God knows nothing of. It repreſents, indeed, one and the ſame Perſon, under very oppoſite Circumſtances, a Man of Sorrow, and of Joy, oppreſſed and exalted, deſpiſed and adored, ſuffering and triumphing, hanging upon a Croſs, and ſeated upon a Throne; but this it does under different *Views*, and according to the different *Characters* he ſuſtained. He was a *Prophet*, to teach us the Will of God; and he was a *Prieſt*, to make Atonement for us; but theſe Offices he could not execute, without Trouble and Affliction, without ſuffering and dying, which he came into the World to finiſh firſt, before he took Poſſeſſion of his Kingdom. His *Sufferings* were accompliſhed here on Earth, but his Triumphs did not begin, until he was aſcended into Heaven; nor ſhall the full Glories of his Kingdom be revealed and diſplayed, until, *with Ten thouſand of his mighty Angels*, he ſhall return from thence *to judge the World in Righteouſneſs*, and [m] *to take Vengeance on them, that know not God, and obey not his Goſpel*.

HAVING thus vindicated the *Chriſtian* Interpretation of ancient Propheſies, which point out the Time and Place of the Meſſiah's Birth, his perſonal Qualities, Manner of Life, and Circumſtances of Death, all accompliſhed in our Bleſſed Saviour; we come now to another *Characteriſtick* of him, and that is,

2. THE great *and miraculous* Works, which he was to do. The *Jews*, indeed, of late, are fallen into a Notion, [n] that Miracles are not neceſſary to prove a Divine *Miſſion*, and that the *Meſſias*, when he comes, is to do no other Wonders, [o] than to fight the Lord's Battles, and conquer all before him: But a ſmall Reflection will convince us, that, in the Days of our Saviour, their Forefathers were of a contrary Opinion. When [p] *John the Baptiſt had heard of the Works which Chriſt did, he ſent two of his Diſciples with this Meſſage to him, Art thou he that ſhould come, (i. e.* the Meſſias) *or look we for another?* To whom our Saviour returned this Anſwer; *Go, and ſhew* John *again theſe Things, which ye do hear and ſee; the Blind receive their Sight, and the Lame walk, and the Lepers are cleanſed, and the Deaf hear, and the Dead are raiſed up.* The Anſwer is, in a great Meaſure, taken from the Prophet [q] *Iſaiah*, deſcribing the great Operations of the *Meſſias*; and, by remitting the *Baptiſt* to them, our Saviour has both proved the Truth of his own Miſſion, and the Neceſſity of Miracles in any other, who pretends to the Authority of a Prophet ſent from God. The Demand therefore which the *Jews* made (had

Chriſt proved to be the Meſſias, from his Miracles.

[k] Dr *Jackſon*, Tom. II. Sect. 2. c. 9.

[l] Thus, as to the Prophecy of *Zechariah*, where the King is repreſented riding on *an Aſs*, 'tis twice explained of the Meſſias in the *Talmud*; as to that of *Daniel*, where the Prince is to be *cut off* in ſo many *Weeks*; this *Saying* is ſtill extant in the *Talmud*, as the Tradition of former Times; *in* Daniel *is delivered to us the End of the Meſſias, i. e.* the Term, wherein he ought to come, as *Jarchi* explains it: And (to name no more) as to the famous 53d Chapter of *Iſaiah*, their *Targum* is expreſs, that it relates to the Meſſias; and not only ſo, but their Doctors, with one Mouth, aſſert, (as they received it by Tradition from their Anceſtors) that the Meſſias muſt be underſtood, *by God's Servant*, that ſhall *proſper*, and be exalted. Biſhop *Chandler*'s Defence of Chriſtianity. If then there be any Miſinterpretation of the Propheſies, 'tis not *we*, but the *modern Jews*, that are guilty of it, who, to maintain their Ground againſt Chriſtians, have departed from the Expoſitions of their *Forefathers*, and, in Contradiction to *Philo* and *Joſephus*, as well as other Authors, have perverted both *Chronology* and *Hiſtory*, placing the *Paſſion* of our Saviour ſixty-nine Years before the true Account of it, although we have the Teſtimony of *Tacitus*, that he ſuffered under *Pontius Pilate*. *Jenkin*'s Reaſonableneſs.

[m] 2 Theſſ. i. 8. [n] The learned *Jew*, who diſputed with *Limborch*, *Anno* 1687, contends, that the Prophets foretold neither the Time nor Place of the Nativity of the Meſſias, and ſays, that Miracles were of no Uſe to prove his Miſſion, but only to gather the *Jews* together from all Parts of the World, and to conquer the Nations. *Leſlie*'s Short Method with the *Jews*. [o] *Mahomet* made the like Excuſe for his not working of Miracles. He ſaid, that *Moſes*, *Solomon*, and *Jeſus*, were ſent to ſhew God's *Righteouſneſs*, *Wiſdom*, and *Clemency*, to which Miracles were neceſſary to gain Belief; but that *he* was ſent to ſhew *God*'s *Fortitude*, to which no Miracles were neceſſary, but to enforce it with the Sword, which carried its own Conviction. *Leſlie*, ibid.

[p] Matth. xi. 4, 5. [q] Iſa. xxxv. 5, 6.

(had it proceeded from a good Intent) was neither *impertinent*, nor *unreaſonable*; [r] *Maſter, we would ſee a Sign from thee; what Sign therefore doſt thou do, that we may ſee, and believe thee?* And the Reply, which our Saviour makes, ſeems to allow of the Juſtneſs of it; [s] *If I witneſs of myſelf, my Witneſs is not true*, i. e. not credible; [t] *If I do not the Works of my Father*, (i. e. Works, only imputable to God's extraordinary Power) *believe me not*; but [u] *if I do the Works among you, which no Man elſe has done*; if I cure all Diſeaſes with a Touch, and [*] *with the Finger of God caſt out Devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you.*

His Miracles not diabolical.

How many in Number, how great in Power, how beneficial in their Effects, the Miracles were, which our Saviour wrought, we had Occaſion to conſider [x] elſewhere; and ſhall only now obſerve from what *Principle* they did proceed: And this the rather, becauſe there have not been wanting thoſe, who have had the Hardineſs to aſcribe our Lord's Miracles [y] to *magical* Enchantment, and to compare them with ſuch, as falſe Prophets, and Wizards, and the vileſt Impoſtors have been ſaid to do in all Ages. Whether it be conſiſtent with the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God to ſuffer Men, under the Influence of evil Spirits, to do *true* Miracles, in Confirmation of a *real* Impoſture, [z] is an Argument, wherein the *Learned* are divided, and what we ſhall not purſue at preſent. We will allow it for once, that, in ſome Caſes God may permit this to be, in order to exerciſe our Faith, [a] and to prove us, whether we will adhere to the Truth, which he hath already, by mighty Signs and Tokens, eſtabliſhed among us: But that this may be done, in all Caſes, without any Means to diſtinguiſh *falſe* from *true* Miracles, this is a Thing impoſſible. [b] There are ſome Things ſo *great*, that it is not reaſonable to conceive, that any created Powers can do them, or that, if they could, God would permit them to have Succeſs; ſuch is [c] the making a great and general Alteration in the Courſe of Nature: Some Things *ſo good* and beneficial to Mankind, that wicked and infernal Agents will not, even tho' they were able, perform them; ſuch are the Ejection of Devils, or the Diſcovery of moral Truths: Some Things of ſuch a *Nature*, that theſe malicious Spirits, which are under the Reſtraint and Controul of their Judge, dare not do them, for Fear of meeting ſevere Chaſtiſement for their Preſumption; ſuch may be the *ſpecial* Names of God, or oppoſing directly his extraordinary Meſſengers: And, laſtly, there are ſome Things, ſo peculiarly *appropriated* to God, that no other Being, otherwiſe than as it is acted by his Divine Power, and immediately dependent on it, can in the leaſt intermeddle with; ſuch are the Knowledge of future Contingents, the Diſcernment of our ſecret Thoughts and Intentions, and the Reſtitution of Men from a State of Death; *for, I am he, and there is none beſides me, ſaith the Lord*; [d] *I ſhew the Things to come*; [e] *I ſearch the Heart, and try the Reins*; [f] *I kill, and I make alive.*

THERE being ſo many *Caſes* then, wherein either the Will or Power of *diabolical* Agents muſt *fail*, their Compaſs of working Miracles cannot be ſo *large*, as ſome may imagine; but, even if it were more extended than it is, upon the Suppoſition, that we believe a righteous Providence, we can hardly imagine, that he will ſuffer them to uſurp ſuch a *Tyranny* over the Minds of Men, as to make thoſe Things paſs with the ſober and inquiſitive Part of the World, for Divine Miracles, which were only *Counterfeits* and *Impoſtures*: [g] If the Providence of God, I ſay, be concerned in the Diſcovery of *Satan*'s Deſigns, there muſt be ſome Means of this Diſcovery; and that Means can be ſuppoſed to be no other, than ſome rational and ſatisfactory Evidence, whereby we may know, when ſtrange and miraculous Things are done by *Satan* to deceive Men, and when, by the Power of God, to *confirm* a Divine Teſtimony.

Rules for diſtinguiſhing between true *and* falſe *Miracles.*

THE Rules then, that are generally laid down, in order to diſtinguiſh true Miracles from falſe, and to ſatisfy ourſelves, whether they are done by God and good Spirits, or

[r] John vi. 30. [s] Ibid. v. 31. [t] Ibid. x. 37. [u] Ibid. xv. 24. [*] Luke xi. 20.
[x] See Page 34.
[y] Vid. *Juſt. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph.* *Celſus*, as he is quoted by *Origen*, accounts for our Saviour's Miracles, by pretending, that he went into *Egypt*, and there learnt the Art of doing wonderful Works; and ſeveral of the *Talmudic* Writers affirm, that he was well verſed in *Magic*; while others aſcribe all his wonderful Works to the *Art* he had, in pronouncing the Name *Jehovah*, which he learnt in the Temple, having, as they ſay, once ſecretly conveyed himſelf into the Sanctuary for that Purpoſe. *Chandler*, on Miracles.
[z] Vid. *Chandler*, ibid. and *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [a] Deut. xiii. 1. [b] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. III.
[c] Jer. v. 22. xxxiii. 25. [d] Iſa. xli. 23. [e] Jer. xvii. 10. [f] Deut. xxxii. 39.
[g] *Stillingfleet*, ibid.

or by evil Angels, in Oppoſition to him, [h] are ſuch, as either reſpect, 1. The Works themſelves, and their Manner of being done; or, 2. The Perſons themſelves, and the Ends for which they are done.

1. IN Relation to the *Works themſelves*, it is required, that they be [i] *poſſible*, ſince no Power whatever can effect that which is ſtrictly impoſſible; that they be [k] *probable*, ſince the Divine Power will hardly concern itſelf in what ſavours of *Fable* and *Romance*; that they be not [l] *below the Majeſty of God*, as he is the great Ruler and Governor of the World; nor inconſiſtent with his Character, as he is a good and gracious Being. It is farther required, that they be done *openly*, in the Eye of the World, and before many competent Witneſſes; that they be done *readily*, ſo that no previous Forms or Ceremonies may make them look like *Magic*, or Incantation; that they be done *upon all important Occaſions*, to ſhew the Permanency of the Divine Power; and that the Power be *communicated to others*, and remain in the Hands of their Succeſſors, ſtill producing the ſame great Effects.

2. IN Relation to the *Perſons*, pretending to a Divine Miſſion and Authority, it is neceſſary, that they be in the perfect Exerciſe of their Reaſon and Senſes; that they be conſtant and uniform in the Meſſage they deliver; Men, that fear God, and have a good Report for their unblameable Converſation; and that the Doctrine they endeavour to eſtabliſh by their Miracles, be conſiſtent with the Principles of true Reaſon and Natural Religion; conſiſtent with right Notions and Worſhip of God; conſiſtent with the former Revelations he has made of his Will; of a fit Tendency to deſtroy the Devil's Power in the World, to recover Men from their Ignorance, to reform them from their Vices, to lead them into the Practice of Virtue and true Godlineſs, by proper Motives and Arguments; and, in ſhort, to advance the general Welfare of *Societies*, as well as every Man's particular Happineſs in this Life, and Preparation for a better. And now to apply theſe Marks and Characters to the *Miracles*, which our Saviour and his Apoſtles wrought.

Theſe Rules applied to Chriſt.

1. WE may allow indeed, that what they did tranſcended the natural Skill of any Angel to effect; but it will not therefore follow, that they were any Ways *impoſſible*, ſince they were not above the Power of the firſt Cauſe and ſupreme Being. [m] The ſame God, who formed the Eye, could reſtore the Blind his Sight; he, who wrought the whole Frame of our Bodies, could as eaſily cure the Maimed, and heal the Diſeaſed; and he, who cauſes the Rain to deſcend, and to water the Earth, that it may produce the various Kinds of Herbs and Fruits, and miniſter *Bread to the Eater, and Seed to the Sower*, could not be at a Loſs to change *Water into Wine*, or to multiply the *Loaves* and *Fiſhes*, for the Relief of a fainting, hungry Multitude.

THAT wicked and malicious Spirits ſhould, for a long Continuance of Time, do innumerable Acts of Beneficence, Kindneſs, and Charity to Mankind, is a Thing incredible, and quite repugnant to their known Character; but that God ſhould have Compaſſion on his Creatures, and exerciſe his tender Mercies over the Works of his Hands; that he ſhould raiſe the Dead, and create Bread for the Hungry, and Limbs for the Maimed, are Works both of Power and Mercy; and therefore entirely agreeable to his Wiſdom and Goodneſs, ſince they naturally tended both to beget Reverence in the Minds of Men towards his *Meſſenger*, and to reconcile them to the Belief and Obedience of his heavenly Will.

'TIS natural to imagine, that falſe Prophets and Impoſtors ſhould *creep* into Corners and *obſcure* Places, when they are called upon to give Teſtimony of their Miſſion, and, in the *few* Things they do, ſhould endeavour to gratify the Curioſity, and raiſe the Admiration of their deluded Followers. But ſo far was our Lord from ſeeming to have any Deſire of *Privacy*, that he choſe the moſt publick Places to perform his Wonders in; [n] cleanſing the *Leper* in the View of the Multitude; [o] healing the

[h] Vid. *Stillingfleet*'s *Orig. Sacræ*, and *Chandler*, on Miracles.

[i] This deſtroys the Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*, the ſtanding *Miracle* of the *Roman* Church, but no great *Proof* of its *Infallibility*.

[k] This deſtroys the Credit of the few Miracles pretended to be wrought by *Mahomet*, *viz.* his ſplitting of the Moon, and his wonderful Journey to Heaven, *&c.*

[l] This ſhews the Folly of thoſe, related by *Philoſtratus*, in his Life of *Apollonius Tyaneus*: For can any Thing be more trifling, than the miraculous Dance of the Stools and Tables, and Cups and Diſhes, and placing themſelves in Order for his Entertainment among the *Indians*? Any Thing more ſilly, than his pretending to underſtand the Language of Birds, or the Queſtion he puts to *Achilles*'s Ghoſt; as whether *Polyxena* was ſlain at his Tomb, and whether *Helen* was carried to *Troy* or no? Wonderful Queſtions indeed, to be aſked by ſo *grave* a Philoſopher, whom the Enemies of Chriſtianity ſet up in Competition with *Jeſus!* *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons.

[m] *Chandler*, ibid. [n] Matth. viii. 1, *&c.* [o] Ibid.

Centurion's Servant before many Witneſſes; [p] raiſing the *Ruler*'s Daughter before the Company, that was to attend her Funeral; [q] feeding *four Thouſand* Men at one Time, beſide Women and Children; and, at another, [r] entertaining no leſs than *five Thouſand* at his Table. So far was he from contenting himſelf with a *few* miraculous Actions, that almoſt every Day and Hour produced ſome freſh Inſtance of his Power and Goodneſs; inſomuch, that, if all he did were recorded, *the World itſelf* (ſays the [s] Apoſtle, but with ſomething of *Hyperbole*) *would not contain the Books which ſhould be written*: And ſo far from affecting any Pomp or Ceremony, to delude or captivate the Multitude, that he did all with a Word's ſpeaking. [t] *Peace, be ſtill*, quelled the Raging of the Winds and Waves; [u] *Young Man, ariſe*, revived the Widow's Son; [*] *Be it to thee, as thou deſireſt*, cured the *Canaanitiſh* Woman's Daughter, poſſeſſed with a Devil; [x] *Ephpatha, be opened*, gave the deaf Man Hearing; [y] *Be thou cleanſed*, healed the Leper; and [z] *Lazarus, come forth*, raiſed him from the Grave, who had been *dead four Days*.

THESE Miracles, ſo great in their Nature, and ſo remarkable in their Manner, had our Saviour performed in his own Perſon only, he had given a *Demonſtration* of his Divine Miſſion, and that the Works which he did, were according to the Power and Will of God; but when, even in the Time of his Miniſtration, he imparted to his Diſciple the ſame Power of *caſting out Devils, and healing all Manner of Sickneſs, and all Manner of Diſeaſes among the People*; when he promiſed and made it good to them, that they ſhould *do greater Works, than he had done*, [a] becauſe, by the Power of their Preaching and Miracles, as a Father expreſſes it, *the Eyes of blind Souls ſhould be opened, and the Ears of them, that were deaf to Goodneſs, hearken to the Precepts and Promiſes of the Goſpel*; when he continued this Power to their Succeſſors, [b] till Chriſtianity was ſo fully *eſtabliſhed*, as to need no farther Proof for its Confirmation; till it had overcome the Power and Policy of the World, and converted an innumerable Company of Souls to the true Worſhip and Service of God: When our Saviour did this, I ſay, both in his own Perſon, and in the Perſons of thoſe, that ſucceeded him, what ſhall we think? Did not he act by a Power moſt evidently ſuperior to that of the Devil, when diſpoſſeſſing evil Spirits, and forcing them to [c] confeſs, to [d] intreat, to [e] obey, to [f] expreſs an Awe and Dread of him; when detecting and [g] defeating the Treachery and Sorceries of *Simon*, by one Apoſtle, and ſtriking *Elymas* with Blindneſs, by another? Did not he and they act by a Power oppoſite to Devils, when rooting out their Idolatry and Superſtition, [h] putting the Heathen Oracles to Silence, diſcountenancing all Manner of Wickedneſs, declaring that Light and Darkneſs may as well have Fellowſhip, [i] as *Chriſt and Belial*? [k] *Are theſe the Words of one, that hath a Devil?* Is he not declared to be manifeſted, for this very Purpoſe, [l] *that he might deſtroy the Works of the Devil*? Have we not ſhewn his Miracles to be ſo many Works of Mercy and Goodneſs? And [m] can a Devil *open the Eyes of the Blind?* Is it in the Power, is it in the Inclination of the common Enemy of Mankind to do Things ſo aſtoniſhingly *great*, ſo excellently *good* as thoſe, which this Man has done? *Either therefore make the Tree good, and his Fruit good, or elſe make the Tree corrupt, and his Fruit corrupt; for the Tree is known by his Fruit.*

The Character of Chriſt *and his Apoſtles.*

2. IN trying the Miracles of *Chriſt*, whether they were done by the Interpoſition of a *Divine* or *Diabolical* Power, we muſt examine into his *Character*, and that of his Apoſtles. [n] That they were in full Poſſeſſion of their Reaſon and Senſes, the Nature of their Doctrines, the Excellency of their Precepts, their Speeches, their Apologies, in a Word, their whole Conduct is an abundant Proof: That they were good and holy Men, appears from every Part of their Hiſtory; from their reproving Vice in others, and carefully avoiding it themſelves; their recommending the Fear of God, and the Love of Juſtice and Charity, of Sobriety and Temperance, in their Diſcourſes; and their [o] propoſing themſelves for an Example to others, which, in Modeſty, they could

[p] Matth. ix. 18. [q] Ibid. xv. 36, 37. [r] Mark vi. 34, &c. [s] John xxi. 25. [t] Mark iv. 39. [u] Luke vii. 14. [*] Matth. xv. 28. [x] Mark vii. 34, 35. [y] Luke v. 13. [z] John xi. 43, 44. [a] Orig. cont. Celſ. L. II.

[b] This Power of working Miracles in the Chriſtian Church, in greater or leſſer Degrees, was continued many Years; for *Origen* [*contra Celſum*] ſpeaking of the Spirit of God, tells us, Ἔτι ἴχνη αὐτοῦ πνεύματος, &c. that ſome Footſteps of this holy Spirit remain, even to this Day, among Chriſtians, who caſt out Devils, and perform many Cures, and foreſee ſome future Events, according to the Will of *Chriſt*.

[c] Luke iv. 34, 35. [d] Ibid. viii. 28, 31. [e] Matth. viii. 29, 32. [f] Ibid. viii. 34. [g] Acts viii. 13. [h] Euſeb. Præp. Evang. L. V. [i] 1 Cor. x. 21. 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. [k] John x. 21. [l] 1 John iii. 8. [m] John x. 21. [n] *Chandler*, on Miracles. [o] 1 Cor. iv. 16.

could not have done, had they not been conſcious of their own Integrity, and able [p] *to approve themſelves as the Miniſters of God, in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Neceſſities, in Diſtreſſes, by Pureneſs, by Knowledge, by Long-ſuffering, by Kindneſs, by the Holy Ghoſt, by Love unfeigned.* Whatever Oppoſition or Difficulties they met with, they ſtill continued firm to the Principles of their great Maſter, and conſiſtent with each other. Their Arguments, their Defences, their Exhortations, their Principles of Action, their Motives to Virtue, the Rewards and Puniſhments they ſet before Men, their Behaviour to their Enemies, and, in a Word, their entire Conduct was always, and every-where the ſame. They none of them ſet up for themſelves, nor divided into *Parties*, nor wrought *Counter-Miracles*, in Oppoſition to one another, but had all the ſame End in View, and every-where purſued it by the ſame Means.

And of the Chriſtian Religion.

[q] SUCH was the real Character of the Perſons employed to propagate the Religion of *Jeſus Chriſt*: A Religion, that was worthy to be *publiſhed by the Son of God, and confirmed by Signs, and Wonders, and Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt.* For the great Deſign of this Religion is, to eſtabliſh the Belief of a God, and his Providence, and a future State of Rewards and Puniſhments; to teach Men the Nature of God, and that, as he is a *Spirit*, he is to be *worſhipped in Spirit and in Truth*; to inſtruct them in their Duty towards one another, and to oblige them, by the ſtrongeſt Motives, to obſerve and practiſe whatſoever Things are *true*, and *honeſt*, and *juſt*, and *pure*, and *lovely*, and of *good Report*, and *virtuous*, and *praiſe-worthy*; and to perſuade them to *mortify* every inordinate Affection, and to attain to thoſe excellent Diſpoſitions of Mind, which will make them *reſemble* God, and become moſt uſeful in Life, and beſt prepared for future Happineſs; in a Word, to eſtabliſh the Practice of theſe two great Duties, *the Love of God, and the Love of our Neighbour*, upon theſe two excellent Principles, *of Faith in God*, as a Rewarder of thoſe, that ſeek him; and *Faith in Jeſus Chriſt*, as the Saviour and Judge of Men. And, if this be the *Tenor* of the Chriſtian Religion, there is little Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that the Devil ſhould have any Hand in effecting thoſe Wonders, which gave Credit to the firſt Appearance and Strength, and Succeſs to the Propagation of ſuch Doctrines, as were calculated on Purpoſe to *deſtroy* his Dominion in the World, and, upon its Ruins, to *erect* the Kingdom of God and his *Chriſt*.

The Abſurdity of ſuppoſing Chriſt's *Miracles to be* diabolical.

THE Sum of the whole Matter is this——If the Goſpel-Account of *Chriſt* be *true*, then his entire Character will appear conſiſtent, and of a Piece; but if he was a *Cheat* and *Impoſtor*, and beholden to the Aſſiſtance of evil Spirits, in what he did, it will be a Bundle of the greateſt *Contradictions* in Nature. That a righteous and good Man ſhould be ſent from God to reform the World; that he ſhould do many wonderful Works of Goodneſs, to confirm his Divine Authority and Miſſion; that he ſhould lead a ſober, righteous, and godly Life, and, by his own Example and Precepts, teach others the Practice of Virtue, upon the Principles of Rewards and Puniſhments in another Life; that he ſhould be reproached and perſecuted by *bad* Men, and die, in Confirmation of his Character and Doctrines, with great *Truſt* and *Confidence* in God; and that a great deal of Good ſhould, by a wiſe and gracious Providence, be brought out of this Inſtance of Wickedneſs and Cruelty; theſe are all conſiſtent Suppoſitions, and very far from being incredible or unaccountable. But that a Perſon ſhould pretend to a Miſſion from God, himſelf conſcious, at the ſame Time, that he really had none; that, in order to confirm ſuch falſe Pretenſions, he ſhould impoſe on the World *Tricks* and *Juggles*, known to be ſuch, as *genuine* Miracles, and perform them by a voluntary Compact with Devils; that, in ſuch Circumſtances, he ſhould himſelf live an exactly regular Life, and ſteadily proſecute this one great Deſign, the Honour of God, and the Good of Mankind; that he ſhould inculcate the Neceſſity of univerſal Goodneſs in others, and, in particular, the Obligations of Juſtice, and Honeſty, and Truth to his Neighbour; that he ſhould teach the Doctrines of God's Providence, of a future State, and of eternal Rewards and Puniſhments, as the Conſequence of Mens Actions, according as their Quality ſhould be; that he ſhould deny himſelf all the worldly Advantages, which an Impoſtor, one would think, ſhould chiefly deſign to ſecure; willingly expoſe himſelf to Death, for the Maintenance of his Truth; and, at the very Inſtant of his expiring upon that Account, ſhould call God his *Father*, and with the greateſt Eaſe and Aſſurance commend his departing *Spirit into his Hands*; that a known, obſtinate, hardened *Impoſtor* ſhould

[p] 2 Cor. vi. 4, 6.

[q] *Chandler*, on Miracles.

ſhould thus live, and thus die, is one of the moſt *monſtrous*, moſt *improbable* Suppoſitions in the World.

An Objection againſt Chriſt's *being the Meſſias.*

"BUT how monſtrous ſoever the Suppoſition be, *may the Jews ſay*, your *Jeſus* "can never be that *Prophet*, which was to come from God, ſince his Religion is "contrary to former *Revelations*: Since he hath aboliſhed our *Law*, which was "confeſſedly of Divine *Inſtitution*, and, by the Appointment of its Author, or"dained to endure *for ever*, and, in the Room thereof, has ſet up another, which "*we know not whence it is.* "God we account *immutable* in his Nature, and "wiſe in all his Purpoſes; but if the Goſpel-Diſpenſation be from Heaven, and re"pugnant to what was once his declared Will, at this Rate of *chopping* and *chang*"*ing* Revelations, he has proceeded with ſo much *Levity* in the *new*, or elſe with "ſuch *Weakneſs* in the *old* Eſtabliſhment, as cannot, without the laſt Degree of Ig"norance or Impiety, be imputed to an *all-wiſe*, and conſequently an *unchangeable* "Being."

Anſwered.

THIS is one of the ſtrongeſt Objections, that the *Jews* have, againſt the Divine Miſſion of our bleſſed Saviour; and therefore, to give it a full and ſatisfactory Anſwer, we muſt remember what has been alledged before, * *viz.* that the *Jewiſh* Laws were of three Sorts, *moral*, *civil*, and *ceremonial*; that the *moral* related to the Conduct of Mens *Lives*, and had a Tendency to make them good and virtuous; that the *civil* concerned the Government of the *State*, and made Proviſion for the Adminiſtration of *Juſtice*; and that the *ceremonial* had Reſpect to the Offices of the *Church*, and were converſant about the *Rites* and *Ceremonies* of Religion. The *civil* or *judicial* Laws however are not properly of *religious* Import, and therefore come not under our preſent Conſideration; it is the *moral* and *ceremonial*, about which the Controverſy is ſtated; and therefore, though we readily own [x] that, as they both came from Heaven, they were a great Bleſſing to the *Jewiſh* Nation, and one of thoſe *Crowns*, as their Doctors call it, wherewith they were adorned; though we agree with the Commendation, which *Moſes* gives of them; [y] *What Nation is there ſo great, that hath Statutes and Judgments ſo righteous, as all this Law, which I ſet before you?* Nay, though we cannot but acknowledge, that, as they were the Product of Divine Wiſdom, they could not but be perfect in their Kind, fit for the People to whom, and the Place in which, and the Ends for which they were given, and therefore given with this Injunction, [z] *Ye ſhall not add unto the Word which I command you, neither ſhall ye diminiſh aught from it:* Though we readily agree to this, I ſay, yet we hope to make it appear, that it is no Imputation upon the Divine Wiſdom to have *changed* the one, and *improved* the other.

The original Deſign of the Ceremonial *Law.*

I. THAT the *ceremonial* Part of the Law was ordained by God to *typify* and prefigure the *Goſpel-State*, as well as to make a peculiar *Diſtinction* between *Jews* and other Nations among whom they lived, is what we have elſewhere taken notice of; and from hence we may obſerve, [a] that, if this Law was an *occaſional* Inſtitution only, (as it muſt be, if impoſed upon the *Jews*, for a peculiar Note of Diſtinction) this Inſtitution muſt fall, when once the *Occaſion*, which required it, ceaſes; and, if it was only *typical* of ſome future Things, the very Nature of a *Type* is the giving way to the *Antitype* when once it appears. And indeed, if we look into the Form of theſe Laws, and compare them a little with others of a different Kind, we ſhall ſoon perceive that they were not ſuch, as had real and intrinſic Worth in them; as made Men immediately better, becauſe they were obeyed, but ſuch, as were therefore obeyed, becauſe they were commanded; and, conſequently, were *primarily* impoſed, not for themſelves, but for ſome farther End. [b] *To what Purpoſe is the Multitude of your Sacrifices unto me*, ſaith the Lord? *I am full of the Burnt-Offerings of Rams, and the Fat of fed Beaſts, and I delight not in the Blood of Bullocks, or of Rams, or of He-goats. Bring no more vain Oblations; Incenſe is an Abomination unto me; the New Moons, and Sabbaths, the Calling of Aſſemblies, I cannot away with; it is Iniquity, even the ſolemn Meeting: But waſh ye, make you clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well: For I ſpake not unto your Fathers*, (ſays he by another Prophet [c]) *nor commanded I them, in the Day that I brought them out of the Land of Egypt, concerning Burnt-Offerings, or Sacrifices; but this Thing commanded I them, ſaying, Obey my Voice, and I will*

[a] *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures. [x] *Kidder*'s Demonſtration. [y] Deut. iv. 8. [z] Ibid. *ver.* 2. [a] *Stanhope*, ibid. [b] Iſa. i. 11, &c. [c] Jer. vii. 22, 23. * *Vid.* Page 392, 442, 445.

I will be your God, and ye ſhall be my People. But, how ſhould this be, (ſays the *Jewiſh Commentator*) that God *ſhould not command them concerning Sacrifices*, when it is obvious to every Reader, that a great Part of the Law is taken up about them? Why, himſelf reſolves the Doubt excellently well, *viz.* [e] *That God's primary Intent, and that which he chiefly looked at, was* Obedience, *which it was his Deſign, in appointing Sacrifices and Oblations, to teach them.*

AND as this Part of the Law was not, at firſt, inſtituted for any *intrinſic* Goodneſs that it had; ſo may we farther obſerve, that it was often diſpenſed with, when the End of its Inſtitution could not be attained. [f] Thus, in the Matter of Circumciſion, the *Jews* intermitted it, all the while that they wandered in the Wilderneſs, and that, not becauſe of the *Uncertainty* of their Motion, which always depended upon the Signal of the *Cloud* that conducted them; but, probably, becauſe it might be, with *Safety*, diſcontinued, while they remained in a *deſert* Place alone; and ſo, having no Neighbours to mingle with, were not in Danger of thoſe Inconveniencies, which it was deſigned to prevent. And, indeed, if we look a little farther into the Nature of theſe *Laws*, we ſhall find, that, in their firſt Inſtitution, they were never deſigned to be of general Uſe, or perpetual Obligation. Some of them [k] ſo peculiarly belonged to the *Jews*, that they could not be ſuppoſed to concern any other Nation; ſome were [l] ſo appropriated to the Land of *Judea*, that, in any other Country, the *Jews* themſelves were exempted from them; and others again ſo confined to the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, that to obſerve them in any other Place was reputed no leſs than *Impiety*. [m] *To do Juſtice, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with God*, were Precepts eternally good, and therefore of general Obligation; but to have *Fringes* on their Garments, or *Frontlets* between their Eyes; not [n] to wear a *Garment of Linnen and Woollen*, nor to ſow the ſame Ground with divers Seeds; but to be obliged to repair to *Jeruſalem* three Times a Year, there to keep the ſolemn *Feſtivals*, to eat the *Peace-Offering*, and *Firſt-Fruits*, and the *Paſchal Lamb*; theſe were Precepts *peculiar* to that People and Place, and not proper to be impoſed upon any other Nation. And therefore God, having all along ſignified his Deſign of enlarging the *Boundaries* of his Church, that [o] *pure Incenſe might be offered in every Place, and his Name be made great among the Heathen, from the riſing up of the Sun unto the going down of the ſame*, did not obſcurely intimate, that theſe Ceremonies, which made a Diſtinction, and, properly ſpeaking, were only *practicable* by one Nation in ſuch particular Circumſtances, ſhould be laid aſide, and an *Inſtitution* of a more *univerſal* Comprehenſion ſucceed in its Place.

It frequently diſpenſed with.

Of Uſe and Obligation to the Jews *only.*

To this Purpoſe, even while the Law was in its full Force, God himſelf expreſſly tells us, [p] *that all Nations ſhould flow unto him:* That he would [q] *appoint a Prieſt according to the Order of* Melchiſedeck; [r] *take to himſelf Prieſts and Levites out of every Nation*; [s] *cauſe the Sacrifice and Oblation to ceaſe*; *deſtroy the City and the Sanctuary*; [t] *and make a new Covenant with the Houſe of* Iſrael, *and with the Houſe of* Judah; *not according to the Covenant, which I made with their Fathers*, ſays God, *in the Day I took them by the Hand, to bring them out of the Land of* Egypt—— *But this ſhall be the Covenant, which I will make with the Houſe of* Iſrael, *after thoſe Days*, ſaith the Lord: *I will put my Law in their inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts, and will be their God, and they ſhall be my People.* [u] Can any one, that conſiders the State of Things, thus deſcribed, ever imagine that the *Levitical* Service was calculated for it? Can the Covenant of God, made with the *Iſraelites*, continue, when himſelf expreſſly ſaith, that he would make a *new one*, upon different Conditions, to what he entered into with their Forefathers? Was God's Worſhip to be confined to the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, when all the Nations of the Earth ſhould come to ſerve him? Was the High-Prieſt to make an Atonement there, when an Order of *Prieſthood*, different from the *Aaronical*, ſhould be ſet up? Muſt the Tribe of *Levi* only attend the Temple, when God ſhould take Prieſts and *Levites* out of all Nations to adminiſter to him? And what would become of the Magnificence and *Glory*

[e] Maimon. More Nev. *p.* 3. *c.* 32. [f] *Stanhope's* Sermons at *Boyle's* Lectures. [k] Thus the Paſſover, being appointed in Remembrance of their Deliverance out of *Egypt*, was a peculiar Law to that People, who were delivered from thence. [l] The *Jews* own, that the Sheaf, which was to be reaped, and other First-Fruits, which were to be offered, were to be of the Growth of *Canaan*, as likewiſe the Shew-Bread was to be of the Corn of that Country. The Laws, which concern Tithes, the *Sabbatical* Year, their Year of *Jubilee*, their *Feſtival* Rites, their Cities of *Refuge*, their *Expiation* of an *uncertain Murther*, and very many others, did all oblige them in their own Land. *Kidder's* Demonſtration. [m] Micah vi. 8. [n] Lev. xix. 19. [o] Mal. i. 11. [p] Iſa. ii. 2. [q] Pſal. cx. 4. [r] Iſa. lxvi. 21. [s] Dan. ix. 26, 27. [t] Jer. xxxi. 31, 32. [u] *Stillingfleet's* Orig. Sacræ.

of the Temple, when both *City* and *Sanctuary* ſhould be deſtroyed, which was to be within a few *prophetick Weeks*, after the *Meſſias was cut off*.

And that they actually have ceaſed, and are never to be reſtored.

THESE *prophetick Weeks* have, long ſince, expired, and the *Abrogation* of this Law is abundantly notified to the *Jews*, by the Deſtruction of their City and Temple, and the miſerable Diſperſion of that People, after the Promulgation of a *new* Law and Covenant by Jeſus and his Apoſtles. * In ſuch Caſes, the Providence of God is the *Interpreter* of his written Word; and he cannot more plainly ſignify the Releaſe of any Obligation, than by making the Diſcharge of it abſolutely *impracticable*. The *Country*, which was the proper Scene of this Religion, Strangers do now inhabit; the *City*, which all their Males were obliged to reſort to thrice every Year, is now laid *waſte*; the *Temple*, where the Morning and Evening Sacrifice was to be performed, is *level* with the Ground, [x] by the Decree and Appointment of God, never to be built again; and themſelves are ſcattered among other Nations, without City, without King, without Government, without Temple, without Altar, without Sacrifice; and therefore the Law can now be no longer in Force, which ſuppoſes the Continuance of all theſe.

The diſtracted Circumſtances of the Jews.

IN the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, [y] *Jehoiachim*, their King, had his Throne, and there were always [z] proper Rulers, to keep up Order and Government among them; their *Genealogies* too were preſerved, and the Diſtinction of their Tribes and Families known; their Deliverance out of Captivity, and the very Name of *Deliverer* foretold; and, during the whole Time of their Continuance in it, they had Prophets ſent to direct and ſupport them under their Afflictions, and to give them Aſſurance of a Reſtoration: But, in their preſent Diſperſion and Calamity, there are Circumſtances that quite alter the Caſe. It is ſubſequent to the Publication of the Goſpel; it is [a] *after the Viſion and Propheſy had been ſealed up* by the Coming of the Meſſiah; it is that *Deſolation*, which has *cauſed Sacrifice* and *Oblation to ceaſe*, for theſe Sixteen hundred Years, and more; it is the only long *Captivity*, that never had any Time prefixed for their Return, never any one Meſſage of Comfort to ſuſtain the Hearts, from the firſt diſmal Blow, to this very Day; it ſeems to have brought their Affairs into ſuch Confuſion, that their Genealogies are perplexed, and loſt beyond the Poſſibility of a *Retrieve*; inſomuch that they have loſt the Pedigree, even of thoſe Tribes, on which the *Prieſthood* was entailed, and from whence the *Meſſias* was to ſpring: So that, upon the Suppoſition that *Chriſt* is not yet come, they are in no Capacity of knowing when he does come, becauſe they are not able to prove his *Deſcent*, according to the Propheſies which ſpeak of his Coming.

To ſum up then what has been ſaid on this Argument: If God, who at firſt inſtituted the *ceremonial* Law of the *Jews*, did it for particular Ends, and with Regard to one Nation of the World only; if he never intended it to be of *univerſal* Uſe, but, even while it was in Force, gave ſufficient Warning of its approaching Expiration; if he all along ſignified his Intentions of inſtituting a *New Religion*, which ſhould comprehend all Nations, and have its Commencement, even before the *Old* was totally laid aſide; and if the *Old*, of Courſe, was to be laid aſide, when the People and Polity, for which it was calculated, were diſperſed and diſſolved; and that People and Polity have had their ſad Fate attending them, without any Proſpect of Relief, or Promiſe of Reſtoration, for above theſe Sixteen hundred Years; in vain do they contend, that their Law is of *perpetual* Obligation, unleſs they could

* *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures.

[x] Dan. ix. 26, 27. Accordingly we may obſerve, that the *Jews* have, ſeveral Times, attempted to rebuild their Temple, in the Reigns of *Adrian*, *Conſtantine*, and *Julian*; but have always been defeated. This *Apoſtate* Emperor, in particular, out of Hatred to the Chriſtians, gave Orders for rebuilding the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, and engaged himſelf to bear the Expences; to which the Heathens, for the ſame Reaſon, did willingly contribute their Aſſiſtance; but God did immediately himſelf interpoſe, and, by a terrible Earthquake, threw up the Stones, from the very Foundation, with ſuch Violence, that they deſtroyed many of the Workmen and Spectators; and, by overthrowing the Buildings near adjoining to the Temple, killed and maimed many more of the *Jews*, who were gathered together for the carrying on of this Work: And when, not terrified with this, they again attempted to lay the Foundations of the Temple, *Globes* of Fire, burſting out of the Foundations, not only deſtroyed the Workmen, but devoured the very Stones. The Perſons, who relate this, are, *Ammianus Marcellinus*, [Lib. xiii.] an *Heathen*; and *Wagenſel* (in his Annotat. *Ad Excerpta Gemaræ*, c. 1.) who was a *Jew*; *Nazianzen* and *Chryſoſtom*, among the *Greeks*; St *Ambroſe* and *Ruffinus*, among the *Latins*, who flouriſhed at the very Time when this was done; *Theodoret* and *Sozomen*, orthodox *Hiſtorians*; *Philoſtrorarius*, an *Arian*; and *Socrates*, a Favourer of the *Novatians*, who wrote the Story, within the Space of fifty Years after the Thing was done, and whilſt Eye-witneſſes of the Fact were ſtill alive. Vid. *Whitby*'s general Preface, *Leſlie*'s Short Method, and *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II.

[y] 2 Kings xxv. 28. [z] Ezek. viii. 1. Ezra i. 5. which Rulers were called Ἀιχμαλωτάρχαι.

[a] Iſa. xliv. 28. Jer. xxv. 12. Dan. ix. 2. [b] Ibid. ix. 24.

could maintain the perpetual Poſſeſſion of that Land, in which it was to be obſerved.

The meaning of the Law's abiding for ever.

THE Word [*Olam*] which we render *for ever*, is, [c] by the *Jewiſh* Interpreters, acknowledged to ſignify, not always *an Eternity*, but very frequently *a limited* and *determinate Space of Time*. The Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan* was promiſed them as an *everlaſting Poſſeſſion*, and an *Inheritance for ever*; but the Event has proved, that this was to be underſtood in a *limited Senſe*; and the Similitude of Diction, as well as the Nature of the Thing, obliges us to think, that the Duration of their Law, I mean their *ceremonial* Law, was to be no longer, than their Continuance in that Land: And accordingly ſome learned Men have obſerved, that where theſe Precepts, which are ſaid to be *for ever*, are given, [d] there is ſomething in the very Text, which determines the utmoſt Extent of this Expreſſion, and aſſures us, that theſe Things were to be in Force no longer than the *Jewiſh* State and *Polity* did continue. It cannot be denied, indeed, but that, before *the Conſummation of all Things*, God may bring back the *Out-caſts of Iſrael*, and reſtore them to their native Land; yet, that neither the *Levitical* Worſhip, nor any Part of its Ceremonies, ſhall ever be reſtored again, we have an expreſs Propheſy, even where this Reſtoration is promiſed, to convince us: [e] *Turn, O back-ſliding Children, ſaith the Lord, for I am married unto you; and I will take you, one of a City, and two of a Family, and I will bring you to Zion; and I will give you Paſtors according to mine Heart, which ſhall feed you with Knowledge, and with Underſtanding; and it ſhall come to paſs, when ye ſhall be multiplied, and increaſed in the Land, all Nations ſhall be gathered to the Name of the Lord to Jeruſalem. In thoſe Days, ſaith the Lord, they ſhall ſay no more the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, neither ſhall it come to mind, neither ſhall they remember it, neither ſhall they viſit it, neither ſhall that be done any more:* For in the Days of the Meſſiah, as [f] ſome of the ableſt *Jewiſh* Doctors affirm, *all Sacrifice is to ceaſe, except Praiſe and Thankſgiving.*

The Imperfection of the Law,

IT does not, indeed, become us to cenſure or diſparage any Thing, that had once the Appointment and Sanction of God; [g] but let any indifferent rational Perſon take the Precepts of the Goſpel, and lay them in the *Balance* with thoſe of the *ceremonial* Law, and, if he makes any Scruple of determining on which Side the Over-weight lies, we may have cauſe to ſuſpect him forſaken of that little Reaſon, which gave him the Name of Man. Let but the *fifth* Chapter of St *Matthew* be laid againſt the whole Book of *Leviticus*, and then ſee whether it does not contain Precepts more excellent in themſelves, more ſuitable to the divine, and more perfective of *human* Nature. The Pſalmiſt, indeed, runs an high Commendation on the *Law*, calling it [h] *perfect, and pure, and undefiled, converting the Soul, and giving Wiſdom to the Simple:* But then he inſinuates what Part of the Law it is he means, when, [i] in another Place, inſtead of outward Waſhings, and outward Sacrifices, he offers up his Petitions in theſe Words; *Make me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me; for thou deſireſt not Sacrifice, elſe would I give it thee; thy Sacrifice, O God, is a troubled Spirit, a broken and a contrite Heart thou wilt not deſpiſe.*

ſupplied by the Goſpel.

IT muſt not be diſſembled indeed, that theſe poſitive Obſervances of the *Jews* were deſigned to recommend moral Virtues; that their *Circumciſion* repreſented *inward*

[c] *R. Joſeph Albo* confeſſes thus much, and produces ſeveral Inſtances to prove, that what is ſaid to be *for ever*, is to abide for ſome *ſtated* and fixed Time only. Thus, when it is ſaid of the Servant, that he ſhould ſerve his Maſter *for ever*, [Exod. xxi. 6.] the *Targum* confines it to the next *Jubilee*, becauſe the Year of *Jubilee* was the utmoſt Extent of that Service; and, in like Manner, when *Hannah* ſays of *Samuel*, that he ſhould *appear before the Lord*, and there abide *for ever*, [1 Sam. i. 22.] the utmoſt Extent could be no more, than that of his Life, or ſo long as he was fit to miniſter *legally*; whence it appears, that the eternal Obligation of theſe Laws cannot be proved from this Expreſſion. *Kidder*'s Demonſtration.

[d] For theſe Laws, which are ſaid to be *for ever*, are ſaid to be ſo *in their Generations*, and *in their Dwellings*, which two Expreſſions reſtrain that indefinite Phraſe *for ever*, and confine it to the *Jewiſh Country* and *Polity*. Thus the Law, which forbad the *eating of Fat*, is called a *perpetual* Statute; but then it follows *for your Generations*, and *through all your Dwellings*, Lev. iii. 17. The eating of Fat, which was forbid, was the Fat of thoſe Beaſts, which were admitted as Sacrifices, *Lev.* vii. 23, 25. and when the Sacrifices ceaſed, which were confined to a certain Place, this Law ceaſed likewiſe. The Law of *afflicting their Souls*, on the Day of Expiation, is ſaid to be a *Statute for ever*, Lev. xvi. 31. but then it is confined by thoſe Expreſſions, in which it is ſaid to be a Statute to them throughout *their Generations*, and *in all their Dwellings*, Lev. xxiii. 31. The ſame Reſtrictions we find annexed to the Laws of the *Sheaf* of *Firſt-Fruits*, Lev. xxiii. 14. of the two *Wave-Loaves*, Lev. xxiii. 17, 21. of *burning the Lamps*, Lev. xxiv. 3. of *blowing the Trumpets*, Numb. x. 8. of the *Meat and Drink Offerings*, Numb. xv. 15. of the Service of the *Levites*, Numb. xviii. 23. of the *Prieſthood of Aaron*, Exod. xl. 15. and of the Prieſts abſtaining from *Wine and ſtrong Drink*, during the Time of their Miniſtration, *Lev.* x. 9, *&c.*

[e] Jer. iii. 14, *&c.*

[f] Vid. Raym. Mart. Pug. Fid. p. 3.

[g] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacra.

[h] Pſal. xix. 7, 8.

[i] Pſal. li. 10, 16, 17.

ward Purity; their *Sacrifices* were Signs of Contrition; and their ſolemn *Feaſts*, Commemorations of the Divine Bounty; that ſeveral other of the Rites ſuggeſted, ſome [k] Juſtice and Equity, others, [l] Mercy and Humanity, and others again, Temperance and Chaſtity, *&c.* yet was the ſpiritual Meaning hereof ſo deeply laid, that, *few* having the Sagacity to find it out, *moſt Men* contented themſelves with the outward Performance. It was, however, a fit *School-maſter*, as the Apoſtle calls it, *to bring us to Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by Faith*, or by the Belief and Obedience of the Goſpel; *but, after that Faith is come, we are no longer under a School-maſter.* [m] *Do we then make void the Law through Faith? God forbid; yea, we eſtabliſh the Law.* [n] What was *intrinſically Good* in the *Jewiſh* Oeconomy, is preſerved entire in the *Chriſtian*; what was *typical* with *them* is accompliſhed with *us*; what was *defective there* is ſupplied *here*; and all this, in ſuch a Manner, as, we make no Doubt, was intended from the Beginning; it being reaſonable to ſuppoſe, [o] *that, when that which was perfect was come, that which is in Part ſhould be done away.* If then *the Law be made void* by ſuch a *Faith*, it is only done in the ſame Manner, as *Promiſes* are made void by being *fulfilled*; or as *Images* become uſeleſs, when their *Originals* are preſent, or as Rules, for educating Children, are laid aſide, when the *Heir* is of Age, and their Aim is anſwered.

HAVING thus ſhewn, from the Nature and firſt Inſtitution of it, that the changing *the Commandment, contained in Ordinances*, which were but *a Shadow of good Things to come*, can be no Imputation upon the Wiſdom of God, nor any Prejudice to our Saviour's Claim of being the *true Meſſias*; we ſhould now proceed,

That God might make Additions to the Law.

II. TO obſerve, what Improvements have been made to the moral Part of the Law; but this being a Subject, which, in a great Meaſure, has been handled elſewhere, we ſhall only remark at preſent, that the *Jews*, leaſt of all, have Reaſon to complain of Additions of any Kind; ſince, without the Direction of any *Prophet*, or the Teſtimony of any *Miracle*, they have made no ſmall Number to their Law, even to the utter Deſtruction of its true Intendment. For how many *Traditions of their Elders* do they obſerve, which were never commanded by *Moſes*, and of theſe, ſome flatly repugnant, not only to the Laws of God, [p] but the very Ties of Conſanguinity? What Command or Direction had they for changing the *Poſture* of eating the Paſſover, and putting their own Conſtruction upon ſo ſtrict and ſo particular an Injunction? By what Authority did they add a *Poſt-cœnium* to the Paſſover, and Baptiſm to Circumciſion, and ſeveral other Things, which are not contained in their Law? [q] *What God has commanded*, Man *may not add to, nor diminiſh from*; but may not God, who is certainly the Judge of his own Revelation, add or diminiſh what he pleaſeth? May not he, who, to [r] the Injunctions he gave *Adam*, added the *ſeven Precepts* of *Noah*; to theſe Precepts, added the Law of *Moſes*; and, to this Law, the Meſſages of his *Prophets*; may not he, I ſay, enlarge his Will, and, by ſlow Degrees, bring his *Scholars*, from the *Rudiments* of their *Nonage*, to the higher Knowledge of the Adult; and, thence [s] *to a perfect Man, to the Meaſure of the Stature of the Fulneſs of Chriſt*, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it?

LET the *Jews* then make never ſo loud Boaſts of the Perfection of their Law, yet the Man muſt be extremely prejudiced, who does not perceive its *Defectiveneſs*, in point of *Aſſiſtance*, in point of *Pardon*, and in point of *Reward*; all which our Saviour, in his Goſpel, has abundantly ſupplied.

As he has done,

1. WE allow, indeed, that the Aſſiſtance of God's bleſſed Spirit did, in all Ages, attend good Men in the Diſcharge of their Duty, and that, under the Diſpenſation of the Law, the *cleanſing the Heart, and renewing the Spirit within them*, was the Effect of a Divine Principle; but then we affirm, that this Gift of God was *arbitrary*, imparted to whom, and in what Meaſure he pleaſed; that it was not *ſtipulated* to Mankind; was no Condition of the *Covenant* then in being; what no Man was permitted to call upon God for as *a Right*; and what God, in thoſe Times, diſpenſed with a ſparing Hand; and therefore we ſay, that the *Law was weak*, and, though it impoſed the Duty, yet it did not give Life and Power ſufficient to obey.

2. WE

[k] Such are their Laws about Cities of Refuge, concerning Dominion, purchaſing Property, Treſpaſſes, *&c.*
[l] Such were the Laws about the *forgotten Sheaf*, [Deut. xiv. 28.] and the *Corner of the Field*, and the *third* Year's *Tithing*, and the Increaſe of the ſabbatical Year, *Lev.* xxv. 4, *&c.*
[m] Rom. iii. 31. [n] *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures. [o] 1 Cor. xiii. 10.
[p] Matth. xv. 5, 6. [q] Deut. xii. 33. [r] *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. [s] Eph. iv. 13.

2. WE allow again, that, upon the Account of their Divine Institution, the Sacrifices under the Law might be accepted for the Atonement of Guilt; but then we say, that there were some Sins, for which there was no Atonement allowed, and where the Offender, consequently, was left without Hope of Pardon. All those Sins indeed, which were committed with an high Hand, were of this Sort; and whatever Comfort the Sinner, that was surprized, or transgressed ignorantly, might conceive, he, who was guilty of Offences, for which there was no Provision made, was left disconsolate and despairing: And though, upon his Repentance, he might have Recourse to the Blood of that Lamb which was *slain from the Foundation of the World*; yet this was a Sacrifice, he was so little acquainted with, that he could not apply it to the Pacification of his Conscience.

3. ONCE more we allow, that the Hopes of eternal Life were found among some pious and devout *Jews*; and that, under temporal Blessings, especially a *Land flowing with Milk and Honey*, the Joys and Happiness of a celestial Country were insinuated; but then the *earthly Canaan*, as one expresses it, lay so fair and open to their Prospect, that it easily intercepted the View of the *heavenly*; and their Faith must remove, at least overlook that *Mountain*, before it could come to any Sight of the *Horizon* and extended Sky; and therefore we need less wonder, that, viewing the Reward at so tedious a Distance, they contented themselves with what lay before them, and were less sollicitous for the future.

THESE cannot but be reckoned Defects in the Law; but behold what glorious Things we are promised under the Gospel-State, in Point of Assistance! For * *after those Days, saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts, and they shall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them, unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.* [x] *For I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty, and Floods upon the dry Ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Blessing upon thine Offspring*; and not only so, but [y] *I will pour my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesy; your old Men shall dream Dreams, and your young Men shall see Visions.* This was actually fulfilled after the Descent of the Holy Ghost, on the *Day of Pentecost*: And though these *miraculous* Gifts were not designed to continue in the Church any longer, than the Reason and Necessity of them continued; yet the *ordinary* Operations of God's Spirit, such as conduce to the Illumination of our Minds, and the Sanctification of our Hearts, are permanent, and will never fail. These *Christ* has made the Purchase of his Blood: These we have actually indented for in the Christian Covenant; and therefore we have a Right [z] *to be led by the Spirit*, to be *kept by Grace unto Salvation*, and, in Trials too difficult for our single Strength, may with Justice require Succours and Assistance; upon which Account it is, that the Apostle assures us, that, unless we are minded to have it so, *Sin shall not have Dominion over us, because we are not under the Law*, which required Obedience, but gave no Help to obey; *but under Grace*, where all Assistance imaginable, comporting with the Freedom of our Will, is continually afforded us. *in Point of* Assistance,

2. WHAT glorious Assurances does the Gospel give us of our *Pardon*, upon Terms, that are easy and reasonable, and by no Means to be rejected! For, be our Sins never so great, yet, upon our Repentance and sincere Obedience for the future, we are sure of God's Favour and Reconciliation; as sure, as [a] the Covenant of Grace, which *Christ purchased* by his Merits, *sealed* by his precious Blood, *assured* to us by his Resurrection, *confirmed* by Miracles, *proclaimed* by his Messengers, and *signified* to us by his *Sacraments* and holy Institutions, can possibly make us. St *Paul*, to shew the Extent of *Evangelical* Forgiveness, gives a dark Catalogue of the Sins of the Heathen World, that [b] *they were Fornicators, Idolaters, Adulterers, effeminate, Abusers of themselves with Mankind, Thieves, covetous, Drunkards, Revilers, Extortioners, and such were some of you*, says he; the Christian Doctrine found them such, but it did not leave them so; for *ye are washed, for ye are sanctified, for ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* For [c] here again is the Ground of our Comfort, that *if any Man sin*, (be his Sin, we see, never so great) *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and he is a Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but also for the Sins of the whole World.* And, *in Point of* Pardon,

[a] *Kidder*'s Demonstration. * Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. [x] Isa. xliv. 3. [y] Joel ii. 28.
[z] Rom. viii. 14. [a] *Kidder*, ibid. [b] 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, &c. [c] 1 John ii. 1, 2.

and in Point of Reward.

3. WHAT glorious Encouragement have we *in Point of Reward!* When by our blessed Saviour, the Mediator of a *Covenant* [d] *established on better Promises*, God has [e] *brought Life and Immortality to Light*, which was but obscurely revealed before; and, [f] *according to his abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, to an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us*; enough to engage us to obey all the Precepts, which our Master has given us, and to reconcile us to all the Labour and Difficulty, which may at any Time attend our Performance of them. [g] For *eternal Life* imports more, than we can express or comprehend; Something more excellent, than what our *Eye hath seen*, our *Ear hath heard*, or our shallow Mind is *able to conceive*. Crowns and Sceptres, Feasts and Triumphs, worldly Success and Prosperity, are but little and *faint* Resemblances of this unspeakable and inconceivable Happiness, which is clearly *revealed*, faithfully *promised*, and expressed in Words of the highest Import, but in such a Manner, as speaks the Thing too big for the Expression, and too glorious for the Comprehension of Men, while they [h] *dwell in Houses of Clay, whose Foundation is in the Dust.* And so we proceed,

Jesus *proved to be the Messias from his* Predictions.

III. To another Argument, proving our Saviour to be the *Messias*, and that is, *the Truth of his Predictions concerning future Events.* But herein we have so far prevented [i] ourselves already, that we need only observe, what is most suitable to our present Purpose, how punctually his Predictions concerning the Calamity and Desolation of the *Jews* were accomplished, even according to the Account which their own *Historian* has given us. Our Saviour prophesied that their Temple should be so totally destroyed, that [k] *there should not be left one Stone upon another, which should not be thrown down*: And [l] *Josephus* tells us, that though *Titus* endeavoured what he could to save that *stately* Building; though he gave the Officers in Charge that it should not be demolished, and, even when he saw the Fire begin to seize it, called and beckoned, and commanded the Soldiers to extinguish it; yet they, regardless of his Commands, went on furiously, and animated one another in the Destruction of it; till it was not only laid level with the Ground, but (to have the Prophesy verified in the Letter) *the very Foundations of it were plowed up*: [m] *God himself*, as *Josephus* observes, *assisting with the Romans to the Ruin of it*, that the Words of *Christ* might not fail of their Accomplishment, [n] *he will send forth his Armies, and destroy those Murtherers, and burn up their City.*

OUR Saviour prophesied, with the same Exactness and Particularity, that their Place and City should be ruined and destroyed; that [o] *their Enemies should cast a Trench about it, and compass it round, and keep it in on every Side; that they should lay it even with the Ground, and not leave in it one Stone above another*: And [p] *Josephus* tells us, that *Titus* encouraged his Soldiers so, that, in three Days Time, they built a Wall of thirty-nine Furlongs, with thirteen Castles on it, round the City; which hindered those within from making their Escape: And that, when he made the Assault, he gave the Soldiers Orders to dig up the City, and level it entirely; which they executed so effectually, that *those who came afterward to see it, were of Opinion that it would never be built again.*

OUR Saviour prophesied, that *Jerusalem should be trodden down, i. e.* possessed and inhabited *by the Gentiles*: And [q] *Josephus* tells us, that *Titus* commanded the whole Land of *Judea to be sold to any Heathen Nation, that would buy it*; and *Hadrian*, about sixty-three Years after, as [r] *Eusebius* tells us, made a Law, *that no Jew should come into the Regions round about Jerusalem*; so that the *Jews* being banished thence, and other Nations flocking in, it became perfectly *a City and Colony of the Romans, and, in Honour of the Emperor, was named Ælia.* Our Saviour prophesied, that the Calamities of the *Jews*, upon this Occasion, should be so very grievous, as to admit of no *Parallel*; that there [s] *should be great Tribulation, such as never happened from the Beginning of the World to that Time*; that they [t] *should be led away Captives into all Nations*; and that [u] *wherever the Carcase was, i. e.* the Nation of the

[d] Heb. viii. 6. [e] 2 Tim. i. 10. [f] 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. [g] *Kidder*'s Demonstration.
[h] Job iv. 19. [i] *Vid.* Page 33. [k] Matth. xxiv. 2. [l] De Bello Jud. Lib. VII.
[m] The Temple was destroyed on the same Month, and the same Day of the Month, on which it formerly was burnt by *Nebuzaradan*, the Captain of the King of *Babylon*, which is therefore, by *Maimonides*, stiled *the fatal Day of Vengeance*, and by *Josephus* [L. vii. c. 26.] is reckoned a Matter of just Admiration, and a plain Indication, that this so happened by a Divine Appointment. *Whitby*'s Gen. Pref. [n] Matth. xxii. 7.
[o] Luke xix. 43, 44. [p] De Bell. Jud. L. VII. [q] Ibid. c. xxvii. [r] Hist. Eccles. L. XXI. c. vi. L. IV. c. vi.
[s] Matth. xxiv. 21. [t] Luke xxi. 24. [u] Matth. xxiv. 28.

the *Jews*, rejected now, and loathed by God, as a dead Carcaſe, *there ſhould the Eagles, i. e.* the *Roman* Army, *be gathered together*, to prey upon them: And *Joſephus* tells us, *that, as never any People was more wicked, ſo never did a Nation ſuffer as they did*; for he informs us, * that *eleven hundred thouſand* periſhed in the Siege; that *ninety-ſeven thouſand* were made Captives; and that, when there was no more left in *Judea*, many of them were deſtroyed at *Alexandria*, at *Cyrene*, and other Cities of *Egypt*, and, to the Number of *ſixty thouſand*, in all the Cities of *Syria*: Inſomuch [z] *that all the Miſeries, which all Mankind have ſuffered from the Beginning of the World*, ſays he, *are not to be compared with what the Jewiſh Nation at that Time endured.*

OUR Saviour propheſied, what were to be the Forerunners of this Deſtruction; that [a] *there ſhould be great Earthquakes in divers Places, and in Heaven great Signs, and fearful Sights*: And *Joſephus* tells us, [b] that in *Judea and Jeruſalem there happened an immenſe Tempeſt, and vehement Winds, with Rain, and frequent Lightning, and dreadful Thundering, and extreme Roarings of the quaking Earth*, which portended no ſmall Miſchiefs; that [c] a *Sword* ſeemed to hang over the City, and a *Comet*, with its fiery Tail, pointed down upon it for a whole Year; and that, frequently before the Sun ſet, [d] *there were ſeen in the Clouds* [e] *Armies in Battle-Array, and Chariots*, as it were, *compaſſing the Country, and inveſting Cities: A Thing ſo ſtrange*, ſaith he, *that it would paſs for a Fable, were there not ſtill Men living to atteſt it.* Our Saviour propheſied, that the Period of Time, when all theſe Things ſhould come to paſs, would be [f] within the Compaſs of the *Generation*, which was then living: He declared likewiſe the Reaſon, for which they ſhould befal *Jeruſalem*, even [g] *becauſe ſhe knew not the Time of her Viſitation, and the Things which belonged to her Peace*; but promiſed, withal, ſuch effectual Care ſhould be taken, that, amidſt this general Ruin, [h] his faithful Servants *ſhould be ſaved*, and [i] *not one Hair of their Heads periſh.* And *Joſephus* tells us, that, about forty Years after *Chriſt*'s Death, all this Deſolation came upon them; but is very full of this Obſervation, [k] that, when *Ceſtius* beſieged them at firſt, he might have taken the City, and put an End to the War; but that God, being angry with them for their Wickedneſs, reſerved them for a worſe Deſtruction, [l] becauſe they would give no Credit to the *Signs*, which manifeſtly portended their Deſolation. *Ceſtius* indeed, when he came to *Jeruſalem*, ſoon took the *lower City*, and might have taken the *upper* too; but, all on a ſudden, he quits the Siege without any viſible Cauſe, and ſo gave the *Chriſtians* an Opportunity to eſcape; whereupon *many fled out of the City*, [m] ſays the Hiſtorian, *as from a ſinking Ship*, into the Region of *Peræa*, a deſart and *mountainous* Country, which lying beyond *Jordan*, and under the Government of King *Agrippa*, was at that Time exempted from War.

ONCE more: Our Saviour propheſied, [n] that falſe Prophets ſhould ariſe; that they ſhould ſhew great Signs and Wonders; [o] deceive many, and [p] lead their Followers into the Wilderneſs; but, notwithſtanding this, [q] that *the Goſpel of his Kingdom ſhould be firſt preached unto all the World, i. e.* throughout the *Roman* Empire, *for a Witneſs to all Nations, and then ſhould the End come.* And ſo *Joſephus* tells us, that, about this Time, [r] an *Egyptian*, a falſe Prophet and *Magician*, got together about thirty thouſand of the *Jews*; that [s] one *Theudas*, another Magician, who declared himſelf a Prophet, deceived many; and that many more Impoſtors and Magicians perſuaded [t] the People to follow them into the *Wilderneſs*, where they promiſed to ſhew them many Signs and Wonders done by God. By this Time however, *the Faith of the Church of Rome* (as St *Paul* [u] tells them) *was ſpoken of throughout the whole World*, and * *the Truth of the Goſpel* (as he acquaints the *Coloſſians*) *was come, not to them only, but to all the World, and preached to every Creature*: For the Word of God, as [x] *Euſebius* relates, ſhone ſuddenly upon the World, as a Ray of the Sun, and was, on that Account, ſtiled, by the very Heathens, *the prevailing Doctrine.* Conſidering then the *particular* Manner in which our Saviour predicted theſe

* Lib. vii. c. xlv.
[x] Ibid. c. xliv.
[y] Ibid. c. xxxvi.
[z] Proleg. ad Bell. Jud.
[a] Luke xxi. 11.
[b] Lib. iv. c. xvii.
[c] Lib. vii. c. xxxi.
[d] Ibid.
[e] Tacitus, *a* Roman *Hiſtorian of that Age, has in a manner given us the ſame Account*: Evenerant prodigia, viſæ per cœlum currere acies, rutilantia arma, & ſubito nubium igne collucere templum, expâſſe repentè delubri fores, & audita major humana vox, *excedere Deos*, & ſimul ingens motus excedentium. *Hiſt L. V.*
[f] Matth. xxiv. 34.
[g] Luke xix. 42, 44.
[h] Matth. xxiv. 13.
[i] Luke xxi. 18.
[k] De Bell. Jud. L. II.
[l] L. VII. c. xxx.
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[p] Ibid. *ver.* 26.
[q] Ibid. *ver.* 14.
[r] Antiq. L. XX. c. vi.
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[t] De Bello Jud. L. II. c. xxiii.
[u] Rom. i. 8.
* Col. i. 23.
[x] Hiſt. Eccleſ. L. II. c. iii.

and in Point of Reward.

3. WHAT glorious Encouragement have we *in Point of Reward?* When by our bleſſed Saviour, the Mediator of a *Covenant* [a] *eſtabliſhed on better Promiſes*, God has [c] *brought Life and Immortality to Light*, which was but obſcurely revealed before; and, [f] *according to his abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Reſurrection of Chriſt from the Dead, to an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for us*; enough to engage us to obey all the Precepts, which our Maſter has given us, and to reconcile us to all the Labour and Difficulty, which may at any Time attend our Performance of them. [g] For *eternal Life* imports more, than we can expreſs or comprehend; Something more excellent, than what our *Eye hath ſeen*, our *Ear hath heard*, or our ſhallow Mind is *able to conceive*. Crowns and Sceptres, Feaſts and Triumphs, worldly Succeſs and Proſperity, are but little and *faint* Reſemblances of this unſpeakable and inconceivable Happineſs, which is clearly *revealed*, faithfully *promiſed*, and expreſſed in Words of the higheſt Import, but in ſuch a Manner, as ſpeaks the Thing too big for the Expreſſion, and too glorious for the Comprehenſion of Men, while they [h] *dwell in Houſes of Clay, whoſe Foundation is in the Duſt.* And ſo we proceed,

Jeſus *proved to be the Meſſias from his* Predictions.

III. TO another Argument, proving our Saviour to be the *Meſſias*, and that is, *the Truth of his Predictions concerning future Events.* But herein we have ſo far prevented [i] ourſelves already, that we need only obſerve, what is moſt ſuitable to our preſent Purpoſe, how punctually his Predictions concerning the Calamity and Deſolation of the *Jews* were accompliſhed, even according to the Account which their own *Hiſtorian* has given us. Our Saviour propheſied that their Temple ſhould be ſo totally deſtroyed, that [k] *there ſhould not be left one Stone upon another, which ſhould not be thrown down*: And [l] *Joſephus* tells us, that though *Titus* endeavoured what he could to ſave that *ſtately* Building; though he gave the Officers in Charge that it ſhould not be demoliſhed, and, even when he ſaw the Fire begin to ſeize it, called and beckoned, and commanded the Soldiers to extinguiſh it; yet they, regardleſs of his Commands, went on furiouſly, and animated one another in the Deſtruction of it; till it was not only laid level with the Ground, but (to have the Propheſy verified in the Letter) *the very Foundations of it were plowed up*: [m] *God himſelf*, as *Joſephus* obſerves, *aſſiſting with the Romans to the Ruin of it*, that the Words of *Chriſt* might not fail of their Accompliſhment, [n] *he will ſend forth his Armies, and deſtroy thoſe Murtherers, and burn up their City.*

OUR Saviour propheſied, with the ſame Exactneſs and Particularity, that their Place and City ſhould be ruined and deſtroyed; that [o] *their Enemies ſhould caſt a Trench about it, and compaſs it round, and keep it in on every Side; that they ſhould lay it even with the Ground, and not leave in it one Stone above another*: And [p] *Joſephus* tells us, that *Titus* encouraged his Soldiers ſo, that, in three Days Time, they built a Wall of thirty-nine Furlongs, with thirteen Caſtles on it, round the City; which hindered thoſe within from making their Eſcape: And that, when he made the Aſſault, he gave the Soldiers Orders to dig up the City, and level it entirely; which they executed ſo effectually, that *thoſe who came afterward to ſee it, were of Opinion that it would never be built again.*

OUR Saviour propheſied, that *Jeruſalem ſhould be trodden down, i. e.* poſſeſſed and inhabited *by the Gentiles*: And [q] *Joſephus* tells us, that *Titus* commanded the whole Land of *Judea to be ſold to any Heathen Nation, that would buy it*; and *Hadrian*, about ſixty-three Years after, as [r] *Euſebius* tells us, made a Law, *that no Jew ſhould come into the Regions round about Jeruſalem*; ſo that the *Jews* being baniſhed thence, and other Nations flocking in, it became perfectly *a City and Colony of the Romans, and, in Honour of the Emperor, was named Ælia.* Our Saviour propheſied, that the Calamities of the *Jews*, upon this Occaſion, ſhould be ſo very grievous, as to admit of no *Parallel*; that there [s] *ſhould be great Tribulation, ſuch as never happened from the Beginning of the World to that Time*; that they [t] *ſhould be led away Captives into all Nations*; and that [u] *wherever the Carcaſe was, i. e.* the Nation of the

[a] Heb. viii. 6. [c] 2 Tim. i. 10. [f] 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. [g] *Kidder*'s Demonſtration.
[h] Job iv. 19. [i] *Vid.* Page 33. [k] Matth. xxiv. 2. [l] De Bello Jud. Lib. VII.
[m] The Temple was deſtroyed on the ſame Month, and the ſame Day of the Month, on which it formerly was burnt by *Nebuzaradan*, the Captain of the King of *Babylon*, which is therefore, by *Maimonides*, ſtiled *the fatal Day of Vengeance*, and by *Joſephus* [L. vii. c. 26.] is reckoned a Matter of juſt Admiration, and a plain Indication, that this ſo happened by a Divine Appointment. *Whitby*'s Gen. Pref. [n] Matth. xxii. 7.
[o] Luke xix. 43, 44. [p] De Bell. Jud. L. VII. [q] Ibid. c. xxvii. [r] Hiſt. Eccleſ. L. XXI. c. vi. L. IV. c. vi. [s] Matth. xxiv. 21. [t] Luke xxi. 24. [u] Matth. xxiv. 28.

the *Jews*, rejected now, and loathed by God, as a dead Carcaſe, *there ſhould the Eagles, i. e.* the *Roman* Army, *be gathered together*, to prey upon them: And *Joſephus* tells us, *that, as never any People was more wicked, ſo never did a Nation ſuffer as they did*; for he informs us, * that *eleven hundred thouſand* periſhed in the Siege; that [y] *ninety-ſeven thouſand* were made Captives; and that, when there was no more left in *Judea*, [z] many of them were deſtroyed at *Alexandria*, at *Cyrene*, and other Cities of *Egypt*, and, to the Number of *ſixty thouſand*, in all the Cities of *Syria*: Inſomuch [a] *that all the Miſeries, which all Mankind have ſuffered from the Beginning of the World*, ſays he, *are not to be compared with what the Jewiſh Nation at that Time endured.*

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[y] Ibid. c. xxxvi.
[z] Proleg. ad Bell. Jud.
[x] Ibid. c. xliv.
• Col. i. 23.

theſe Events, and the *punctual* Manner, even according to the Teſtimony of an *Adverſary*, in which they came to paſs, we cannot in Juſtice but conclude, that he was the *great Prophet* ſent from God; ſince [y] theſe Events were ſo perfectly *contingent*, that no *human* Sagacity could poſſibly foreſee them, and, conſequently, ſuch Diſcoveries, as could come from none but him, at whoſe Diſpoſal all Things lie, and with whoſe comprehenſive Knowledge the moſt diſtant of them are always preſent.

Jeſus *proved to be the* Meſſias, *from the ſpeedy* Propagation of his Religion.

IV. ONE Argument more, proving our Saviour to be the *true Meſſias*, is, *the miraculous and ſpeedy Propagation of his Goſpel.* But herein again we have ſo far [z] prevented ourſelves, that we need only obſerve farther, that no other Religion whatever had ſo large an Increaſe, with ſo little human Aid and Aſſiſtance, or prevailed in ſuch a Manner, as to make a Recourſe to *ſupernatural* Influences neceſſary, in order to explain the Succeſs of it.

The Mahometan *Religion.*

[a] OF all falſe Religions, the *Mahometan* came neareſt to the *Chriſtian* in the ſwift Manner of its Propagation; for in a ſmall Time it over-ran a great Part of the *Eaſtern* World: But this Succeſs, how extraordinary ſoever, had nothing *miraculous* in it; nothing but what may eaſily be accounted for, by reflecting on the Circumſtances, which attended the Propagation of that Impoſture; ſuch as *the looſe Manners* and lamentable *Diviſions* of the Chriſtians of that Time; the groſs *Ignorance*, which then abounded every-where; the *Suitableneſs* of *Mahomet*'s Doctrine to the ſenſual Inclinations of Men, eſpecially of thoſe *Eaſtern* People, to whom it was firſt addreſſed; and the Method he uſed, of procuring Submiſſion to it by the *Dint* of the *Sword*, not by the Power of *Perſuaſion* and *Argument*. A Religion, that gave a full Indulgence to the Ambition, the Luſts, and Cruelty of Mankind, could not fail of gaining *Proſelytes*, and when a warlike and ſavage Race of Men, united by the Hopes of *Rapine* and *Spoil*, ſet upon a diſſolute, divided, and weakened Enemy, as the Chriſtians then were, the Succeſs of ſuch an Enterprize was ſure and eaſy; and on the Succeſs of *Mahomet*'s Arms the Succeſs of his Religion did depend. When, by an uninterrupted Courſe of Victories, he had laid the Foundation of the *Saracen* Empire, it was no Wonder, that a new Empire ſhould be able to introduce a new Religion: The Increaſe of the *one* was naturally followed by a proportionable Enlargement of the *other:* But this, as I ſaid, had nothing *miraculous* in it; nothing that rivalled, or any Ways reſembled the Succeſs of the *Goſpel*, [b] *that Stone, which was cut out of the Mountain without Hands, i. e.* without viſible Cauſes, or Inſtruments proportioned to ſuch a Work, *and brake in Pieces all other Kingdoms, and,* at laſt, became *itſelf a great Mountain, and filled the whole Earth.*

The Jewiſh.

THE *Jewiſh* Religion indeed was inſtituted by God; but it will will admit of no Compariſon with the *Chriſtian*, either as to the Manner of its firſt Reception, or the Addition of Converts, which were afterwards made to it. It was given to the *Iſraelites* by *Moſes*, in the Wilderneſs, whither he led them, *out of the Houſe of Bondage*, in their Way *to a Land flowing with Milk and Honey.* Now, ſetting aſide the Conſideration of Miracles, (by which the *Jewiſh* and Chriſtian Diſpenſations were alike confirmed) the Reception of the Law by the *Iſraelites*, from ſuch a *Deliverer*, under whoſe Conduct and Command they then *entirely* were, and in a *Place*, where they had no Communication with the reſt of the World, had nothing in it near ſo *wonderful*, as the firſt Plantation of the Chriſtian Church, by Means of the Apoſtles Preaching. Nor was the Acceſſion of the *Gentile Converts*, after the *Tabernacle* was ſet up at *Shiloh*, ſo conſiderable, as to give the Religion of the *Jews* any Title or Pretenſion to a *Divine Original* on that Account.

THE narrow Limits of the *Jewiſh* Church are thus, under the Emblem of a *tranſplanted Vine*, aptly repreſented by the Pſalmiſt: [c] *Thou haſt brought*, ſays he, *a Vine out of Egypt, thou haſt caſt out the Heathen, and planted it; thou preparedſt Room for it, and didſt cauſe it to take Root, and it filled the Land, viz.* the Land of *Jewry*, wherein it was ſet. *The Hills, i. e.* the hilly Country of *Judah*, the fartheſt Part of *Paleſtine ſouthward, were covered with the Shadow of it, and the Boughs thereof were like the Cedars of God*, on Mount *Lebanon*, in the Extremity of its *Northern* Borders: *She ſent out her Boughs into the Sea*, the *Mediterranean Sea*, her utmoſt Limit to the *Weſt*, and *her Branches to the River*, even as far *Eaſtward* as the River *Euphrates.* Thus was the *Jewiſh* Church, even in its largeſt and moſt flouriſhing

[y] *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures. [z] *Vid.* Page 36. [a] Biſhop *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[b] Dan. ii. 34, 35. [c] Pſal. lxxx. 8, &c.

flouriſhing Condition, ſhut up within the Bounds of *Canaan*, and the Countries adjacent: Whereas [d] that *Muſtard-Seed*, the Kingdom of Chriſt, [e] *though it were leſs than all the Seeds, that be in the Earth, yet, when it was ſown, it grew up, and became greater than all Herbs, and ſhot out Branches, and the Fowls of the Air lodged in the Branches of it*; Men of all Countries and all Religions under Heaven flocked to it for Shade and Shelter.

THE Truth is, the *Moſaick* Law was intended for a ſingle People only, who were to be ſhut in, from the reſt of the World, by a *Fence* of *legal* Rites and *typical* Ceremonies, and by that Means, to remain ſeparate and unmixed, till the great *Antitype*, the Meſſias, ſhould appear, and break down this Fence, and lay open this Incloſure, publiſhing a Religion of a more extenſive Nature and Uſe, which all Mankind ſhould be invited to profeſs, and in which all ſhould have an equal Intereſt. [f] *Whereunto* therefore *ſhall we liken the Kingdom of God*, and its marvellous Increaſe? *Or with what Compariſon ſhall we compare it?* There is indeed ſome faint Reſemblance of it in the prodigious Fecundity of Seeds, which accordingly our Saviour makes uſe of more than once to illuſtrate it; but there is nothing parallel to it, in the Hiſtory of all the Religions, which have obtained among Men, from the Beginning of the World to this Day.

An Objection, That the Propagation of the Goſpel might come about by natural Means.

" BUT though the Propagation of the Goſpel was *wonderful*, yet why ſhould it be " accounted *miraculous?* Wonderful it was indeed, as every unuſual Thing is to " thoſe, who do not know or conſider the Cauſes of it; But to a Man, who dares " to go out of the common Road, and think for himſelf, it will appear that there " was, at that Time, a Set of *natural Cauſes* on Foot, ſufficient to account for this " Effect, without any Recourſe to a *Divine* and *Supernatural* Agent. The Apoſtles " indeed were twelve plain illiterate Men, who had neither Force nor Skill of themſelves, to bring about ſuch an Event; But their natural Inability was ſupplied " by a favourable Juncture; by an happy *Coincidence* of ſuch conſpiring Cauſes, " and accidental Advantages, as mightily helped on the Work. [g] The Sufferings " of thoſe poor *bigotted* Creatures, the *Martyrs*, made a mighty Impreſſion upon " the common People, who never fail to take the Side of the oppreſſed, and to " think the Cauſe good, be it what it will, for which they ſee People badly treated; " the Purity of the Chriſtian *Morals* was a great *Inducement* to Men of Probity " and Virtue; the *Analogy* of ſome of its *myſtical Truths* to the *Doctrines of Plato*, " then in Vogue, was a *Bait* to Men of Philoſophy and Learning; the Diſtribution " of Goods, which was cuſtomary among the firſt Chriſtians, was a ſtrong *Temptation* to the meaner Sort; and the *Oracles*, at this Time happening to ceaſe, and " the *Jewiſh* State to be diſſolved, turned to the Advantage of the *Chriſtian* Religion, " and contributed not a little to the Increaſe of its Numbers. Mean while, the Rulers of the World overlooked and neglected to cruſh a Doctrine, ſo *harmleſs* in itſelf, " and ſo unlikely to ſucceed on the Account of its *Abettors*, till, by their Connivance, " it was at laſt univerſally received by the vulgar Sort, and the Number of its Votaries was grown ſo *formidable*, that even Princes themſelves were forced, for their " own Eaſe and Intereſt, to come into it and profeſs it."

Anſwered particularly.

IT cannot be denied indeed, but that every one of theſe Particulars might, in a *natural* Way, contribute *ſomewhat*, either to the planting or ſpreading of the Goſpel; but that all of them together could not do the thouſandth Part of the Work, that is here allotted them, will beſt appear by examining them ſeverally. *The Blood of the Martyrs* was indeed, what it hath oft been ſtiled, *the Seed of the Church*; but this could not be at the Time when thoſe Martyrs ſuffered, ſince nothing could have a greater Tendency to *frighten* Men from profeſſing the Goſpel, than to find that they ſhould be perſecuted, and muſt die for it. This only then can be the Meaning of the *Saying*, that the Sufferings and Torments, which the firſt Chriſtians underwent ſo willingly and bravely, were a ſtrong *Evidence* of the Truth of that Doctrine, which could inſpire its Followers with ſo much Courage and Conſtancy, and diſpoſed Men mightily to embrace the Religion of *Chriſt* afterwards, in *better* and more *quiet* Times: But before the Time, that this *Motive* could have any Influence, the Goſpel had already ſpread, and ſettled itſelf every-where. *The Purity of the*

[d] Luke xiii. 19. *and* Mark iv. 31, 32.

[e] The *Jews* give a wonderful Account of the Growth and Increaſe of this Seed, *viz.* that there was a Stalk of Muſtard-Seed in *Sichem*, from which ſprang out three Boughs, one of which being broke off, covered the Tent of a Potter, and produced three *Cabs* (every Cab about three Pints and an half) of Muſtard-Seed. *Whitby*, on *Matth.* xiii. 32. [f] Luke xiii. 18. [g] Biſhop *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

Chriſtian Morals, and the *anſwerable Lives* of Chriſtian Converts, did indeed very naturally lead Men to admire and value the Doctrine of *Chriſt*, but by no Means to come under its Yoke: For though moſt Men have an Eſteem for ſtrict Rules and ſtrict Livers, yet few care to practiſe the one, or imitate the other; and therefore a Religion, which required of all its *Proſelytes* to renounce their deareſt Paſſions and Appetites, was, upon this Account, more likely to *deter*, than *allure* Men to the Profeſſion of it: And, in like Manner, the *Analogy of ſome of its myſtical Truths to the Doctrine of Plato*, as it was an Argument calculated to touch but *few*, only the Philoſophers of the *Academic* School; ſo it ſeems improbable, that it ever ſhould have Weight enough to *out-balance* the Scorn and Contempt, with which they treated the Chriſtian Religion, for its *unphiloſophical* Way of propounding Truths, without Demonſtration; and the Promulgers of it, for their apparent Ignorance and Want of Education: And though *the charitable Diſtribution of Goods*, or *having all Things in common* among the *primitive* Chriſtians, may be thought a *Motive* ſomewhat adapted to the meaner Sort; yet even this could be of no great Influence, ſince there was Something in the Chriſtian Religion of far more Force to *affright*, than this to engage them, *viz.* the *ſtrict Rules* of Honeſty and Temperance, according to which they were bound to live; and the *great Calamities* and Perſecutions, they were ſure to undergo.

WE allow indeed, that had the *Ceſſation of Oracles* been imputed to its right Cauſe, and known to be the Effect of the *Promulgation* of the Goſpel; this would have been of Uſe towards bringing the *Heathen* World to the Acknowledgment of *Chriſt*; but this Cauſe, at that Time, was not conſidered, as is evident from that celebrated Diſcourſe in *Plutarch* concerning this very Subject; where, among many Reaſons for that *Ceſſation*, he never once mentions that of *Chriſt*'s Coming: And though *the Deſtruction of the Jewiſh State* brought in ſome Converts to Chriſtianity, yet this happened late, forty Years after our Saviour's Death; and the *Advantage* which his Cauſe gained by the Compliance of ſome few was more than out-done by the *Harm*, occaſioned by the Obſtinacy of others, who, not content to reject his Religion themſelves, made it their Buſineſs to expoſe and ridicule it among the *Heathens*, in all the Countries, into which they were driven.

[h] WELL then, the Chriſtian Religion, from ſmall and weak Beginnings, ſpread itſelf far and wide, after a ſudden and ſtrange Manner; and this it did, contrary to all the Rules of Succeſs, which all other riſing Opinions ever ſet up with. It was marked out for Deſtruction in its Infancy, and by the early Perſecutions of *Nero*, we may learn, that the *Powers of this World did not overlook it*, but were eagerly bent upon its Extirpation: It had none of thoſe *Advantages*, which recommend every new Sect, that ſtands and prevails; and as for all other leſſer Helps and Aſſiſtances towards its Increaſe, which the Wit of Man can aſſign, they are apparently too *weak* to ſuſtain the Weight that is laid upon them. It remains therefore, that this wonderous Effect ſprang undoubtedly from the immediate Influence of God, ſtirring up the Minds of Men to attend to, and diſpoſing their Hearts to embrace the Truth of the Goſpel; actuating, after an extraordinary Manner, the Induſtry, and bleſſing the Endeavours of the Apoſtles; and, in ſhort, accompanying all they ſaid and did with mighty *Signs* and *Wonders*, with the *Demonſtration of the Spirit and of Power*.

Why Learning *and the* ſecular Power *were not employed in the Propagation of the Goſpel.*

AND hence probably we may perceive the Reaſon, why the Providence of God did not ſuffer *human* Learning, or the *Civil* Power to come in to the Support of Chriſtianity, the one not till at leaſt an *hundred*, and the other not till *three hundred* Years after *Chriſt*, *viz.* that the Eſtabliſhment of our Faith might appear manifeſtly to be the immediate Work of Heaven, and not owing to human Means, or any Set of *natural Cauſes*. The Apoſtles themſelves confeſs, and glory in confeſſing, that as they preach the Doctrine of *Chriſt*, in the moſt ſimple and artleſs Manner, not *with Excellency of Speech, or the enticing Words of Man's Wiſdom*; ſo the firſt Converts, whom their Labours brought over to the Faith, were generally *mean* Perſons, of no acquired Knowledge, no Rank, no Education. *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory* tells us, that, for near three hundred Years after *Chriſt*, no *Roman* Emperor embraced the Faith, though there were ſeveral of them Men of great *moral* Virtues, and not far from the Knowledge of God, as to their *perſonal* Qualifications and Characters; and yet

[h] Biſhop *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

yet it pleased the Divine Providence, that even these good Emperors, instead of embracing and protecting the Faith, should discourage and persecute it, that the Kingdom of *Christ, which was not of this World*, might not be beholden to any of the Kingdoms of this World for its Establishment. [i] *For you see your Calling*, says St *Paul, how that not many Wise Men after the Flesh, not many Mighty, not many Noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish Things of the World to confound the wise, and the weak Things of the World to confound the mighty, and base Things of the World, and Things that are despised, hath he chosen, yea, and the Things which are not*, such is the lessening Phrase of the Apostle, *to bring to nought Things that are, that no Flesh might glory in his Presence, i. e.* that he might have no Rivals, no Sharers in the Glory of this Event. For though the Apostles, to whom St *Paul* alludes, were destitute of every Accomplishment, that might recommend them to the World; [k] yet such was the Power of God working in them, that the most celebrated *Philosophers*, and the most eloquent *Orators*, were not, all of them together, so persuasive, as one of the least of these. They enlightened Men's Understandings; convinced their Judgments; baffled whole Synagogues; struck an Awe into Courts of Judicature; confounded Gainsayers; charmed Enemies; converted Kingdoms; subdued and reformed a corrupted World; and were the only Persons that ever *triumphed* over the Disadvantages of long-rooted Prepossessions, implacable Malice, and general Contempt. In Despite of all these, and without any artful Insinuations, their Authority and commanding Influence was such, that their Followers were content, not only to *believe*, but to sacrifice their Estates, their Reputation, their Liberty, their Lives, and to stake down their Souls, their *All*, upon the Credit of these new Teachers, and in Confidence, that the *Jesus*, whom they preached to them, was the *Prince of Life*, and the *Author of eternal Salvation* to those, that laid hold on him.

The Sum of the whole Argument.

To sum up the Evidence, then, of this whole Argument. If God did all along promise, and promise, in an *absolute* and *unconditional* Manner, that, in the *Fulness of Time*, he would send a Person, of *peculiar* Eminence, called the *Messias*, to redeem lost Mankind from the Captivity of Sin and Satan; if, at the Time, when *Jesus* of *Nazareth* (whom we *Christians* account the *Messias*) came into the World, there was an *universal* Expectation, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, of this great Person, to make his Appearance; if, according to some famous Prophesies, which limit his Coming to such a certain Period, this *Saviour of the World* is, in all Probability, come, because this Period is undoubtedly past, and no Reason can be assigned for his longer Delay; and if all the Prophesies, which distinguished the *Messias*, in all the Circumstances of his Life, and Sufferings, and Exaltation, according to their true Sense and Interpretation, do fairly meet, and are fully comprehended in our *Jesus*; if the Miracles, which he wrought, are so *great* in their Nature; the Prophesies, which he told, so *certain* in their Event; and the Doctrine, which he taught, so *wonderful* in its Propagation, that nothing but the Divine *Omniscience* and *Omnipotence* could have effected these; then is the Consequence, I think, undeniable, since we are not to suppose that God will assist an *Impostor*, that the Person, who taught this Doctrine, predicted these Events, wrought these Wonders, and in whom all the Prophesies of the *Old Testament*, relating to the *Messias*, do exactly center, is in Reality what he pretended to be, that *promised Messias*, which was to come into the World; since there never was, nor ever can be another, in whom these distinguishing Characters did, or can, at any Time, meet.

Reasons why our Saviour was not owned to be the Messias.

[l] But then, "If there is such "plain Evidence of our Saviour's being the true Messias, it seems a wonderful, *nay* "*some say*, and almost an incredible Thing, that not only the *Gentiles*, but the "*Jews* likewise, who had such remarkable Means and Opportunities of Conviction, "should so universally reject him." And therefore, to satisfy this Scruple, we shall endeavour to give some Account of the Causes of their Unbelief, beginning with the *Gentiles*.

By the Gentiles *from their Philosophy.*

I. OF what Avail soever the *Philosophy*, which, in the Beginning of Christianity, was current in the World, might be towards refining the Notions, and adorning the Minds of Men; yet the Apostle seems to signify, that it was far from being of any Service to fit and dispose them for the *Reception* of Christianity, or to preserve its *Purity*, after it was received; and therefore his Admonition is, [m] *Beware lest any Man*

[i] 1 Cor. i. 26, &c.
[k] *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures.
[l] *Jenkins*'s Reasonableness, Vol. II.
[m] Col. ii. 8.

Man ſpoil you through Philoſophy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Chriſt; as knowing very well, that the Opinions of the ſeveral Philoſophers, then in Vogue, had no kindly Aſpect upon the Faith of *Chriſt*. [n] The *Epicureans*, a confident and vain Sect, would (as the Apoſtle knew by Experience) hear nothing of *a Reſurrection* and future Life, the great Principles of Chriſtianity, without a preventing Deriſion and Contempt [o]. The *Peripateticks* were perſuaded, that the World was *eternal*, and therefore laughed at thoſe, who pretended to teach, that it was not far from its End, and had its Beginning not many thouſand Years ago. The *Pythagoreans* were very ſuperſtitious, and apt to aſcribe every Thing to *Magick*, and, beſides, ſo blindly devoted to their Maſter's Dictates, that they regarded no Reaſons or Arguments againſt them; and (to name no more) the *Stoicks*, who, by the Help of the Chriſtian Syſtem, had mightily improved the *moral* Part of Philoſophy, were ſtrangely erroneous in this, that they believed nothing *immaterial*, which was a plain Contradiction to the fundamental Doctrines of Chriſtianity. Thus, one Way or other, the Philoſophers and learned Part of the World, beſides the common *Prejudices* of other Men, had *Prepoſſeſſions* peculiar to their Opinions, which hindered them from embracing Chriſtianity; and as their Philoſophy was apt to affect the Praiſe and Admiration of Men, to foſter Pride and Self-conceit, and was, indeed, [p] *an Artifice and Diſguiſe only, to conceal the worſt of Vices under a moroſe Look, and an Habit different from other Men*; ſo it ſet them at a farther Remove ſtill from the Reception of a Religion, which calls upon them to be [q] *meek and humble, and poor in Spirit*; [r] *in Lowlineſs of Mind to prefer others before themſelves*; and [s] *in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleſhly Wiſdom, but the Grace of God, to have their Converſation in this World.*

Their Prejudices.

NOR was this Repugnancy of *Tenets* and *Temper* the only Obſtruction found among the *Gentiles*, but even the *poor* and *perſecuted* Condition of the Chriſtians deterred and prejudiced them againſt a new Religion, which would neceſſarily expoſe them to Sufferings, out of a Principle of Fondneſs, which Men naturally have for Eaſe and Safety. They conſidered therefore, that their own Religion was the Religion of their Country, in which they might live without Trouble or Moleſtation, and to which the Honours and Emoluments of the State were annexed: They alledged, that this had been the Religion of their Forefathers, under the Influence of which, the *Roman* Empire had arrived at ſo much Power and Greatneſs; and they aſcribed [t] all the *Calamities*, which befel the World, by Famine, Earthquakes, or Peſtilence, to the *Neglect* of their own Worſhip, and the *Progreſs* of the Chriſtian Religion; and, in Conſequence of theſe Errors and Prejudices, they deſpiſed Chriſtianity before they had any Knowledge of it. Nay, ſome of their learned Men were ſo little acquainted with it, [u] that they did not diſtinguiſh its Profeſſors from *Jews*, nor knew the right Pronunciation of the very Word * *Chriſt* or *Chriſtian*; which made the ancient *Apologiſts* ſo frequently complain, that their Adverſaries perſecuted what they did not underſtand; and ſo earneſtly deſire, that their Religion might be impartially enquired into, and themſelves allowed the Juſtice and Opportunity of a fair Hearing.

And other incidental Things.

THERE were ſome other *incidental* Things, which contributed to the heightening theſe Prejudices of the Heathens. The *Jews* not only [x] blaſphemed *Chriſt* in their Synagogues, but [y] ſent Men (as we ſaid before) on Purpoſe, from *Jeruſalem* into all the Parts of the World, to *vilify* him and his Religion. The *Hereticks*, which ſoon ſprang up in the Church, by their abominable Doctrines and Practices, brought [z] a general *Scandal* upon Chriſtians, as being ſuppoſed all of one Profeſſion, and ſo confirmed Men in the ill Opinion, which they had already conceived of them. The *Chriſtians* themſelves, by their Diſcourſes and Writings concerning *Chriſt*'s Kingdom, gave Umbrage to thoſe, that were glad of a Pretence againſt them, that they

[n] Acts xvii. 18, 32. [o] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. [p] *Vid.* Quintil. Inſtit. Lib. i. c. 1. and Senec. in Exhortationibus apud Lactant. Lib. iii. c. 15. [q] Matth. v. 3, 5. [r] Phil. ii. 3. [s] 2 Cor. i. 12. [t] This was ſo much inſiſted upon, as it is to be ſeen in *Zoſimus*, *Symmachus*, and others, that *Oroſius* ſet himſelf to anſwer it in a particular Work; and St *Auſtin*, who put him upon writing it, thought himſelf concerned, in his own Works, to oppoſe ſo *unreaſonable*, but *fatal* a Prejudice, as *Arnobius* had done before. *Jenkins*, ibid. [u] *Vid.* Sueton. in Claudio, c. 25. * For ſo, in *Suetonius*, [c. 25.] we find it wrote, *Chreſtus* and *Chreſtianus*, whereupon *Tertullian* [in his *Apol.* c. 3.] has the Remark, *Nam nec nominis certa eſt notio penes vos.* [x] Cui [Chriſto] ter, per ſingulos dies, ſub Nomine Nazarenorum maledicunt, in ſynagogis ſuis. Hier. ad Iſa. xlix. 7. [y] Juſtin. Martyr. Dialog. [z] Thus *Celſus* makes Objections from the erroneous and wicked Notions and Practices of the *Ophitæ*, the *Valentinians*, the *Marcionites*, and others. *Orig. contra Celſum*, Lib. vi, &c.

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they intended to ſet up a *temporal* Kingdom by Rebellion. Their *Servants*, [a] being examined before Magiſtrates, and telling, that they had heard their Maſters ſpeak of *the Communion of the Body and Blood of Chriſt*, gave Riſe to the Story of *their devouring human Fleſh and Blood*; and ſome *vile Women* at *Damaſcus*, threatened with Torments, unleſs they would confeſs that they were Chriſtians, which Confeſſion was publiſhed in all Cities and other Places, gave their Enemies an Occaſion to charge them with all Manner of Wickedneſs and groſs Impiety.

Several Heathens, of great Note, Admirers of Chriſtianity.

BUT how much ſoever theſe Arts and Accidents may be ſuppoſed to prejudice Mankind againſt Chriſtianity, yet they did not ſo far prevail, but that, in early Days, we find ſome of the greateſt Names in the *Gentile* World, though they did not actually become *Chriſtians*, entertaining juſt and favourable Opinions of that Religion. Of *Alexander Severus* [b] it is reported, that he had the *Effigies* of *Chriſt* in his Chapel; that he deſigned to have erected a Temple for the Worſhip of him; and inſerted his Name among the Heathen Gods: Of *Arian*, that, with the ſame Intention, he commanded Temples to be built in all Cities without Images, but was diſſuaded from it by ſome about him, who, having conſulted the Oracles, were told, that this would be the Way to make all Men become *Chriſtians*: Of *Valerian*, that, in the Beginning of his Reign, he was ſo favourable to Chriſtianity, that his Palace, being full of *devout Worſhippers*, was, as it were, *the Church of God*, as [c] *Dionyſius* of *Alexandria* ſtiles it: And during the Interval between the Perſecution of *Gallienus*, and that which began in the *nineteenth Year of Diocleſian*, that Chriſtians were in the higheſt *Stations* and Employments; that their Number increaſed daily, and magnificent Churches were erected, where their *Congregations*, which were now become exceeding large, *publickly* reſorted.

By the Jews.

II. THERE is the ſame to be ſaid of the *Jews*, concerning the Cauſes of their Infidelity. [d] Their *Law*, as it came from God, was held in ſuch Eſteem and Veneration, and their *Traditions*, as deſcending (according to their Notion) from the ſame Original, were ſo punctually obſerved, that whoever ſhould go about to weaken or repeal any of theſe, were ſure to meet the Expreſſes of their Indignation. Their fixed Expectance of the Meſſias, in the Pomp and Character of a *temporal Prince*, made them think the Meanneſs of our Saviour's Condition, and the Ignominy of his Death, ſufficient to overthrow all the Arguments, that could be brought in Confirmation of his *Title*; and their having *ſlain the Lord of Life*, and being frequently upbraided with it by the Apoſtles, put them upon the Neceſſity, either of *acknowledging* their Crime, which few are diſpoſed to do, or of *vindicating* the Thing with more obſtinate Reſolution and Outrage, which ſeems to have been their Caſe in the *Martyrdom* of St *Stephen*: For, upon his having charged them with the Murther of *Chriſt*, and declaring his Exaltation to God's Right-hand, [e] *they cried out with a loud Voice, and ſtopped their Ears, and ran upon him with one Accord, and caſt him out of the City, and ſtoned him.*

THERE were other Circumſtances, moreover, which ſeemed not to favour the Reception of the Goſpel. For, beſides that falſe *Chriſts* and falſe Prophets, [f] *with their Signs and Wonders*, were then very frequent, *inſomuch, that if it had been poſſible, they would have deceived the very Elect*; and that the *Jews* were much more inclined to give Credit to *theſe*, who complied with their Luſts and Deſires, than to examine and conſider the Evidence of a Religion, which muſt have obliged them to take up the *Croſs* and follow a crucified Saviour: Beſides this, I ſay, [g] the Nation, at this Time, was ſo very wicked, that, according to the Judgment of their own Hiſtorian, had not the *Roman* Army come, the Earth would have ſwallowed up the City, or a Deluge deſtroyed it, or Fire from Heaven, like *Sodom*, conſumed it. No Wonder then, that, among ſo wicked a People, who, by their Impieties, had fortified themſelves againſt Conviction, ſo [h] *that their Eyes were blinded, and their Hearts hardened, that they ſhould not ſee with their Eyes, nor underſtand with their Heart, and be converted*; Converſions ſhould not be ſo general, and [i] *that the Goſpel ſhould be hid to them that were loſt, in whom the God of this World had blinded their Minds, leſt the Light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.*

[a] Irenæi Fragm. apud Œcumen. Comment. in 1 Pet. iii. [b] Æd. Lamprid. in Alex. Severo. [c] Καὶ πᾶς ὁ οἰκοῦντὲν θεοσεβῶν πεπλήρωτο, καὶ ἦν ἐκκλησία Θεῦ. [d] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. [e] Acts vii. 57, 58. [f] Matth. xxiv. 24. [g] Joſeph. de Bell. Jud. Lib. ix. [h] John xii. 40. Acts xxviii. 26. Rom. xi. 8. [i] 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

Many Jews *converted.*

BUT, theſe Impediments notwithſtanding, it muſt be allowed, that many *Jews* and *Proſelytes* were very early converted to the Chriſtian Faith; that [k] *Simeon*, (ſuppoſed to be the Rabbin [l] *Simeon*, the Son of *Hillel*, and the Father of *Gamaliel*) and *Anna* the Propheteſs, acknowledged and adored our Saviour in his *Infancy*; that *Nicodemus*, *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, and ſeveral other Names of Note and Eminence, ſoon after the Preaching of it, received the Chriſtian Faith; that [m] about *Three Thouſand* were converted at one Time; [n] *Five Thouſand* at another; and that [o] *Believers were daily added to the Lord, even Multitudes both of Men and Women*; [p] that *a great Number of* Grecians, *i. e. Jews*, ſpeaking the *Greek* Tongue, at *Antioch*; [q] a great *Multitude of devout* Greeks, *i. e.* Proſelytes of the Gates, at *Theſſalonica*; a great *Company* [r] *at* Iconium; and [s] *all that dwelt at* Lidda *and* Saron, turned unto the Lord; nay, that not only the People, but [t] *Prieſts alſo* became Chriſtians; ſeveral [u] of *the Sect of the Phariſees*; * Criſpus, *a Ruler of the Synagogue*; Soſthenes, [x] *another chief Ruler*; [y] Apollos, *an eloquent Man, and mighty in the Scriptures*; and [z] many more, not mentioned in the ſacred Records, became great *Defenders of the Faith*; inſomuch, that [a] the *Number of them that were ſealed*, very early in the Church, *was an Hundred and Forty and Four Thouſand, of all the Tribes of the Children of* Iſrael.

The Cauſes, why the preſent Jews *are not converted to Chriſtianity.*

IF it be farther enquired, why ſo many of the *Jews*, even in Chriſtian Countries, live *unconverted*, now in the bright Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel, and when many of their old Prejudices are removed; there are ſundry Reaſons, both on *their* Side and *ours*, that may account for this *Infelicity*, and Faults on *both*, that ought to be amended, and which, for a Concluſion of this Chapter, I ſhall take the Freedom but juſt to ſuggeſt.

WHEREAS the *Jews* of Old were careful in the Preſervation of the holy Scriptures, and extremely cautious againſt any *Adulteration* of them; there are ſome great Preſumptions to think, that, ſince the Coming of our Saviour Chriſt, they have *altered* and corrupted the very *Text*, in thoſe Places which ſpeak of the Meſſias, and the particular *Time* of his Coming; however, this cannot be denied, that the Loſs of the *Vowels* in the *Hebrew* Language has made it very *ambiguous:* And therefore, whereas, to ſupply this Defect, the *Greek* Tranſlation of the LXX (highly commended, and ſuppoſed to be *even* of Divine *Inſpiration* by the ancient *Jews*) was publickly read in their Synagogues, but, ſince the Coming of our Saviour, has been diſuſed, and a *ſpurious* one of *Aquila* (who was an *Heathen*, a *Chriſtian*, and a *Jew*) made in the manifeſt Decay of the *Hebrew* Tongue, ſet up in its Stead, for no other Reaſon, but becauſe the former gave too flagrant Teſtimonies of our Saviour's being the *Meſſias:* And whereas the *ancient Jews* built their Faith upon the Authority of the Scriptures, the Notoriety of the Facts, and the Impoſſibility of an Impoſture, the *modern* ground *all* upon the *Tradition* of their Fathers, and, by that Means, preclude themſelves from all Poſſibility of being converted; " [b] Becauſe their Fa- " thers, *they ſay*, having told them, that the Things, related in the Goſpel, were " not ſo done, as they are related, they are bound to believe them upon their ſole " *Teſtimony*, be the contrary Evidence never ſo convincing."

WHEREAS *Philo* and the *Jews* before him inſiſt much upon the *typical* Senſe of the Law, and their *Cabbala* makes the outward Precepts, but the *Cortex*, or Shell, as it were, of the hidden *Myſteries*, which they contain; their later Authors, finding how this inward and ſpiritual Meaning relates to the *Meſſias*, and is accompliſhed in our Saviour, deny that there is any *Type* at all in the Law, or that the Office of the *Meſſias* extends to any *heavenly* and ſpiritual Acquiſitions, but to *worldly Succeſſes*

[k] Luke ii. 25, 36. [l] The Title of *Rabbin* was the higheſt of all Titles, ſignifying a Prince, rather than a *Doctor* or *Teacher*, as *Rabbi* doth, and there were but Seven of the Poſterity of *Hillel*, whoſe Family was the greateſt in all *Judea*, that were dignified with it. *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. *Ex Buxtorf, de Abbrev. Heb.* [m] Acts ii. 41. [n] Ibid. iv. 4. [o] Ibid. v. 14. [p] Ibid. xi. 21. [q] Ibid. xvii. 4. [r] Ibid. xiv. 1. [s] Ibid. ix. 35. [t] Ibid. vi. 7. [u] Ibid. xv. 5. * Ibid. xviii. 8. [x] Ibid. xviii. 17. [y] Ibid. xviii. 24.

[z] *Epiphanius*, who himſelf was brought up in the *Jewiſh* Religion, acquaints us, that *Ellel*, the *Jewiſh* Patriarch, ſent for a Biſhop, to baptize him upon his Death-bed. *Samuel Morochianus*, *Petrus Alphonſius*, *Rimundus Martini*, *Paulus Burgenſis*, *Nicholas de Lyra*, *Alphonſus de Zamora*, *Petrus Galatinus*, *Sextus Sinenſis*, *Johannes Iſaacus Levita*, *Tremellius*, and other learned Men, educated in the *Jewiſh* Worſhip, upon their Converſion, have been eminent Defenders of the Chriſtian Religion. But it is obſervable, that the Rabbins of the greateſt Note and Authority with the *Jews*, *Maimonides*, *Solomon Jarchi*, *Aben Ezra*, and *David* and *Joſeph Kimchi*, flouriſhed in the moſt ignorant and corrupt Ages of the Chriſtian Church, when Chriſtians, by their ſuperſtitious and erroneous Doctrines, and wicked Lives, had brought their Religion into Contempt, both with *Jews* and *Mahometans*, who, at that Time, were more learned than in any other Age. *Jenkins*, ibid.

[a] Rev. vii. 4. [b] *Leſlie*'s Short Method.

ceſſes and *Conqueſts* only. Whereas the conſtant Tradition of the *Ancients* was, that the *Meſſias* would ſhew himſelf to the World, and vouch his Commiſſion by exhibiting Miracles; the Notion of ſome *Moderns*, to elude the Demonſtration of our Saviour's wonderful Works, is expreſſed in theſe Words, that [c] *there is no other Miracle needful for the Meſſias, but one only*, viz. *to gather the* Jews *out of all the Countries of the World, to reſtore the Throne of* David *to its ancient and greater Majeſty, and to bring all Kings and Nations to the Worſhip of the true God.* Once more; whereas the World before *Chriſt*, never dreamed of more than *one Meſſias*, how various and different ſoever his Offices and Adminiſtrations might be, to anſwer the two States of *Suffering* and *Triumphing*, foretold of the *Meſſias*, and fulfilled in our Saviour: The *Jews*, of late, have invented a new and ſtrange Conceit of two *Meſſias*, one to *die*, and the other to *conquer*, though there be no Footſteps of this in all Antiquity, nor any Poſſibility of crediting the [d] monſtrous Story, they tell about it.

What is requiſite on their Parts.

IF ever therefore the *Jews* would put themſelves in a *Capacity* to ſearch out *Truth*, they muſt reſolve to lay aſide their *counterfeit Hiſtory*, and *corrupt Chronology*, which they have endeavoured to impoſe upon the World; and more eſpecially, their *Oral* Laws, and Traditions of ſuppoſed Credit, contrived on Purpoſe to evacuate the *written* Word of God, and the Evidence, which it produces againſt them. They muſt have Recourſe *to the Law, and to the Teſtimony*, and to the moſt natural and obvious Interpretations of theſe; [e] *for if they ſpeak not according to the Word, it is becauſe there is no Light in them*; and, inſtead of hunting after ſuch *Shifts* and Evaſions, as ſome modern Doctors have deviſed on Purpoſe to maintain a *ſhattered* Scheme, comply with the Advice, which God gives them; [f] *ſtand ye in the Ways, and ſee, and aſk for the old Paths, where is the good Way, and walk therein, and ye ſhall find Reſt for your Souls.* When the *Jews* are once come to the Reſolution of making the Holy *Bible the Rule of their Faith*, it may not miſ-become them, to entertain more charitable Thoughts of thoſe, who differ from them in Matters of Religion; to conſider, that ſo great a Body, as *Chriſtians* make, Men of ſufficient Sagacity in other Affairs, and remarkable enough in moſt Parts of human *Literature*, may poſſibly be in the Right; at leaſt, that it may be worth their Pains, to make the Trial, whether they be or no; that, in the Main, theſe Chriſtians are Men of Probity and Sincerity, and ſuch, as it would not well become the Goodneſs of God, in a Matter of ſuch infinite Importance, to ſuffer to be led away with a common Deception; and upon this Preſumption, they ought to perſuade themſelves [g] to deſiſt from *reviling* the Name of *Jeſus*, (who poſſibly may be no *Impoſtor*) in their *Books*, and *curſing* his Diſciples, (who poſſibly may not deſerve it) in their daily *Prayers*.

WHEN this is done, it may not perhaps be amiſs, in order to create a *Jealouſy* in themſelves, whether they are in the Right or no, to reflect a little on the diſtreſſed Condition they are in; how ſcattered and diſperſed over the Face of the Earth; debarred from their ancient Land, *the Land of Promiſe*; and in no Nation, where they *ſojourn*, allowed the leaſt Power, or Shadow of Government: That in this Diſorder, they have loſt all their Records and *Genealogies*, ſo that, if the *Meſſias* be not yet come, they cannot diſcover him, when he does, or trace the *Lineage*, from whence he is to ariſe. They ſhould remember, that [h] in all their Captivities, the *Time* of their *Redemption* was foretold, and Prophets were all along ſent from God, to revive their drooping Hearts with the Expectation of it; but that ſixteen hundred Years and more are now expired, without any *Glimpſe* of Hopes, or Proſpect of End, or Meſſage of Comfort to refreſh them. *Falſe Chriſts* and *falſe Prophets*, indeed, they have had enough, but theſe have drawn ſo much Ruin and Deſtruction upon them, as

[c] Limber Collat. cum Jud.

[d] The Story which *Hornbeck* [*cont. Jud. p.* 253.] relates, out of their Author *Aukat Rochel, de ſigno Meſſiæ ſeptimo apud Hulſium, p.* 51. is this: ——— They ſuppoſe that a Company of profligate Fellows will invent a new Sin; that they will take a beautiful Stone Statue of a Woman, that is in *Rome*, and warming it, will lie with it: that from thence it will conceive, and at laſt burſting, there ſhall come forth a Child, whoſe Name ſhall be called *Armillus*; that he ſhall be twelve Cubits high, and the Length of a Span between his Eyes; that he will ſay to the Wicked, *I am your Meſſias, and your God*; that they will believe in him, and make him their King; and that to him will be gathered all the Poſterity of *Eſau*. That their firſt Meſſias, *Ben Joſeph*, of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, will fight againſt him with 30,000 *Iſraelites*, and ſhall have Succeſs in the firſt Battle; that, in the ſecond Battle, he ſhall be killed, and his Army routed; but Angels ſhall take away his dead Body, and keep it with thoſe of the Patriarchs: That, after this, ſhall ariſe their ſecond Meſſias, *Ben David*, of the Tribe of *Judah*, and *Elias* with him, to whom the *Jews*, that are left, ſhall be gathered, and oppoſe *Armilius*; that God will deſtroy *Armillus*, and his whole Army, by Fire and Brimſtone, and great Stones caſt down upon them from Heaven. With Abundance more of the like mad Excurſions of Imagination. *Leſlie*'s ſhort Method.

[e] Iſa. viii. 20. [f] Jer. vi. 6. [g] *Stanhope*'s Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lectures. [h] *Leſlie*, ibid.

as ſhould make them weary, one would think, of deluding themſelves with any farther Expectation: But, above all, they ſhould remember, that their Temple is deſtroyed, and with it the *Morning* and the *Evening-Sacrifice* ceaſed; ſo that now they are under a *Curſe* and Condemnation for every Tranſgreſſion of their Law, but have no *Atonement* for their Guilt, or Expedient to pacify their Conſcience; and yet, to be left in this forlorn Condition, would hardly be reconcileable to the Goodneſs and Holineſs of God, had not he ſet forth [l] *Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous, for a Propitiation*, and in him *opened a Fountain for Sin, and for Uncleanneſs.*

THEIR Deſtitution of theſe Things therefore does, in ſome Meaſure, point them to *Jeſus*, and ſhould diſpoſe them, with meek and unprejudiced Minds, *to ſearch the Scriptures, which teſtify of him*; to compare the Propheſies in the *Old*, with the Accounts of him in the *New Teſtament*; and to read the *Apologies*, both *ancient* and *modern*, which ſet this Controverſy in a clear Light. By the Help of theſe, together with their fervent Prayers to God, that he would *enlighten their Minds to the Acknowledgment of the Truth*, it is ſcarce to be doubted, but that, after ſome Enquiry, they would come to perceive the Reaſonableneſs and Certainty of the *Chriſtian* Religion; that [k] *all Things, which were written in the Law, and in the Prophets, and in the Pſalms, concerning the* Meſſias, *were fulfilled in* our Jeſus, and that, according to the wiſeſt Scheme of Man's Redemption, *it behoved him to ſuffer, and to riſe from the Dead, and to enter into Glory, and that Repentance and Remiſſion of Sins ſhould be preached in his Name.*

What is requiſite on the Part of Chriſtians.

WE indeed, who are to aſſiſt in this bleſſed Work of their Converſion, have not thoſe extraordinary Gifts of *Power* and *Utterance*, which enabled St *Peter*, the Apoſtle of the *Jews*, in one ſingle Diſcourſe, to convert [l] *three Thouſand* of his Brethren; and have little or nothing of that Zeal, which encouraged St *Paul*, the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, to take ſuch a large Compaſs in his Travels, and to run through ſuch a [m] Scene of Perils and Perſecutions, for the Salvation of Souls. [n] Thoſe, who are ready *enough to compaſs Sea and Land, to gain* any other Sort *of Proſelytes*, ſeem to be cold and indifferent, in Relation to the ancient *People of God.* The Fear of Idolatry, ſo expreſsly forbidden in the Law, is a great *Stumbling-Block* in ſome Places; and in others, the Want of a regular Conſtitution, with Governors and Laws, with Promiſes and Privileges of their own in a Church, gives no ſmall Offence: Nay, even in this Country, where no ſuch Obſtacle is complained of, there is neither that [o] Care taken by the *Publick*, nor that Application uſed by Perſons of Capacity, as the great Affair of converting *the Brethren of the Circumciſion* moſt certainly does require. We diſpute one againſt another with great *Heat* and Animoſity; we do it about Trifles, concerning *Rites* and *Modes* of Worſhip, about *Decrees* and the Divine *Preſcience*; about Things, that we do not underſtand, and in which we may ſafely be on the wrong Side; here we are fierce and paſſionate, fond of our ſeveral Opinions, and uncharitable to one another: In the mean Time, in the main Controverſy between us and the *Jews*, we are cold and indifferent, as if the *Skirts* and

[l] John ii. 1. &c. Zech. xiii. 1. [k] Luke xxiv. 26, 44, 46, 47. [l] Acts ii. 41.
[m] 2 Cor. xi. 23, 24, &c.

[n] There is this Reaſon offered, why the Church of *Rome* ſhews ſo much Concern for the Converſion of other Nations, and, at the ſame Time, is ſo negligent of the *Jews*. If they could convert any *Pagan* or Infidel Nation, they might from thence have a conſiderable Acceſſion to their Church, both of Glory and Revenue; but alas! the *Jews* are a ſcattered and *peeled* People: Their Converſion therefore would add no new Territory, or Country, or Revenue, or Preferment. So that, if all the *Jews* in *Rome* were converted, the Church's Patrimony would not be enlarged by it; the Tribute given, for Leave to live quietly in the Pope's Territories, would be loſt, and the Poor, who muſt be maintained, increaſed. But if this be the Reaſon, I am ſure it is abhorrent to *Chriſtianity*. Biſhop *Kidder*'s Demonſtration of the Meſſias.

[o] What would be proper for the Publick to do, upon this Occaſion, we find the above named Biſhop expreſſing in theſe Words: "Though I am not againſt the Liberty allowed the *Jews* of reading their Law, and uſing their Prayers and Hymns in their Synagogues; yet I humbly offer, that all *Chriſtian* Princes and States ſhould not permit this Liberty without ſome Reſtraint. It is not reaſonable, that they ſhould have Liberty to *curſe* Chriſtians, under the Name of *Edomites*, or *Minim*, i. e. Hereticks, to *blaſpheme* the holy Name of *Jeſus*, or do any Thing reproachful to our Religion, either in the *publick* Offices, or *private* Converſation; which is not only immoral in itſelf, but contrary likewiſe to the very *Letter* of their Law: And though I am not for compelling the *Jews* to turn Chriſtians, yet Chriſtian Kings and States may oblige them to hear our Sermons, and admit of our Conferences: They may oblige them to appear either before them, or their *Commiſſioners*, at certain Times, and by their *Chacams*, or wiſe Men, to exhibit their Reaſons in Writing, why they continue in *Judaiſm*, and reject *Chriſtianity*. Theſe Papers they may order to be delivered to ſuch learned Men, as are fit to draw up an Anſwer to them, which may be returned to the *Jews*, and they obliged to return a Reply to them, in ſuch a determinate Time. After which, a *publick* Conference may be appointed, and the *Jews* permitted to defend themſelves, and anſwer ſuch Chriſtians, as ſhall be deputed to diſpute with them, with Freedom and Sincerity, and without any Manner of Moleſtation." Biſhop *Kidder*'s Demonſtration of the Meſſias, *ad finem*.

and *Fringes* of Religion were of greater Care to us, than the Vitals and Power of it. In other Differences, the Queſtion is many Times ſuch, that we may be miſtaken, and yet ſafe; but if we are wrong in this Diſpute, we err *fundamentally*, and muſt never hope for Salvation. And therefore it nearly concerns us to know on which Side the Truth lies; and if we are fully convinced that it is on *ours*, and have a Sufficiency of Knowledge and Learning for the Purpoſe, our next Care muſt be, [p] *in Meekneſs to inſtruct thoſe, that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance, to the Acknowledgment of the Truth:* Shewing them, [q] that, ſince there is no living without committing Offences, and thereupon being culpable before God, there muſt, of Neceſſity, be ſome *Atonement* or *Expiation* to quiet the Mind, and ſet the Conſcience at Eaſe; that, ſince all inſtituted Means of that Nature are ceaſed among the *Jews*, there is no Atonement to be expected, but what the Meſſias was to make, as is predicted, and ſet forth in *holy Writ*; and thereupon evincing, that Jeſus is *that Meſſias*, by all the Arguments that prove the Divine Miſſion of *Moſes*, and ſuch as have been the Subject of this Diſcourſe. This while we are labouring to do, we ſhould make it our Heart's Deſire, and Prayer to God, that he would remove from them *all Hardneſs of Heart*, and Contempt *of his Word*, that they may be ſaved *among the Number of true Iſraelites*; and, for our own Encouragement, call frequently to Mind, that they, who are Inſtruments in ſo good a Work, [r] *ſhall ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever and ever.*

[p] 2 Tim. ii. 25. [q] *Kidder*'s Demonſtration of the Meſſias, *ad finem.* [r] Dan. xii. 3.

CHAP. V.

Of CHRIST's *Commiſſion to his Apoſtles.*

THE laſt Thing that we find our Saviour doing, before his *Aſcent* into Heaven, is his giving a *Commiſſion* to his Apoſtles; which deſerves a particular Conſideration, becauſe on it depends all that *Power* and *Authority*, all thoſe *Rights* and *Privileges*, all thoſe *Offices* and *Adminiſtrations*, which the *Apoſtles* themſelves, and, after them, their *Succeſſors*, claimed, and executed in the *Chriſtian* Church. *The Extent of the* Commiſſion.

THE Form of the Commiſſion runs thus —— [a] *Go ye, and teach all Nations, baptiſing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; teaching them to obſerve all Things, whatever I have commanded you.* [b] *Whoſe ſoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whoſe ſoever Sins ye retain, they are retained: For as my Father ſent me, even ſo ſend I you.* The whole Streſs and Purport of the Commiſſion lies in theſe laſt Words, which may very properly be extended to theſe ſeveral Senſes.

I. As *my Father ſent me* from Heaven to declare his Will, and to make choice of you, to be my *Meſſengers* and Apoſtles; *ſo I ſend you* into the World, to preach the Goſpel, and to *gather together* my Church out of every Nation.

II. As *my Father ſent me* to appoint you my *Succeſſors*, to carry on the Work of the Goſpel, when I am gone; *ſo I ſend you* to ordain your Succeſſors, that there may not be wanting fit and proper *Miniſters* in the Church, upon your *Demiſe*.

III. As *my Father ſent me* to acquaint you with the Offices, you are to execute, in the future Adminiſtration of the Church; *ſo I ſend you*, to inſtruct your Succeſſors

[a] Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. [b] John xx. 23.

in the Nature of the *Sacerdotal* Function, to acquaint them with the Powers, and *Miniſtries* belonging thereunto; and in what Manner they are to behave towards the People committed to their Charge.

IV. As *my Father ſent me with* full Power and Authority, to make Laws for the good Government of the Church, and to oblige Mankind to the Obſervance of them; *ſo I ſend you*, with the like Authority, to make ſuch *Orders* and Conſtitutions, to appoint ſuch *Rites*, and impoſe ſuch *Cenſures*, as ſhall be thought conducible to the ſame End. And,

V. As *my Father ſent me* from his Boſom, with a full Aſſurance of his Love and paternal Care; *ſo I ſend you*, and your Succeſſors, with the like Promiſe of Protection and Aſſiſtance, and Succeſs in your Labours; for [a] *lo, I am with you always, even unto the End of the World.*

The firſt Branch of the Apoſtles Commiſſion, to gather a Church.

I. ONE Branch then of the Apoſtles Commiſſion was to *teach*, or make Diſciples of all People, and to collect a Church out of every Nation upon Earth. [b] The *Synagogue* of the *Jews* indeed conſiſted but of one Country, to which the publick Worſhip of God was confined: [c] *In Judah he was known, and his Name was great in Iſrael; at Salem was his Tabernacle, and his Dwelling-place in Sion;* [d] *his Word he ſhewed unto Jacob, and his Judgments unto Iſrael; but he did not deal ſo with any other Nation.* The Temple was the only Place, in which the *Sacrifices* could be offered, in which the *Prieſts* could perform their Office of Adminiſtration; ſo that, under the Law, there was an *Incloſure*, as it were, dividing a particular Nation from all the World beſide. But when God *gave* [e] *the Heathen to his Son for his Inheritance, and the uttermoſt Parts of the Earth for his Poſſeſſion*; when Chriſt [f] *ſent his Apoſtles into all the World to preach the Goſpel to every Creature*; the Church, which, in its *primary* Inſtitution, was of a *diffuſive* Nature, ſoon ſpread and extended itſelf from the City of *Jeruſalem*, where it firſt began, *to all the Parts and Corners of the Earth.*

The Church.

IN the City of *Jeruſalem* we read, that there were *twelve* Apoſtles, together with the Diſciples, and, before the Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, that [g] *the Number of the Names together were about an Hundred and twenty.* When the Holy Ghoſt miraculouſly deſcended upon the Apoſtles, and St *Peter* thereupon preached to the *Jews*, that [h] *they ſhould repent, and be baptiſed in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the Remiſſion of Sins*; it is ſaid, that they, *who received the Word*, were baptiſed; that, the ſame Day, *there were added unto them three Thouſand Souls*; and that theſe, *continuing ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine, and Fellowſhip, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers*, were the firſt, who had the Title of CHURCH conferred on them. [i] From hence we may obſerve what this *Original* Church was, *viz.* a certain Number of Men, of which ſome were *Apoſtles*, ſome the former *Diſciples*, and others, Perſons who repented, and believed in the Name of *Chriſt*, and continued with one Heart, and one Soul, hearing the *Word* preached, receiving the *Sacraments* adminiſtered, and joining in the publick *Prayers* preſented unto God. And, from this Account of its Riſe and Beginning, we may define the *Church*, in all Ages, to be a *ſpiritual Society, joined to Chriſt their Head by the ſame Faith, and Offices of Religion, and to one another by the ſame Love and Charity.*

It's Riſe *and Nature.*

It's Regularity.

St *PAUL*, to ſhew the *Regularity* of this Society, and how they are united to one another by the ſtricteſt Bands and Terms of *Communion*, has employed a great Variety of *Alluſions* and Compariſons to repreſent it by. [m] He ſometimes borrows an Illuſtration from a *civil* Body, when he calls it [n] a Family, [o] a City, a *Kingdom*, whereof *Chriſt* is the *Head* and Governor; ſometimes from an *artificial* Body, when he compares it to a *Building fitly framed*, and to a [p] *ſpiritual Houſe, raiſed upon the Foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief Corner-ſtone*: But what is the moſt lively Compariſon of all, is that which he borrows from a *natural* Body; [q] *Chriſt*, ſays he, *is the Head of the Church, and we, being many, are one Body in him, and every one Members one of another: Into him* therefore

[a] Matth. xxviii. 20. [b] *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [c] Pſal. lxxvi. 1, 2. [d] Ibid. cxlvii. 20. [e] Ibid. ii. 8. [f] Mark xvi. 15. [g] Acts i. 15. [h] Ibid. ii. 38, &c. [i] *Pearſon*, ibid. [m] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. IV. [n] Heb. iii. 6. Eph. iii. 14, 15. [o] Heb. xii. 22. [p] Eph. ii. 20, 21. [q] Ibid. iv. 16.

therefore we are *to grow up, who is the Head, and from whom the whole Body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every Joint ſupplieth, according to the effectual working in the Meaſure of every Part, maketh Increaſe unto the edifying itſelf in Love.*

Now the Deſign of the Apoſtle's uſing theſe *Alluſions* and Allegories, is to teach us, that the *Church*, as it ſignifies the true *myſtical* Body of *Chriſt*, is, and can be, but *one*; becauſe the ſame *Terms* of uniting Members into it have always been, and always will continue *unalterable*. This is the ſame *Family*, and *City*, and *Kingdom*, unto the Rights and Inheritance, the Privileges and Immunities of which, Mankind in all Ages, and all Places, are admitted. This is the ſame *Body*, in which all *Members* are united; and the ſame *Houſe* and *Temple*, in which all the *living Stones* are compacted; and therefore, howſoever we may read of ſeveral Churches in the Scriptures, and elſewhere; yet theſe are only ſo many diſtinct Parts of the *univerſal* Church; they are all *Members* of this Body, all *Apartments* of this great *Houſe*, all *Companies* of this populous *City*: And though they be conſidered as *ſeparate*, with Regard to the Places, where they are ſituate, the Limits of their Dominion, their temporal Conſtitutions, and ſeveral Juriſdictions; yet ſtill they are but *one in the main*, and can no farther deſerve the Title of *Churches*, than as they agree in all *eſſential* Points with the *univerſal* Church, diffuſed over the Face of the whole Earth. *Unity.*

And as the Church of *Chriſt* is one *regular* Society; ſo, in the very Deſign and Inſtitution of it, it cannot but be of a *ſpiritual* Nature. The *Jews*, indeed, who explained the Propheſies, which ſpake of the Meſſiah's Kingdom, in ſuch a Senſe, as agreed beſt with their own *Prejudices*, conceived, that their Meſſias was to be a glorious temporal Monarch, who ſhould ſubdue the *Romans*, and reſtore to them their ancient Laws and Liberties: And therefore they alledge, that *Jeſus*, by declaring himſelf to be the Meſſias, was a profeſſed Enemy to the *Roman* Government; upon which Crime they arraigned him before *Pilate*, and told the Governor plainly, [t] *that, if he acquitted him, he was not* Cæſar's *Friend*, becauſe *whoſoever made himſelf a King, ſpake againſt* Cæſar. He cleared himſelf, however, of this Accuſation, by declaring himſelf, indeed, to be a *King*, but one of a quite different Order to that, which his Enemies ſuggeſted; [u] *My Kingdom*, ſaid he, *is not of this World; if my Kingdom were of this World, then would my Servants fight, that I ſhould not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my Kingdom not from hence.* Which Anſwer, in the Governor's Opinion, ſo fully aſſoiled him from any Affectation of ſecular Empire, that, * *when he had ſaid this*, Pilate *went out to the Jews, and ſaid unto them, I find in him no Fault at all.* *Spirituality.*

All *Power*, indeed, *both in Heaven and Earth, is given* unto *Chriſt*, as he is our *Mediator*; but then this Power is of a very different *Nature*, exerciſed in a different *Manner*, and for quite different *Ends*, from thoſe Powers, which are claimed by the *Civil* Magiſtrate. The *Enemies*, which, by this *Power*, as Soldiers of *Chriſt*, we are to fight againſt, [x] *are not Fleſh and Blood, but Principalities and Powers, the Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World, and ſpiritual Wickedneſs in High-places*; and the *Armour*, which we are to wield, upon this Occaſion, is [y] *the Armour of Light*, [z] *the Girdle of Truth, the Breaſt-plate of Righteouſneſs, the Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Salvation, the Sword of the Spirit*; *for* [a] *the Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal.* The *Rights*, which this *Power* is deſigned to ſecure, are of a different Sort from our *civil* Rights and Liberties; they are ſuch, as *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, *Bond* and *Free*, they who have *civil* Rights, and they who have none, are all capable of enjoying; for [b] *all* of them *are one* and the ſame in *Chriſt Jeſus*. The *Laws*, enacted by this *Power*, though the greateſt Security to the Civil Government, are of a different Nature to its *Ordinances*, ſince theſe are deſigned only to maintain the *outward* Peace and Proſperity of the World; whereas the End of the other is to promote our *everlaſting* Happineſs: And, laſtly, the *Rewards* and *Puniſhments*, whereby this Power enforceth its Laws, are *Spiritual* and *Future*, and ſuch as, in this Life, can only influence Men by Means of their *Faith*; whereas thoſe, which belong to the civil Power, are calculated for this Life only, and, if they do not reach us here, can never affect us at all.

But

[t] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. IV. [u] Archbiſhop *Potter*, of Church-Government, [t] John xix. 12. [u] John xviii. 36. * Ibid. *ver.* 38. [x] Eph. vi. 12. [y] Rom. xiii. 12. [z] Eph. vi. 14, &c. [a] 2 Cor. x. 4. [b] Gal. iii. 28. Col. iii. 11.

Visibility.

BUT tho' the Kingdom of *Christ* is plainly distinct from all worldly Kingdoms, and the *Graces*, whereby our inward Communion with *Christ* is maintained, are *invisible*; yet it will not therefore follow, that the *Christian* Church is not an outward and visible Society. For when we read, how [a] *Paul and Barnabas were brought on their Way by the Church*; how the Elders of *Ephesus* were commanded [b] *to feed the Church, whereof they were Overseers*; and in Case of [c] *Trespass*, between Brother and Brother, how we are to *tell it to the Church, and, if* the Offender *neglects to hear the Church*, he was to be looked upon as an Heathen: When we consider, that publick *Rulers* were appointed to govern this Church; that publick *Worship* was to be frequented, and publick *Sacraments* administered in it; and that *Hereticks*, and other notorious Offenders, [d] *after the first and second Admonition*, were to be *rejected* out of it; we cannot but conclude, that this Church must be an *outward* and *visible* Society, whose Privileges and Offices some Men were admitted to, and others excluded from: And, if the Church of *Christ* be a *visible* Society, it may not be improper here to enquire, by what Means we become, and continue Members of the same.

Baptism the Means of admitting *us into the Church.*

NOW the *Sacrament*, whereby we are at first incorporated into the Church of *Christ*, is declared in Scripture to be *Baptism*; for [e] *by one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body*. This is an Ordinance, which, as we shewed [h] before, our Saviour took from the *Jews*, and, in this new Religion, appointed to be the only Form of admitting us into the Number of his Disciples: And therefore vain and presumptuous is the Delusion of those, who, because they *call* Christ *Lord*, and pretend to an uncommon Measure of the *Spirit*, arrogate to themselves the Name and Privileges of *Christians*, without this *initiating* Sacrament of *Baptism*, which he hath ordained, as the Instrument of making them Members of his *visible* Body. For that *the Baptism of the Spirit*, be it what it will, was never intended to supersede the Observance of this Ordinance, is manifest from a Passage in Scripture, which cannot be gainsay'd. Among the *Acts* of the Apostles we read, that when *Peter*, who was sent for to *Cornelius*, to instruct him in the *Christian* Faith, and preaching to the Company, which was convened upon that Occasion, [i] *the Holy Ghost fell upon all them that heard him*, in the same Manner as it did, at its first *plenteous* Effusion, on the *Day of Pentecost*. But, now, what is St *Peter*'s Inference from this miraculous Event? Is it that the Persons, to whom it happened, were sufficiently *illuminated* already, and had no Need of *outward Baptism*? No: But that this was an Evidence of God's Approbation of them, as fit Objects of Baptism; and accordingly he asks, [k] *Can any Man forbid Water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?* So far is the *Baptism of the Spirit*, even where it is undeniable, from excluding the *Baptism of Water*, or any of the extraordinary Methods of Grace, from intending to break in upon, and overturn the regular Orders and Establishments of the Church.

The Means of our Continuance in it, Faith *and* Love, *and in what Sense.*

AND as Baptism is the proper Means, whereby we are made Members of the Church, so the two great *Ligaments*, which compact and continue us in this *mystical* Body, are [l] *Faith* and [m] *Love*; *Faith*, or the Profession of the Gospel-Truths, as it is opposed to *Heresy*; and *Love*, or Continuance in *Communion* and Church-Fellowship, as it is opposed to *Schism*. For so the Apostle requires, that we should both [n] *hold fast the Form of sound Words, which was delivered to the Saints*; and [o] *that we should keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*. But here it is proper to observe, that as the Profession of *all* the Truths in the Gospel is not made the Condition of our Continuance in the *Church*, so neither is our Deviation from *some* to be accounted a Character of *Heresy* in us. [p] Considering, indeed, the Nature and Corruption, the Ignorance and Frailty, the Avocations and Inadvertencies, the Mistakes and different Capacities and Interests of Men, we have Reason to think, that it is so far from being *necessary*, that, ordinarily speaking, it can hardly be conceived *possible*, how any great Number of Men should entirely agree in the same *Persuasion*, as to several Matters relating to Religion: And therefore, since all *Points* of Faith are not of equal Importance and Concern, it suffices that *those* which are *of the Foundation*, as the Apostle speaks, such as the Being of a God, the Doctrine of the Trinity, the Divinity and Satisfaction of *Christ*, his Resurrection, Ascension, and coming again to Judgment, the Immortality of

[a] Acts xv. 3. [b] Ibid. xx. 28. [c] Matth. xviii. 15, &c. [d] Tit. iii. 10. [e] 1 Cor. xii. 13.
[h] See Page 630. [i] Acts xi. 15. [k] Ibid. x. 47. [l] 1 Tim. i. 4. [m] Eph. iv. 16.
[n] 2 Tim. i. 13. [o] Eph. iv. 3. [p] *Stanhope*, on the Epistles and Gospels, Vol. IV.

of human Souls, the Reward of Heaven, and the Torments of Hell, be firmly believed, and ſtedfaſtly continued in by every Chriſtian. He, that denies any of theſe Articles, indeed, is truly an *Heretick*. But we cannot, and muſt not, give him that Name, who is *erroneous* in ſome leſſer Matters of Chriſtianity, and *diſſents* from the Church in Propoſitions of a lower Nature, ſuch as admit of ſome Diſpute and Debate, but do not properly belong to the *Subſtance* of *Faith* and *Manners*.

IN like Manner we are to obſerve, that, as our Obligation to *Church-Communion* is no where delivered in abſolute and *inconditional* Terms; ſo there may frequent Occaſions ariſe, where *Separation*, or abandoning Communion on religious Accounts, is not only *lawful*, but even *neceſſary* and indiſpenſable. *For though a Church*, as [q] a great Defender of our own ſays, *may want nothing neceſſary in its Conſtitution, yet if it requires me to profeſs, againſt my Conſcience, that I believe ſome Error, though never ſo ſmall and innocent, which I do not believe, and will not allow me her Communion, but upon this Condition; in this Caſe, the Church, for requiring this Condition, is ſchiſmatical, not I, for ſeparating from it.* But where this is not the Caſe, where all Doctrines neceſſary to Salvation are taught, and no unlawful Terms of Communion are impoſed, there the Apoſtle's Exhortation moſt certainly takes Place: [r] *I beſeech you, Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye all ſpeak the ſame Thing, and that there be no Diviſion among you, but that you be perfectly joined together, in the ſame Mind, and in the ſame Judgment*; which he only can be ſaid to do, who holds Communion with the *particular* Church, and Paſtor, to which he *regularly* belongs. For, ſince every *Particular* is a Branch of the Univerſal Church; it is only *thus*, and by the like *gradual* Progreſſions, (beginning from the Union of ſingle Perſons, under their reſpective Guides, and, riſing from particular Congregations, to Diſtricts of larger Extent and Denomination) that we come at laſt to the Union of *each Part* with the *whole Body* of Chriſtians, diffuſed all the World over; and that we are able to ſhew, how he, who is regularly joined to *one*, by Virtue thereof, is joined to the other alſo.

The Means of Union between diſtinct Churches.

THERE can be no Diſpute then, concerning the Obligation of *private* Chriſtians, in Regard to the Unity of the Church; but it is not thought ſo eaſy a Matter to determine, in what Manner Unity is to be maintained between particular *diſtinct* Churches, (eſpecially in different Countries, which have no Claim of Power over one another) in order to make them Members of the *Catholick* Church. [s] For the Reſolution of this Point, however, it may not be improper to obſerve, 1. That it is neceſſary, the inſtituted Order of *Governors* in the Church of *Chriſt* ſhould be ſtrictly obſerved in every Church: Otherwiſe, if he, who is ordained to the *ſacerdotal* Office, and has a Right to exerciſe it in one Communion, be reputed no more than a *Layman* in another, the Unity of the Church in general muſt neceſſarily fall to Decay. 2. That the Governors of the Church, though diſtant in Place, and independent as to their ſeveral Juriſdictions, ſhould agree in ſuch *Fundamentals* of Worſhip and Diſcipline, that they may ſafely communicate with one another, as often as Occaſion offers. And, 3. That, as the *eſſential* Laws of the Church are enacted by *Chriſt* himſelf, in the Obſervance of which, all the Members, and particularly all the Paſtors of it are to unite; ſo great Care ſhould be taken, [t] that all *occaſional* Laws, and *local* Rules of Diſcipline be conformable to, and genuine Deductions, as it were, from the great and fundamental ones, which *Chriſt* himſelf hath left. By this Means we ſhould have the ſame Form of *Government*, the ſame Orders of *Clergy*, the ſame Number of *Sacraments*, and the ſame Terms of *Communion* in every Church, though in Countries of never ſo diſtant Situation, Cuſtoms, and Languages. And that theſe were the Bands of Unity between Church and Church, in the *primitive* Times, is apparent from the * *canonical Epiſtles*, (as the *Ancients* call them)

[q] *Chillingworth*'s Anſwer to *Charity maintained*. [r] 1 Cor. i. 10. [s] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. IV. [t] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

[t] There are other Rules, which ſome have thought proper for the Preſervation of the Church's Unity, *viz.* 1. That Religion be not clogged with Ceremonies, which, when multiplied too much, even tho' they be lawful, eat out the Heart, and Life, and Vigour of Chriſtianity. 2. That nothing of this Kind be determined, but what is ſufficiently known to be indifferent in its own Nature, and impoſed only, in order to the due Performance of what is generally required by the Word of God. And, 3. That no Sanctions be made, nor Mulcts or Penalties inflicted on ſuch, as only diſſent from the Uſe of ſome Things, whoſe Lawfulneſs they at preſent ſcruple, till ſufficient Time be granted, and Means be uſed for their Information of the Nature and Indifferency of the Things, that it may be ſeen whether it is out of wilful Contempt, and Obſtinacy of Spirit, or only Weakneſs of Conſcience, and Diſſatisfaction concerning the Things themſelves, that they diſobey. *Stillingfleet's Irenicum.*

* Theſe Epiſtles were chiefly of three Kinds. 1, Εἰρηνικαὶ, *Letters of Peace* and Congratulation, which one Biſhop

wherewith Persons are wont to be furnished, when going from one Place to another; and whereby *Clergymen* more especially, removing into any other Country or *Diocese*, were, by the Bishop, who ordained them, (testifying the Soundness and Orthodoxy of their *Faith*, as well as the Innocence and Unblameableness of their *Lives*) recommended to the Bishop of the Place, whither they are going, to be admitted to the Exercise of their *ministerial* Function, which, as soon as they exhibited such *Letters*, they immediately entered upon; though it is difficult to imagine, how they could have done this, had not the Terms of Communion, the Orders and Sacraments, and other Ministrations been alike in all Churches.

The second Branch of the Apostles Commission, to appoint proper Officers *in the Church.*

II. ANOTHER Branch of the *Commission*, which our Saviour gave his *Apostles*, was, that they should ordain proper *Officers*, to administer the Affairs of his Church. That there were all along, from the first Beginning of the World, Persons appropriated to the *Service* of God in Matters of Religion, [x] is manifest from the first and *patriarchal* Oeconomy, when the ministerial or sacerdotal Power was vested, not in the *Community*, but in *select* Persons, and every *Patriarch* was the Sacrificer in his respective Family, as may be gather'd from sundry Passages in the sacred Records. After the Publication of the *Law*, and when the Priesthood came to be more particularly and distinctly settled, the publick Ministry of the Church was confined to one Tribe only; nor durst any *intrude* into the least Part of the sacerdotal Office, without a proper Designation. When the Christian Religion appeared in the World, the *evangelical* Ministry was at first wholly seated in Christ alone; but neither [y] *did he*, as the Apostle argues, *glorify himself, to be made an High-Priest, but he, that said unto him, Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee.* After that our Saviour had publickly entered upon *the Work, which he came into the World to do*, he first chose [z] *twelve Apostles*, and afterward [a] *seventy Disciples*, to whom he gave *Commission* to preach the Gospel, and to perform all other Acts, relating to the Christian *Ministry*. It is to be observed likewise, that *one* he refused, *viz.* the *Scribe*, who said unto him, [b] *Master, I follow thee, whither soever thou goest*; and that *another*, whom he called, would not follow, *viz.* the rich young Man, to whom he said, [c] *Sell all that thou hast, and give it to the Poor, and come and follow me*; which plainly shews, that *all Men* were not alike fit for the Kingdom of Christ, nor capable of being his Disciples.

Ministers *always a* distinct Body *of Men, shewn from the Apostles Practice,*

AFTER Christ's Departure, the first Thing of this Kind, which the Apostles did, was to chuse *one*, who might succeed in the Place, which *Judas* had forfeited, and they appointed two, *Justus* and *Matthias*, and [d] *prayed, saying, Lord, thou knowest the Hearts of these Men, shew whether of these thou hast chosen, and they gave forth their Lots, and their Lot fell upon Matthias.* After this, we find them instituting *Deacons*, who, though they were certainly the lowest Order of the Church, were nevertheless not to be taken out of the promiscuous Multitude. They were to be [e] *Men of honest Report, and full of the Holy Ghost:* And though the Brethren presented them, [f] yet the Apostles were the Persons, who actually approved of them, and, by the *Imposition of Hands*, impowered them, whom they thus ordained, not only to act under them, as Ministers in taking care of the Poor, but also to baptise new *Converts*, as we see St *Stephen* afterwards did at *Samaria*.

Bishop sent to another, by such of the Clergy, as were going into distant Dioceses, in order to maintain a good Concord and Agreement between them. 2. Ἀπολυτικαὶ, Letters *Dimissory*, whereby Leave was given to Persons, going into another Diocese, either to be ordained by the Bishop of the Place; or, if ordained already, to be admitted and incorporated into the Clergy of that Church. And, 3. Συστατικαὶ, Letters *Commendatory*, which were granted to the Clergy, when they went into another Diocese, that they might be employed in the Office whereunto they had been ordained; or granted to all, whether Clergy or Laity, who were going to travel, as *Tickets of Hospitality*, that wherever they came, upon producing these Letters, they might be known to be *Catholick* and Orthodox, and as such received and entertained. *Cave*'s Primitive Christianity, Part III.

[x] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [y] Heb. v. 5. [z] Luke vi. 13. [a] Ibid. x. 1. [b] Matth. viii. 19. [c] Ibid. xix. 21, 22. [d] Acts i. 23, 24, &c. [e] Ibid. vi. 3, &c.

[f] Upon this Occasion, I cannot but take Notice of a vile *Forgery*, which is crept into very many Editions of the *English* Bible, especially, since the Beginning of the great Rebellion. St *Luke* tells (*Acts* vi. 1.) that *when the Number of the Disciples was multiplied, and there was a Murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews*, that the Apostles said, *look ye out seven Men, whom we may appoint over this Business*, ὃς κατασήσομεν. Now in many modern Editions, and even in some of *Field*'s beautiful *Cambridge* ones, instead of WE, it is, *whom* YE *may appoint over this Business*. This is a direct Corruption of the Text, and it is well known to what Purpose it served. We see what the People's Power was in appointing Ecclesiastical Officers: They proposed, the Apostles approved, and ordained; and that, as the Text plainly shews, without calling in any other Authority to make their Acts valid, besides their own. *Wotton*'s Sermon, of the Rights of the Clergy.

IF ever any Man had a Miſſion from Heaven to preach the Goſpel, it was St *Paul*; ſo that he, who declared himſelf to be an *Apoſtle, not of Men, neither by Men*, but immediately from *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, needed not, one would think, any farther *Deſignation* by the Governors of the Church to ſet about the Work: And yet, when he was ſent abroad to preach the Goſpel with *Barnabas*, he was particularly ordained, or conſecrated, by the Apoſtles. Before that, indeed, he had publickly declared, what wonderful Things *God had wrought by him* in his Converſion, and had diſputed with the unbelieving *Jews*, (as any other private Chriſtian might do) convincing them, by his own Experience, that *Jeſus was the Chriſt*; yet ſtill he had no *ſolemn Miſſion*: And therefore, when the Holy Ghoſt commanded the Apoſtles, to [h] *ſeparate Paul and Barnabas for the Work, for which he had called them, they faſted, and prayed, and laid their Hands upon them, and ſent them forth*; in like Manner as *Paul* himſelf ordained *Timothy*, when he made him Biſhop of *Epheſus*; and *Titus*, when he ſent him into *Crete*, [i] *to ſet in Order the Things, that were wanting, and ordain Elders in every City.*

AND as the *Practice* of the Apoſtles ſhews, that all Men in common have not a Right to the *prieſtly Office*, ſo their *Doctrines* ſufficiently evince, that there is a particular Order of Men appointed to this Function: For, [k] *are all Apoſtles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers?* ſays St *Paul*, plainly enough intimating, that they are not all ſo, but peculiar Perſons are inveſted with theſe Dignities: And again, ſpeaking of Chriſt's Aſcenſion, he tells us, that he thereupon [l] *gave ſome, Apoſtles; and ſome, Prophets; and ſome, Evangeliſts; and ſome, Paſtors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt*; and this is to be, till *we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man*, i. e. until the Church be conſummated: And, purſuant to this Diſtinction, we find him exhorting the People, [m] *to know thoſe, who labour among them, and are over them in the Lord*; and to [n] *obey thoſe, that have the Rule over them, and to ſubmit themſelves*; becauſe *they watch for their Souls, as they that muſt give an Account; that they may do it with Joy, and not with Grief.* From all which, it unqueſtionably follows, that Miniſters and People were originally *diſtinct*, and that there was a peculiar Rank of Men, all along in the Church, whoſe appointed Taſk it was, to *miniſter about holy Things*. *and Precepts.*

" BUT, allowing it was ſo, in the *Infant-State* of the Church, yet what Occa- " ſion is there for this Set of Men, or their Function now, when the Book of Life " is in every Man's Hands, and all the Congregation is knowing and learned, as well " as they?" 'Tis much to be wiſhed, indeed, that the *Laity* would ſo far attend to the Word of God, and other good Books, where the Subſtance of their Duty is comprized, as to attain a competent Underſtanding thereof, and thereby facilitate the *Clergy*'s Pains, and make the Burthen of their high Calling leſs laborious. But, even upon the Suppoſition that moſt Men do ſo, we cannot but imagine, that ſome Advantage at leaſt will accrue, even to thoſe, that know their Duty beſt, from an *Order* of Men, who are bound to deal impartially with them, in *awakening* their Attention, *ſearching* their Conſciences, *repreſenting* their Danger, *quickening* their Endeavours, and frequently *refreſhing* their Memories in many Things, which they are ſo far from carefully recollecting, that the Temptations, and Pleaſures, and Cares of the World, often prevail with them to uſe many Arts, and to take great Pains to forget, and even drive theſe Things out of their Thoughts. *and from Reaſon itſelf.*

[o] BUT waving theſe, and ſuch-like Arguments, are we to ſuppoſe, that the whole of a Paſtor or Teacher's Office conſiſts in this ſingle Point of Inſtruction? No ſuch Thing. Theſe are the Perſons authorized by God, to tranſact the Affairs of the *ſecond Covenant*, between him and his People, and therefore called in Scripture his Delegates, and [p] *Embaſſadors*; to ſeal that Covenant by viſible Signs and Sacraments, and therefore ſaid to baptiſe Men for [q] *the waſhing away of their Sins*; and to offer the commemorative Sacrifice of their Lord's Death, and therefore ſaid to [r] *bleſs* the holy Elements at his Table. Theſe are appointed to declare the Conſcience abſolved or condemned, and, in the Name, and by the Power of their great *Original*, the High-Prieſt of our Profeſſion, to grant Pardon upon certain Conditions, and therefore ſaid [s] *to rebuke with all Authority*, and [t] *to retain and remit the*

[g] *Wotton*'s Sermon, of the Rights of the Clergy. [h] Acts xiii. 2, 3. [i] Tit. i. 5. [k] 1 Cor. xii. 29. [l] Eph. iv. 11, &c. [m] 1 Theſ. v. 12. [n] Heb. xiii. 17. [o] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. IV. [p] 2 Cor. v. 10. [q] Acts xxii. 16. [r] 1 Cor. x. 16. [s] Tit. ii. 15. [t] John xx. 23.

the Sins of others. These are ſet between God and Men, to bleſs in his Name, and to intercede for their Charge, with an expreſs Promiſe of being heard in their *Mediations*. In a Word, theſe are declared to be *ordained of Men, in Things pertaining unto God*; and, in that Reſpect, to have an Honour conferred upon them, which [u] *no Man taketh to himſelf, but he, that was called of God, as was Aaron.* So far is this Diſtinction between the Clergy and Laity from being an empty *Title*; ſo impoſſible to be at any Time *ſuperfluous*; and, by Conſequence, ſo juſtly to be concluded of perpetual Duration, and even eſſential to the Conſtitution of the Chriſtian Church. [x] And well might it be ſo in the *Chriſtian*, when, even in the *Gentile* World, the Suggeſtions of Nature, and the innate Reverence of a Deity taught them, that ſome Perſons were *peculiarly* to be appointed for the Myſteries and Ceremonies of their Religion, and, that they might perform them with more Exactneſs and Solemnity, ſhould entirely devote themſelves to this Work.

THUS we have ſeen, from Scripture and Reaſon both, that the Miniſters of God were, in all Times, a *diſtinct* Order of Men, ſeparated from the People, and inveſted with a Character and Office peculiar; and ſhall now proceed in our Enquiry who theſe Miniſters were; how they ſucceeded; and in what Point of Pre-eminence they ſtood, with Relation to one another.

Their Orders in the Church from the firſt.

1. WHEN God at firſt eſtabliſhed a Form of Worſhip among the People, whom he had ſeparated from the reſt of Mankind for his more immediate Service, [y] he appointed *three* Orders of Men, the *High-Prieſt*, *Prieſts*, and *Levites*, to attend his Temple, and ſerve at his Altar. When our Saviour inſtituted his Religion, being no Lover of Innovations, he kept as near to this Form in his own Time, as the Circumſtances of Things would bear; for himſelf ſuſtained the Place of *High-Prieſt*, as he is [z] ſometimes called in Scripture; his Apoſtles were, under him, as *Prieſts*, and the Diſciples below them, as *Levites*. When the Apoſtles ſucceeded their Maſter in the Government of the Church, being not fixed as yet in *Dioceſes*, they became a College of *Biſhops*, and, out of the Diſciples, elected *Evangeliſts*, ſent about to preach, and plant Churches, who repreſented *Presbyters*; and to theſe they added the *Deacons*, who were ordained, not only in *Judea*, but alſo among the *Gentile* Proſelytes, [a] as appears from the Title of ſome Epiſtles, and the Rules given to *Timothy* concerning them. When great Multitudes, in ſeveral Nations, were *converted*, and *Biſhops* were placed in every great City, [b] it ſeems very evident, that there were two Orders under their Inſpection, the *preaching Preſbyters*, and the *miniſtering Deacons*, eſpecially in regular Churches, and at leaſt before the Expiration of the *Apoſtolic* Age. But, becauſe all this may be looked upon as bare Aſſertions only, we will here examine a little into the Hiſtory of the Apoſtles Times, and thence trace down their Succeſſors for an Age or two following.

Though the Account hereof is not ſo diſtinct, as afterwards.

AND here the candid and impartial Reader will not expect, we hope, ſo full and diſtinct an Account of the *Miniſters*, who aſſiſted the Apoſtles in governing the Church, as may be given of thoſe, who lived in ſucceeding Ages. 1. [c] Becauſe many of the *Miniſters*, who lived in the Age of the Apoſtles, were *extraordinary* Perſons, whoſe Miniſtrations are not always ſo eaſy to be diſtinguiſhed from the ordinary Offices of the Church, or from one another. The Apoſtle, indeed, tells us, that [d] *God hath ſet ſome in his Church, firſt Apoſtles, ſecondly Prophets, thirdly Teachers, after that Miracles, then Gifts of healing, Helps, Governments, Diverſities of Tongues*: In which Place it is certain, that different *Orders* of Miniſters are deſcribed, ſome of which did not only excel others in the *extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit, but had *Authority* alſo to govern them; becauſe the firſt Order is that of the Apoſtles, to whom all other Chriſtians, of what Rank ſoever, were ſubject: But then, it is not eaſy to give a diſtinct and certain Account, what were the particular Offices of theſe Perſons; which of them were *extraordinary* and *temporary*, and which deſigned for the *conſtant* and *laſting* Uſe of the Church, ſince the Scriptures do not explain them, and [e] learned Men have differed in nothing more, than in their Judgments about them.

[u] Heb. v. 1. [x] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [y] *Comber*, on Ordination.
[z] Heb. iv. 14. [a] Phil. i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 8. [b] *Comber*, ibid.
[c] Archbiſhop *Potter*, on Church-Government. [d] 1 Cor. xii. 28.
[e] The moſt general and received Explication of theſe Offices is this ——— The *Prophets* are ſuppoſed to be the Expounders of the difficult and abſtruſe Parts of Scripture, by an immediate Inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt; for ſo the Apoſtle, in the following Chapter, ſeems to put it; *though I have propheſied, and know all Myſteries, and all Knowledge*, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. The *Teachers* ſeem to be Men, who, having received the Doctrine of Faith from the Apoſtles, preached it to others for their Converſion, and ſo they are the ſame with thoſe, *who laboured in the Word and Doctrine*,

them. 2. It is to be obſerved, that the *hiſtorical* Parts of the New Teſtament are very ſhort, and many Times relate nothing farther, than the *firſt* Plantation of the Goſpel: And that moſt of the Epiſtles, being ſent to Churches juſt in their *Infancy*, where ſtanding Miniſters, as yet, were not ſettled, and written to Perſons lately converted from *Judaiſm* or *Heatheniſm*, their main Deſign was to inſtruct them in the *Principles* of Chriſtianity, or to warn them againſt falſe Teachers. But there was not that Occaſion to ſpeak any Thing concerning the Form of *Church-Government*, which the Apoſtles either kept in their own Hands, or committed to Perſons choſen by themſelves. All that ſeems requiſite was, in general Terms, to put them in mind to be *obedient* to thoſe, who *laboured* among them in the *Miniſtry*, and took great Pains for the Inſtruction and Salvation of their Souls.

The firſt Miniſters of the Church called Elders.

THOUGH therefore it cannot be expected, that the Account, which the Scripture gives us of the *Offices* and *Orders* of the Chriſtian Miniſtry, in this Situation of Circumſtances, ſhould be *full* and *diſtinct*; yet, if we look into the Church of *Jeruſalem*, where Chriſtianity firſt began to form itſelf, beſides the *twelve Apoſtles*, who lived there, and governed the Church together for ſome Time, we find *ſeven Deacons*, who were ſolemnly ordained by the Apoſtles, to be [f] *Miniſters of the Word*, as well as *Miniſters of Tables*; and therefore it was required, as a previous Qualification, that they ſhould be *full of the Holy Ghoſt and Wiſdom*. When the Apoſtles were about to leave *Jeruſalem*, and to take each one the Way, which the Holy Ghoſt ſhould direct for the ſpeedier Propagation of the Goſpel, St *James* was left *Biſhop of Jeruſalem*, and had, at the ſame Time, a *College of Preſbyters* ordained under him: [g] Nor want there ſeveral other Paſſages, both in the *Acts* and the *Epiſtles* of the Apoſtles, which make it appear, that, in all Places, which had been long enough converted to be formed into regular Churches, there were Orders of ſtanding and fixed Miniſters. St *Peter*, who writes to the Strangers, ſcattered thro' *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Aſia*, and *Bithynia*, exhorts [h] *the Elders to feed the Flock of God*, and the People *to be obedient to their Elders*. St *Paul* having called the Elders of *Epheſus* to *Miletus*, gives them a ſolemn Charge [i] *to take Care of the Flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt has made them* [Ἐπισκόπους] *Overſeers*, and tells *Titus*, that he had left him in *Crete*, to [k] *ordain Elders in every City*. St *James*, who writes to the *twelve Tribes*, wherever *ſcattered* abroad, directs [l] *the Sick among them to ſend for the Elders of the Church, to pray over them, and anoint them with Oil, in the Name of the Lord*, and (to inſtance in no more) St *John*, in the three firſt Chapters of his *Revelation*, introduces our Lord, as ſending ſeven Epiſtles to the ſeven Churches of the *Proconſular Aſia*, directed to the ſeven Angels of theſe Churches, whom he calls the [m] *ſeven Stars in his Right-Hand*, and by whom almoſt all Interpreters underſtand ſo many ſingle Perſons inveſted with ſupreme Authority in theſe ſeven Churches. So that in all the Cities of *Crete*, in the principal Towns of *Aſia*, and in all the Places, where the twelve Tribes were diſperſed, and that was all over the *Roman*

Doctrine, 1 Tim. v. 17. The *Helps*, i. e. putting the *Abſtract* for the *Concrete*, *Helpers*, ſeem to be the *Deacons*, whoſe Office it was to look to the Goods of the Church, to the Relief and Maintenance of the Poor, and to aſſiſt the ſuperior Orders in adminiſtering the Sacraments of Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper: For, as the *Talmudiſts*, ſays Dr *Lightfoot*, call the *Levites* the *Helps of the Prieſts*, ſo may the Apoſtle call the Deacons, which anſwered to them, *the Helps of the Apoſtles and Biſhops of the Church*. *Governments*, i. e. (according to the former Way of Speaking) *Governors* are interpreted, by ſome, to be the *ruling Preſbyters*, whoſe Work it was to obſerve the Manners of the People, and to promote good Diſcipline and Government in the Church; others, with more Reaſon, ſuppoſe them to denote the Rulers of the Churches planted by the Apoſtles, and who are ſometimes ſtiled Biſhops, *Acts* xx. 28. Sometimes ἡγούμενοι, Guides, or Rulers, *Heb.* xiii. 7, 17. And ſometimes προϊστῶτες, Preſidents, or Prelates, *Rom.* xii. 8. 1 *Theſſ.* v. 12. But Dr *Lightfoot* conjectures, that they were the Men, who had *the Gift of diſcerning Spirits*, becauſe the Κυβερνήσεις, which we here render *Governments*, ſignifies, in the Old Teſtament, *wiſe Counſels*, and Skill in giving Judgment of Things, [*Prov.* i. 5. xi. 14. xiv. 16.] and it is not reaſonable, as he ſays, to ſuppoſe, that no Office ſhould be appointed to this ſo neceſſary a Gift, and yet no other is here mentioned, to which it can belong. *Whitby*, on 1 *Cor.* xii. 28. As for the Gifts of *Healing*, of *Miracles*, and of *Tongues*, they have not the leaſt Appearance of diſtinguiſhing the Perſons, who were poſſeſſed of them, as Officers of the Church, becauſe they were promiſcuouſly conferred on all, as appears in the Caſe of the Converſion of *Cornelius* and his Friends, as well as the Converts which were at *Epheſus*; and therefore the ſagacious Mr *Rogers* concludes, that the Characters, here deſcribed, were not, in a proper Senſe, *Officers* of the Church of *Corinth*, but only Perſons, by whoſe ſupernatural and infuſed Gifts, the Holy Ghoſt ſupplied the Want of proper *Officers*, and were therefore never deſigned for any long Continuance in that Church. *Sermons, on ſeveral Occaſions.*

[f] Acts vi. 2, &c.

[g] This, indeed, is not *expreſsly* mentioned in the Hiſtory, but there is good Reaſon to preſume it was ſo; becauſe, after a certain Period of Time, we find ſuch frequent Mention made of the *Elders*, viz. that (*Acts* xv. 2, &c.) the Diſciples came from *Antioch* to *Jeruſalem*, to conſult with the *Apoſtles and Elders*, whether the Converts from Heatheniſm were to be *circumciſed*; that theſe Diſciples were received *by the Apoſtles and Elders*; that a Decree was accordingly enacted (*Acts* xvi. 4.) *by the Apoſtles and Elders at Jeruſalem*; and that when St *Paul* returned from preaching the Goſpel, and was deſirous to give an Account of his Succeſs among the *Gentiles*, (Acts xxi. 18.) the *Day following he went in unto* James, *all the Elders being preſent*; *James*, as the Chief, or *Biſhop*, and the *Elders*, as next under him, Paſtors and Teachers of the Church of *Jeruſalem*. Archbiſhop *Potter*, of Church Government.

[h] 1 Pet. v. 1, 2. [i] Acts xx. 28. [k] Tit. i. 5. [l] James v. 14. [m] Rev. i. 20.

Roman Empire, there were *Elders*, or Perſons intruſted with the Government of God's Church, appointed even before the *Canon* of the New Teſtament was compleated. But who theſe Elders were; whether they were the ſame, as what we now properly call *Biſhops*, or of an Order next above *Deacons*, and what, in Time, came to be diſtinguiſhed by the Name of *Preſbyters*, is a Queſtion, that has exerciſed the Pens of many learned Men; which, though we pretend not to determine, yet it may poſſibly give ſome Light to the Argument, if we conſider,

Who theſe Elders were.

1. THAT, tho' the Words *Biſhop* and *Preſbyter* be ſometimes uſed *promiſcuouſly*, yet it will not therefore follow, that they are both of the ſame Order. [p] In the *Jewiſh OEconomy*, there was an *High-Prieſt*, under him *inferior Prieſts*, and under them *Levites*; and yet, in ſeveral Authors, all theſe three Orders are comprehended under the two Names of *Prieſts* and *Levites*, tho' it cannot be denied, that the *High-Prieſt* had Powers and Prerogatives peculiar to himſelf. The Apoſtles, in like Manner, call [q] themſelves *Preſbyters*, but it muſt not thence be concluded, that every *Preſbyter* was an *Apoſtle*, becauſe it is apparent, that there were ſeveral Powers exerciſed by the Apoſtles, which never, of Right, belonged to a *mere Preſbyter*; and therefore, when the Name of *Preſbyter* is applied to any of a ſuperior Order, it might be either in Conſideration of their *Seniority*, (the Apoſtles, and others admitted to the *Epiſcopate*, being generally Perſons of *advanced* Years) or on Account of their Authority as Church-Governors, according to the general Import and Signification of the Word *Preſbyter*; or becauſe theſe Governors, having, each of them, really all the Power of a *Preſbyter*, might the rather call themſelves ſo, becauſe it was a Title of more *Condeſcenſion* and Humility, than that of Apoſtles, which, in a ſhort Time, grew into *high Repute*. It may be conſidered,

2. THAT though, in ſome Churches, we read only of *Biſhops* and *Deacons*, which may induce Men to imagine, that Biſhops and Preſbyters were all of the ſame Order; [r] yet it is a Thing conſonant enough to Reaſon, that in thoſe Churches, where any of the Apoſtles lived, or commonly reſided, the Government remained in their Hands; and ſo long there was no Occaſion for any more than two Orders, *viz.* Preſbyters and Deacons, under the Direction of an Apoſtle: And, in like Manner, in thoſe Cities where few were converted, there was no Occaſion, at firſt, for any more than a *Biſhop* and his *Deacons*, until the Number of *Proſelytes* was increaſed. To this Purpoſe, we find *Epiphanius* [s] accounting, why St *Paul*, in ſome Places, mentions only Biſhops and Deacons without Preſbyters; and in others, Preſbyters and Deacons without Biſhops; *viz.* "That the Apoſtles could not perfectly ſettle all Things at once, and "therefore, in their *Converſions*, where no Perſon was fitly qualified to be a Biſhop, "they only ordained Preſbyters and Deacons, and ſuch Places, for the preſent, re"mained without a Biſhop; and, in other Places, where one was found fit to be a "Biſhop, but by Reaſon of the *Paucity* of Believers, there were no others qualified "to be *Preſbyters*, they ordained only a Biſhop and Deacons." Which, by the Way, ſolves the Difficulty, why St *Paul* delivers Rules [t] for the Ordination of Biſhops and Deacons, without mentioning the intermediate Order of *Preſbyters*; ſince, according to this Situation of Affairs, he might, conveniently enough, include theſe *laſt* in the Rules which concern Biſhops; [u] becauſe Preſbyters are ordained to a Sort of *Copartnerſhip* in the *Paſtoral* and *Epiſcopal* Charge, and (excepting the Impoſition of Hands in *Ordination* and *Confirmation*) there is ſcarce any Act, which Preſbyters may not exerciſe, as well as Biſhops. But,

3. THOUGH we ſhould allow, that the Names of *Biſhop* and *Preſbyter* did, in the Age of the Apoſtles, ſignify the ſame Office; and that all the Biſhops, ſpoken of in the New Teſtament, were *mere Preſbyters*, and of the next Order above Deacons; yet ſtill it appears, that, even then, there were three diſtinct Orders of Miniſters in the Church; namely, that of *Deacons*, another of *Preſbyters*, and over them, a ſuperior Order, in which were not only the *Apoſtles*, but alſo *Timothy* and *Titus*, who governed the Churches in which they reſided. For it is plain, from St *Paul*'s Epiſtles to each, (but * more eſpecially from that to *Timothy*) that they had Power, not only over the *Laity*, to [x] *command and teach them*; [y] to receive Widows into the Church's Service; or to reject or refuſe them; and [z] to oblige Women to go *modeſtly* in

[p] Archbiſhop *Potter*, of Church-Government. [q] 1 Pet. v. 1. John Ep. ii. 1. [r] *Comber*, on the Ordination Office. [s] *Hæreſ.* DXXV. Sect. V. This Account he affirms to be taken from the moſt ancient Hiſtories, [Βαβυλῶνιαις ἱστοριαις] and it is hence manifeſt, that, in his Time, it was believed, that the Superiority of *Biſhops* over *Preſbyters* was eſtabliſhed by the Apoſtles. [t] 1 Tim. iii. [u] Archbiſhop *Potter*, ibid.
* *Scott*'s Mediator. [x] 1 Tim. iv. 11. [y] Ibid. v. 4, 9, 16. [z] Ibid. ii. 11, 12.

in their Apparel, and to *keep Silence* in the Church; but alſo over the *Clergy*; to take care, [a] that ſuitable Proviſion ſhould be made for them, [b] that none ſhould be admitted a *Deacon*, till after competent Trial, nor ordained an *Elder*, till after he had well acquainted himſelf in the Deaconſhip; to exerciſe *Eccleſiaſtical* Juriſdiction over them; [c] to receive Accuſations againſt them, and, if he found them guilty, to put them to open Shame; to charge *Paſtors* [d] not to preach any *ſtrange Doctrine*; if they did, [e] *to rebuke with all Authority*; [f] to *admoniſh Hereticks*, and, in caſe of Pertinency, to *eject* them from the Communion of the Church.

THUS it ſeems manifeſt, that, in the Times of the Apoſtles, there were three diſtinct Orders of *Miniſters*, by whom the *Chriſtian* Church was governed; and, if we proceed in our Enquiry an Age or two farther, we ſhall find who the ſupreme Governor in each Church was, cleared up beyond all Controverſy. *Clemens Romanus*, who wrote an Epiſtle to the *Corinthians* before St *John*'s Death, reminds them, that, before the late unhappy Schiſm, *they walked in God's Laws, being ſubject to* [g] *their Governors*, i. e. their Biſhops, or ſpiritual Rulers, *and giving due Honour to the Preſbyters among them*. *Ignatius*, who ſuffered Martyrdom about four Years after St *John*'s Death, writing to the *Magneſians*, exhorts them all to reverence their Biſhop; [h] *their Biſhop preſiding in the Place of God; the Preſbyters, as the Council of Apoſtles; and the Deacons, as the Miniſters of Chriſt*. *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, who lived in the ſame Century, having ſelected ſome Texts of Scripture, containing a Summary of the Duties which concern all *Chriſtians* in general, adds, [i] *that there are other Precepts without Number, which concern Men in particular Capacities; ſome, which relate to Presbyters, others to Biſhops, and others to Deacons*. *Tertullian*, who was contemporary with them, in his Treatiſe of Baptiſm, affirms, that [k] *the Power of baptiſing is lodged in the Biſhop, and that it may alſo be exerciſed by Presbyters and Deacons, but not without the Biſhop's Commiſſion*; [l] and, in another of his Pieces, he tells us, that *Biſhops were ſet over the Church by the Apoſtles, and had had their Succeſſion continued to his Time*. *Origen*, who was Scholar to *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and flouriſhed in the Beginning of the next Century, ſpeaking of *our Debts* in the Lord's Prayer, inſiſts firſt on the Debts or Duties common to all *Chriſtians*, and then adds, [m] *beſides theſe general Debts, there is a Debt peculiar to Widows, another to Deacons, another to Preſbyters, and another to Biſhops; which is the greateſt of all, exacted by our Saviour of the whole Church, and who will ſeverely puniſh the Non-payment of it*. *Cyprian*, who was *Tertullian*'s Scholar, lived a little before the Middle of the ſame Age: And he, blaming ſome Preſbyters, who, without his Conſent, would have reſtored to the Church's Communion ſome, who had *lapſed*, in the Time of Perſecution; [n] *What a dreadful Proſpect*, ſays he, *muſt we have of the Divine Vengeance, when ſome of the Presbyters, neither mindful of the Goſpel, nor of their own Salvation, neither regarding the future Judgments of God, nor the Biſhop, who now preſides over them, dare arrogate entirely to themſelves, what was never attempted under any of my Predeceſſors?* Which is a ſufficient Evidence of the Subordination of Preſbyters to their Biſhops, both in *Cyprian*'s own Age, and under his Predeceſſors.

Biſhops the ſupreme Governors of the Church, from Antiquity.

BUT the farther we go, the clearer the Evidence both of the Succeſſion and Preeminence of Biſhops appears, and therefore to cloſe up all farther Enquiry with this Obſervation,——That, before the Middle of the ſecond Century, *viz.* within forty Years after the *laſt* of the Apoſtles, ſingle Perſons did every where preſide over *Presbyters*; that theſe did, each of them, exerciſe Authority over their reſpective Churches; and that their Powers were as great, as thoſe, which we claim to belong to Biſhops now, is ſo irrefragably proved from the beſt and moſt ancient Monuments of the Church, that the greateſt Oppoſers of *epiſcopal* Authority have been forced to confeſs it: Which, to all unprejudiced Perſons, muſt needs be a ſufficient Proof of ſuch an Inſtitution.

FOR that the firſt Succeſſors of the Apoſtles were wiſe and good Men, no one, who has any Regard to the Cauſe of *Chriſtianity*, will deny. They knew what the Apoſtles had ordained concerning the *Government* of the Church, and no ſufficient Reaſon can be aſſigned, why they ſhould *innovate* upon an Apoſtolick Inſtitution.

and the Reaſon of the Thing.

° They

[a] 1 Tim. v. 17, 18. [b] Ibid. iii. 10. 13, [c] Ibid. v. 19, 20. [d] Ibid. i. 3. [e] Tit. ii. 15. [f] Ibid. iii. 10. [g] Since we cannot reaſonably ſuppoſe, that the Chriſtians at *Corinth* had then any *ſecular* Governors of their own, theſe Ἡγούμενοι (who are ſet before, and diſtinguiſhed from the Preſbyters) muſt be their Biſhops, who in Scripture are called by that very Name, [*Acts* xv. 22. and *Heb.* xiii. 7.] and it may be farther remarked, that *Obedience* is made due to them, and only *Reverence* to the Preſbyters. *Comber*, on the Ordination Office. [h] Ad Magneſ. c. vi. [i] Pædag. Lib. III. c. xii. [k] De Baptiſmo. c. xvii. [l] De præſcrip. Hæretic. c. xxx. [m] Origen. Lib. Περὶ ἰυχῆς. [n] Cypriani Epiſt.

• They were Men of ſuch Integrity, ſuch Piety, ſuch Love to *Chriſt*, that they never ſcrupled to ſeal the Goſpel, which they preached, with their Blood; they *brought forth the Fruits of it* in their holy Lives, and ratified its Truth by their Deaths. Now, how was this conſiſtent with the known Humility of theſe Perſons to arrogate to themſelves more Power over their Brethren, than their Lord and Maſter had truſted them with? What could ſhew more Impiety towards *Chriſt*, than boldly and *ſacrilegiouſly* to violate his Inſtitution? And what could be more injurious to their Brethren, than to rob them of their *Privileges*, and to aſſume to themſelves alone an Authority, which was common to others beſides? How much Ambition, how much Pride, how much Tyranny muſt poſſeſs the Minds of thoſe, who would thus go about to *lord it over God's Heritage?* Theſe are the Crimes, which Contenders for *a Parity among Eccleſiaſtical Governors* muſt, in Conſequence, impute to the immediate Diſciples and Succeſſors of the Apoſtles, when they repreſent them, as uſurping an *undue* Authority and Dominion over thoſe, who, by *Chriſt*'s Appointment, were their *Equals*; but if theſe Men were *holy*, if they were *religious*, if they were worthy of the Name of *Chriſtians*, (as none I think, can have the Courage to gainſay) they were not, they could not, be guilty of ſuch intolerable Pride and Arrogance.

AND as they would not if they could, ſo neither is it probable that they could, if they would, have introduced into the univerſal Church another Form of Government, than ſuch as was inſtituted by the Apoſtles. If indeed only one or two Churches had been governed by Biſhops, there would be Room to ſuſpect, that this might be an undue *Deviation* from the Apoſtolical Pattern. But, when all the Churches, founded by the Apoſtles, though never ſo remote, and not ſo much as known by Name to one another, did all agree in the ſame Form of Government, ſo that there is not one Church, we read of, but what we are able to prove was governed by a ſingle Biſhop; this, we think, could never ſo ſoon, ſo univerſally, have been brought about, unleſs the Churches had, together with the ſame *Faith*, received alſo the ſame *Form* of Government from the Apoſtles. If the ſeveral Biſhops, in their ſeveral Churches, did challenge and exerciſe an Authority over their *Preſbyters*, which was contrary to the Command of Chriſt, and the Inſtitution of the Apoſtles, how came it to paſs, that no Preſbyters did ever oppoſe them, and object to them this *Violation* of the Lord's Command, and *Invaſion* of their Rights? If the Apoſtles did delegate an equal Share of Authority to every Preſbyter of each Church, how came the Preſbyters quietly to ſuffer this Authority to be forced away from them, and transferred upon the Biſhops? Why did not the Preſbyters of that Age, as well as ſome of ours, pretend that they were equal to the greateſt of the Biſhops? Were not they, who had lived in the *next* Age, as well acquainted with the Practice of the Apoſtles, as we are, at the Diſtance of ſo many *Centuries*? And if they were, how came it to paſs, that no Preſbyter of them all had, in thoſe Days, Courage enough to tell an aſſuming Biſhop, "That he arrogated too much to himſelf; that "he could not but know, what every one knew, that the Lord and his Apoſtles, "from whom they received their Faith, their Doctrine, and their Authority, had de-"creed, that there ſhould be an exact *Equality* between them, and no one pretend "to a *Superiority* over another?" And yet it is certain Matter of Fact, that ſuch an Authority was exerciſed without any Oppoſition; that ſuch a Power was challenged by Biſhops, and never reſiſted by Preſbyters; and that, from the Age next after the Apoſtles, to the Age next before ours, there was never above [p] one Preſbyter taken Notice of in Hiſtory, (and him we find branded as an *Heretick* on this Account) as pretending to be equal to a Biſhop.

An Objection. "BUT might not this be done, may the preſent Advocates for *Equality* ſay, with-"out any Methods of Uſurpation, by a free Conſent and voluntary *Dedition?* The "Apoſtles indeed, at firſt exerciſed a Superiority over other Eccleſiaſtical Orders, "but

[o] Biſhop *Smalridge*'s Sermons.

[p] This was *Aerius*; but upon what Account he is called an *Heretick*, is not ſo well agreed: *Blundel* however has well obſerved, that the main Reaſon why he was condemned, was his unneceſſary Separation from the Church, and not his Opinion about Biſhops; for, had it been the *latter*, there can be no Reaſon aſſigned, why his Hereſy, if it was then thought ſo, ſhould not be mentioned either by *Socrates*, *Theodoret*, *Sozomen*, or *Evagrius*, before whoſe Time he lived, when yet they mention the *Euſtathiani*, who were Contemporaries with him: And therefore, when *Epiphanius*, and others, liſt him in the Roll of Hereticks, it muſt be, either on Account of the other heretical Notions which he maintained, or becauſe they took the Name *Heretick*, (as it is evident they often did) for one, who, upon a Matter of different Opinion from the preſent Senſe of the Church, did proceed to make Separation from the Body of the Catholick Church; which I take to be the trueſt Account of the Matter. *Stillingfleet*'s Irenicum.

" but leaving none behind to ſucceed in that Power, the Church was every where " governed by *a Common Council of Preſbyters*, till this Form of Government being " found *inconvenient*, as giving too much Occaſion for Schiſms and Diviſions, it " was at laſt univerſally agreed, that one *Preſbyter* ſhould be choſen out to preſide " over the reſt:" And from this they produce the Authority of St *Jerom* [q], who having obſerved, that the Names of *Biſhops* and *Preſbyters* are uſed *promiſcuouſly* in the Scriptures, and that the Apoſtles likewiſe, in ſome Places, call themſelves Preſbyters; from thence he concludes, that *there was no Diſtinction between their Offices, but that Apoſtle, Biſhop, and Preſbyter, were only different Names for the ſame Thing; that Churches at firſt were generally governed by a College of Preſbyters, equal in Rank and Dignity to one another; but, afterwards Diviſions ariſing by Reaſon of this* Parity *among Preſbyters, when every Preſbyter began to claim, as his own particular Subjects, thoſe, whom he had baptiſed; it was decreed, all the World over, that one of the Preſbyters, in every Church, ſhould be ſet over the reſt, and particularly called* Biſhop, *and that the chief Care of the Church ſhould be committed to him, in order that the Seeds of Schiſm and Contention might be deſtroyed.*

THIS Suppoſition at firſt Sight reflects not a little upon the Wiſdom of *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles. For, if the Apoſtles, devolving the Government of the Church upon *common Councils* of Preſbyters, left it in ſuch a Condition, as occaſioned *Schiſms* and *Diviſions*, and, for the Removal of theſe, the Church afterwards found it neceſſary to diſſolve theſe *Preſbyteries*, and introduce *Epiſcopacy* in its room; then were *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles both imprudent in not foreſeeing, and neglective in not preventing theſe Diſorders; and, conſequently, had not the After-Age taken care to ſupply the Defect of their Conduct, by ſettling a wiſer Form of Government, than they left, the Church had infallibly run to Ruin. This is the unavoidable Conſequence of St *Jerom's Hypotheſis*, and, at the ſame Time, a remarkable Inſtance, to what Abſurdities a wiſe Man's Paſſion and Reſentment will lead him. For the true Occaſion of this famous Paſſage was,——That ſome *Deacons*, who enjoyed *wealthier* Places in the Church, than many *Preſbyters*, claimed ſeveral Privileges above them, and were thereupon unwilling to be admitted into the Order. This Irregularity ſo provoked that holy Father, who himſelf was only a *Preſbyter*, that, to raiſe his own *Order* beyond the Competition of *Deacons*, he endeavoured to make it *equal*, by its Original Inſtitution, with *Biſhops* and Apoſtles; and in this he fell into a common Miſtake of running into one Extreme, to avoid another. But even if this had not been the Caſe, yet there is very good Reaſon to except againſt his Teſtimony, becauſe it was a long while ſubſequent to the Witneſſes, we have above produced.

Anſwered.

The Occaſion of St Jerom's *Words.*

St *JEROM* [r] was not born till about three hundred and thirty Years after *Chriſt*, almoſt an hundred Years after *Origen* one of the *lateſt*, and full three hundred Years after *Clemens*, the *earlieſt* of the Authors we have cited; and therefore, to adhere to the *Authority* of *one* ſingle Witneſs of ſo late a Date, againſt the unanimous Aſſertions of ſo *many*, that lived ſo near a Matter of Fact, cannot but be thought irrational, eſpecially when we find this ſame great Advocate for *Parity*, in other Parts of his Writings, where he was not heated with Paſſion, expreſsly declaring, that [s] *what Aaron and his Sons were, that we know the Biſhops and Preſbyters to be*, and thereby acknowledging, that, as *Aaron*, by Divine Right, was ſuperior to his Sons the Prieſts, ſo is the Biſhop to the Preſbyters. [t] As plain a Contradiction to this above-cited Paſſage, as one Propoſition can be to another! And therefore we muſt ſuppoſe, that the Notion of an *univerſal Decree*, whereby one *Preſbyter* in every Church was raiſed to an *Epiſcopal Superiority*, was a mere Conjecture of this Father's, in order to ſolve the Difficulty, which he conceived in the promiſcuous Uſe of the Words *Apoſtle*, *Biſhop*, and *Preſbyter*; " ſince it is impoſſible to conceive, how ſo great a Change ſhould be introduced in all Parts of the World, at a Time when the Church abounded with Men of great Parts and Learning, and yet not the leaſt Mention be made of it in any other Writings; at a Time when no *General Council* could meet to appoint it; when there were no Chriſtian Princes, on a *political* View, to ſet it forward; and when by Reaſon of the Heat of Perſecution, and the Diſtance of Churches, there was ſo little Commerce and Intercourſe between them, that from the Churches of *Armenia* and *Perſia* in the *Eaſt*, to thoſe of *Spain* in the *Weſt*, from the *African* Churches in the *South*, to our *Britiſh* Churches in the *North*, this Conſtitution ſhould univerſally be received and ſubmitted to, if it had not been eſtabliſhed by the Apoſtles, or the firſt Founders of theſe *Churches*."

That Preſbytery could not be changed into Epiſcopacy.

[q] Ep. ad Evagrium. [r] Ep. ad Nepot. [s] *Scott's* Mediator. [t] Archbiſhop *Potter*, of Church Government. [u] See *Whitby's* Preface to the Epiſtle to *Titus*.

GOVERNMENT, we know, is a publick Matter of Fact, and, as such, visible, and well known to every one. The People were all concerned to be well acquainted with the Rulers, whom God had set over them, and to whom the Scriptures had obliged them to pay Obedience; and therefore would not easily submit to an *Innovation*, which manifestly endangered the Safety of their Souls. But even supposing that both they and the Presbyters could have been prevailed upon to come into it; yet what Temptation or Motive could the Persons, then *exalted*, have to accept of the Advancement? Men do not easily desire a Change, but upon Prospect of some Ease or temporal Advantage, much less when they perceive the Change is like to add to their Trouble, and increase their Danger. Now this was really the Case of the *first* Christian Bishops: They were still exposed to the sharpest Fury of their Persecutors, and when any *Storm* was raised against the Church, it commonly fell upon them first. Their Labours too were very great; and as the Care of the whole Flock lay upon them, they were extremely sedulous, and unwearied in the Discharge of it? And can we then reasonably think, that they could be so fond of so much Toil and Peril, as to violate the Institution of the blessed *Jesus* or his Apostles, to obtain it? This is repugnant to the Nature of Man, and abhorrent to their Principles, (as we shewed before) and therefore upon the whole we may conclude, that whatever the Sense of the Passage, upon which the Objection is founded, may be, the Superiority of Bishops to Presbyters was of ancient Right, derived from the Apostles, and no subsequent Concession, or Innovation.

The small Distinction between Bishop *and* Presbyter.

THIS Difference, however, we owe to the Authority of St *Jerom*, among many other Fathers, as to suppose the *Distinction* between Bishop and Presbyter, not only as to the *Honours* and *Emoluments*, wherewith the Bounty of Princes has enriched the *former*, but even as to the Exercise of their *Office* and *spiritual Jurisdiction*, was not near so conspicuous in former Ages, as it is now. A Bishop *then* thought it no Disparagement * *to be joined* with the lowest *Priest in the sacerdotal Honour*. The common Appellation, [x] wherewith they addressed each other, was *Brother*, or *Fellow-Presbyter*; nor was it any Disparagement to his Wisdom and Knowledge, in every Matter of Importance, to advise with the [y] *Assembly of Presbyters*, which was held *the Senate of the Church*. Nay, several Things there were, in a Manner peculiar to the Bishop's Office and Function, which yet he could not do, without the Consent and Approbation of his Presbyters. He could not [z] *ordain any Clerks*, unless the Presbyters *were consenting to it*; for they were the Persons, who were to offer and propose such, as they judged fit to enter into *holy Orders*: He could not hear any Cause of Consequence [a] *without their Presence*, nor determine it, without *their Approbation*, and in case he did, *the Sentence* he gave *was to be deemed null*; nor could [b] he degrade any *Presbyter*, without the Consent of a *Synod*, wherein a Majority of Presbyters were usually present; or [c] suspend him, without the Approbation of his *Chapter*.

Dr Comber's *Opinion hereupon.*

" I AM very sensible, (says the [d] learned Author, I have frequently quoted upon " this Subject) that many of the Privileges, belonging to the second Order of the " Clergy, have been laid aside, whether to repress the Ambition of the *Presbyters*, " who unjustly aimed at an *Equality*, or out of an Affectation of *Singularity* in some " of the superior Degrees, I will not determine. 'Tis, however, equally pernicious " to the Church, for Presbyters to aspire at a *Parity* with Bishops, or for Bishops " to despise the *others*, as unworthy to advise or assist them: For the *former* " destroys, and the *latter* very much impairs the good Government of the Church. " Bishops cannot exercise that Authority, which Christ and his Apostles left them, " if Presbyters were their Equals; for this, as St *Jerom* speaks, *will make as many* " *Schisms, as Priests*; nor can they have that useful Assistance, towards the Execution " of their episcopal Function, which was designed them, when they exclude so " many learned and able Men, as this next Order affords, from their Counsels and " Administrations. The Orders therefore must be distinct, to avoid Confusion; " but, provided the *Subordination* be kept up, due *Respect* should at all Times be " shewn, to exclude *arbitrary Dominion*. The Bishop, in short, as an ancient Canon " has

* Presbyteros cum Episcopo sacerdotali honore conjunctos. *Cypr. ad. Luc. Ep.* 58. [x] Fratri & Compresbytero sexto. *Aug. Ep.* 104. *Nay, the College of Presbyters, writing to St* Cyprian, *their Bishop, call him* Brother. Cypr. Ep. 26. [y] Σύμβουλοι καὶ συνεδρίται Ἐπισκόπου, Ignat. Ep. ad Tral. Habemus in Ecclesiâ Senatum nostrum, cœtum Presbyterorum. *Hier. in Jesai. c.* iii. [z] Ut Episcopus sine Concilio Clericorum suorum Clericos non ordinet. *Conc.* 4. *Carth. Can.* 22. [a] Ut Episcopus nullius causam audiat, absque præsentiâ Clericorum suorum, alioqui irrita erit sententia. *Ibid. Can.* 23. [b] Concil. Hispal. 2. Can. 6. Anno 619. [c] Vel inhonestè tractare, aut sine Judicio Capituli suspendere. *Alex.* III. *in Decret. Lib.* V. [d] *Comber*, on Ordination.

"has provided, *ſhould ſit higher in the Aſſembly of Preſbyters in the Church*, but with-
"in the Houſe he ſhould conſider them as *Colleagues*: In *Publick*, he ſhould have
"all imaginable Expreſſions of Reverence from his Clergy; but, in *Private*, ſhould
"treat them with great Civility and Condeſcenſion, to allay the Splendor of an ex-
"alted Fortune, and to leſſen the Diſtance, which his Honours and *Temporalities*
"have ſet between them."

THUS we have endeavoured to ſhew, that [e] as, in the *Jewiſh* Church, the *High-Prieſt* was above the *Prieſts* and *Levites*; as, in the Infancy of the Chriſtian Church, *Chriſt* was above the Apoſtles, and the ſeventy Diſciples; as, while the Apoſtles lived, they were above the other Eccleſiaſtical Officers; ſo, even after their Death, Biſhops have, (by Divine Appointment, not any voluntary Dedition) and, to the End of the World, ought to have a Power and Authority over Prieſts and Deacons. But becauſe here it may be enquired, whether there is not the like Authority of one Biſhop over another, it is to be obſerved, that, whatever may be diſputed concerning a *Priority of Order*, it is undoubtedly true, that, in Point of Power and Authority, every Apoſtle was equal. They were all diſtinguiſhed by the ſame common Name; had all the ſame Commiſſion and Inſtructions given them; were all alike admitted to be Attendants on Chriſt; were authorized alike to preach his Goſpel; and, without a Difference, have *twelve Thrones* appointed them, *in which they are to judge the twelve Tribes of Iſrael*. And as their Predeceſſors, the Apoſtles, were, in all Reſpects, of *equal* Power and Authority; ſo there are very pregnant Proofs in Antiquity, that every Biſhop, in the firſt *Centuries*, was Supreme in his own Dioceſe, and ſubject to none but *Chriſt*. One Biſhop, indeed, might excel another in the *Extent* of his Dioceſe, in the Number and *Quality* of Chriſtians under his Care, or in outward *Splendor* and Magnificence; but, to apply [f] St *Jerom*'s Words in this Caſe; "Wherever a Biſhop is, whether at *Rome*, or at "*Eugubium*, at *Conſtantinople*, or at *Rhegium*, at *Alexandria*, or at *Tani*, he has the "ſame Merit, and the ſame Prieſthood. Neither the Power of Riches, nor Abaſe-"ment of Poverty makes a Biſhop higher or lower, but they are all Succeſſors of "the Apoſtles."

Biſhops all equal.

BUT though the Biſhops of the *primitive* Church were all inveſted with the ſame Office and Authority; yet, in Proceſs of Time, and as Chriſtianity increaſed, it was found neceſſary to enlarge the Epiſcopal Power: And therefore, as before there was commonly a Biſhop placed in every great City, [h] ſo now, in every *Metropolis*, as the *Romans* called it, or *Mother-City* of every Province, wherein were Courts of Civil Judicature, there was an *Archbiſhop*, or *Metropolitan*, who had *Eccleſiaſtical* Juriſdiction over all the Churches within that *Province*. He was ſuperior to all the Biſhops within thoſe Limits; and here it belonged to him, either to ordain, or to ratify the Elections and Ordinations of all other Biſhops, which, without his Confirmation, were looked upon as null and void. Once, at leaſt, every Year, he was to ſummon the Biſhops under him to a *Synod*; to enquire into, and direct the Eccleſiaſtical Affairs within his *Province*; to inſpect the Lives and Manners, the Opinions and Principles of his Biſhops; and to admoniſh, reprove, and ſuſpend them, that were diſorderly and irregular: If any Controverſies or Contentions happened between any of them, he was to have the Hearing and Determination of them; nor, indeed, was any Matter of Moment done within the Compaſs of his Juriſdiction, without conſulting him in the Caſe.

The Riſe of Metropolitans *and* Primates, *and their Juriſdiction.*

WHEN Chriſtianity, increaſing ſtill more and more, came at laſt to overſpread the whole *Roman* Empire, there ſprang up another *Branch* of the *Epiſcopal* Office, as much ſuperior to that of *Metropolitans*, as theirs was to common Biſhops, *viz.* that of *Primates* and *Patriarchs*, who had Juriſdiction over ſeveral Provinces: But, for the right underſtanding of this, it is requiſite to know:——[i] That, when the Chriſtian Faith was fully ſettled in the World, it was determined to *model* the *external* Government of the Church, as near as might be, to the *Civil* Government of the Empire. Now, the whole Empire being *divided* into thirteen *Dioceſes*, as they called theſe Diviſions, and theſe containing about an hundred and twenty Provinces, and every Province ſeveral Cities; as in every City there was a *Civil* Magiſtrate, for the Execution and Preſervation of the Peace, both in the City and adjacent Country; ſo was there alſo a *Biſhop*, for ſpiritual Order and Government, whoſe

[e] Biſhop *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [f] See Archbiſhop *Potter*, on Church-Government, c. iii. [g] Ad Evagrium. [h] *Cave*'s Primitive Chriſtianity. [i] Ibid.

whoſe Juriſdiction was of like Extent and Latitude: As in every Province there was a *Proconſul* or *Preſident*, whoſe Seat was uſually at the *Metropolis*, whither all inferior Cities came for Judgment in Matters of Importance; ſo in the ſame City there was an *Archbiſhop*, or *Metropolitan*, for Matters of Eccleſiaſtical Concernment: And laſtly, as, in every *Dioceſe*, the Emperors had their *Vicarii* or *Lieutenants*, who dwelt in the principal City of the Dioceſe, where all Imperial Edicts were publiſhed, and Cauſes, not determined elſewhere, decided; ſo there was in the ſame City a *Primate*, to whom the laſt Determination of all Appeals from all the Provinces in Differences of the Clergy, and the ſovereign Care of all the Dioceſe for ſundry Points of ſpiritual Concernment, did belong: So that the *Patriarch*, as ſuperior to the *Metropolitans*, was to have under his Juriſdiction, not only one *ſingle* Province, but a whole *Dioceſe*, (in the old *Roman* Notion of the Word) conſiſting of many Provinces. To him belonged the *Conſecration* of the *Metropolitans*, that were under him; the ſummoning them to Councils; the correcting their Miſdemeanors; and in Matters, which lay properly within his Cognizance, from his Judgment and Sentence, there was no Appeal. But, to return to the ordinary *Miniſters* of the Church.

The Qualifications of Miniſters.

THE *Qualifications*, which the Scriptures require in him, that is admitted to attend on God's Altar, are ſuch as theſe—That he [k] *be blameleſs, as the Steward of God; not ſelf-willed, not ſoon angry, not given to Wine, no Striker, not given to filthy Lucre, but a Lover of Hoſpitality, a Lover of good Men, ſober, juſt, holy, temperate,* [l] *and having a good Report, even of them that are without*, i. e. of unbelieving *Jews* and *Gentiles, leſt he fall into their Reproach, and in the Snare of the Devil.* For, be he never ſo learned and ingenious, yet, if he be not virtuous, [m] his Example will do more Harm, than all the other Labours do Good: He will diſcourage the Pious, and harden Sinners; diſhonour the Lord *Jeſus*; diſgrace the Church whereunto he belongs, and not only deſtroy his own, but the Souls of other People likewiſe.

Virtue.

Learning.

BUT though Virtue be the *principal*, yet it is not the only Qualification belonging to a Miniſter of *Chriſt*; for if under the *Levitical* Diſpenſation, which conſiſted, in a great Meaſure, of *carnal Obſervances*, [n] *the Prieſts Lips were to preſerve Knowledge, becauſe the People were to require the Law at their Mouths*; how much more under the *Chriſtian*, where the Adminiſtrations of the Prieſthood are become *ſpiritual*, and the Burthen of their Office vaſtly *augmented*. [o] The Apoſtles, indeed, were ἀνθρωποι ἀγραμμάτοι καὶ ἰδιῶται, that is to ſay, according to the ſtrict Signification of the Words, *Men unlearned, and of a mean and plebeian Condition*; nevertheleſs, ſince they were appointed by God to preach the Goſpel to ſeveral Nations, a Work requiring a conſiderable Knowledge of the *Languages* of thoſe Nations, impoſſible to be performed without it, and yet impoſſible for the Apoſtles, in a natural and ordinary Courſe of Study, to acquire; God was pleaſed to ſupply this Defect, and to give them all neceſſary Qualifications by immediate and divine Infuſion. From whence we may infer, that if Helps and Qualifications were not always of moſt ſingular Uſe, and ſometimes of indiſpenſable Neceſſity to the ſacred Calling, certainly the moſt wiſe God would never have been at the Expence of a Miracle to endow Men of that Calling with them.

Even neceſſary to the Apoſtles.

NAY, we may add further, [p] that even the *Apoſtles*, thoſe Miniſters of God, who were inſpired from Heaven, did not ſo wholly depend upon Divine Inſpiration, but that they made uſe alſo of *ordinary* Helps and Means (ſuch as reading Books, with Study and Meditation on them) for their Aſſiſtance in the Diſcharge of their Office. St *Paul* had his Books, his Manuſcripts, and Collation of Notes too, which he read, and which he found ſo uſeful, that he gives *Timothy* a ſpecial Charge to convey them ſafely to him; [q] *The Cloak, that I left at* Troas *with* Carpus, *when thou comeſt, bring with thee, and the Books, but eſpecially the Parchments:* And it is farther to be obſerved, that he earneſtly exhorts the ſame *Timothy*, to the like Courſe of Reading and Study; [r] *Give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine*; (which he calls elſewhere [s] *kindling, or ſtirring up Gifts that were in him*) *meditate on theſe Things, and give thyſelf wholly to them, that thy Profiting may appear unto all.* And if Study and Meditation, the Knowledge of Sciences, and human Learning were requiſite in inſpired Apoſtles, for the more complete Diſcharge of their Office, how much more neceſſary is it now, when thoſe miraculous Gifts are ceaſed, and no Man hath

[k] Tit. i. 7, &c. [l] 1 Tim. iii. 7. [m] *Comber*, on Ordination. [n] Mal. ii. 7.
[o] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. [p] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [q] 2 Tim. iv. 13. [r] 1 Tim. iv. 13, &c. [s] 2 Tim. i. 6.

hath any Thing beyond the ordinary Aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt, to bleſs his Study and his Labours?

Knowledge of the Scriptures.

BUT as in all other Sciences, ſo great a Part of Knowledge, requiſite in a Miniſter of *Chriſt*, is, that he ſhould [t] *be mighty in the Scriptures*, and ſo far [u] *taught in the faithful Word, as to be able thereby both to exhort the Orthodox, and convince Gainſayers:* But as Things are now, there is no Way to underſtand the Scriptures, but by Skill in the *original* Tongues, conſulting *Fathers* and *Commentators*, and comparing one Part of the Bible with another; and yet, unleſs he underſtands them, he cannot do his Office well, becauſe all his Doctrines and Exhortations muſt be taken from thence. He muſt inſtruct the Ignorant, confirm the Faithful, comfort the Sad, ſtrengthen the Weak, exhort the Negligent, and reprove the Wicked with Divine Sentences, duly applied, and carefully gathered from the Word of God, which give Strength and Authority to all his Diſcourſes. Thus the Miniſter of Chriſt's Church ſhould be a good Man, a learned Man, well ſkilled in the Scriptures, and (to give him more Leiſure to attend on his Duty) as little entangled with worldly Cares and ſecular Buſineſs as poſſible. For [*] *no Man* (as St *Paul* applies the Similitude to the Clergy) *that warreth, entangleth himſelf with the Affairs of this Life, that he may pleaſe him, who hath choſen him to be a Soldier.*

Leiſure to ſtudy.

Solemn Ordination.

THESE are the Qualifications of the Miniſters of *Chriſt:* But every one that has theſe Qualifications, may not yet enter upon the Work of a *Miniſter*, without a proper Call and Deſignation: For, [x] when every other Office of Truſt and Power, whether in a *civil* or *military* Capacity, is conveyed unto Men by ſome Form of Admiſſion and ſolemn Inveſtiture; 'tis incongruous to think, that theſe great Offices of *bleſſing* the Congregation, of *abſolving* the Penitent, of *ejecting* the Criminal, and of *working together* in this wiſe for the Salvation of Souls, ſhould be left to the Diſcretion of every one, that either has Preſumption enough to aſſume, or Abilities enough to perform them. We have a very remarkable Paſſage to this Purpoſe in the Hiſtory of the Apoſtles, where we are informed, that [y] *the Holy Ghoſt ſaid, ſeparate me Barnabas and Saul for the Work, whereunto I have called them*; and accordingly *they faſted, and prayed, and laid their Hands on them, and ſent them away.* And ſo *they went forth by the Holy Ghoſt.* Now it is very obſervable here, that the Holy Ghoſt himſelf dictated, and appointed the Ordination of *Barnabas* and *Saul*; that though Perſons are *called to the Work of the Miniſtry* by the Spirit, and educated with proper Gifts, yet *laying on of Hands* is required; and farther, that thoſe who are lawfully ſeparated, and ordained to the Work of the Miniſtry, *are ſent forth by the Holy Ghoſt.* [z] Theſe are natural Deductions from this Place of Scripture, and from the whole 'tis rational to infer, that it is not ſufficient for Perſons to have the *Call of the Spirit*, but they muſt likewiſe be called by *Men*, to exerciſe the miniſterial Function. Even *Paul* and *Barnabas*, we ſee, though approved by the *Spirit*, and bleſſed with extraordinary Graces, muſt have *Impoſition of Hands*, to fit them for the Work, for which God deſigned them, and for which the Holy Ghoſt called them: And from hence we may gather what it is, that conſtitutes a Miniſter of the Church of *Chriſt* at this Day, and what is the Call, that authorizes him to diſcharge the publick Offices thereof.

Impoſition of Hands.

IMPOSITION *of Hands* was a Ceremony of ancient Date: It [a] was in Uſe before the Law, but among the *Jews* it was chiefly employed, as a *figurative Rite*, in ordaining *Elders*, and thereby qualifying them, either to be Members of their *Sanhedrim*, or Teachers of the Law. [b] Now, beſides the ſolemn Deſignation of the Perſon, on whom the Hands are laid, we may imagine a threefold Uſe of this *ſymbolical* Rite. 1. To *invocate* the Divine Preſence and Aſſiſtance to the Perſon, on whom the Hands are laid. 2. To *deliver* unto him a Power to act in the Office and Capacity, to which he is appointed. And, 3. To *denote* the Conſignment of him to the more immediate Service of God. The Apoſtles therefore, introducing this Ceremony into the Chriſtian Church, intended thereby to implore a Bleſſing upon the new ordained Perſons, that [c] *the Spirit of the Lord might reſt upon them*; *the Spirit of Wiſdom and Underſtanding, the Spirit of Counſel and Might, the Spirit of Knowledge, and of the Fear of the Lord:* Intended thereby, as *Stewards of the Myſteries of Chriſt*, to give them full Power and Authority to officiate in the Church; and, by the Sign of ſuch Delegation of Power, to declare their future Adminiſtrations valid: But, above all, intended thereby to put them in

The Nature and Deſign of it.

[t] Acts xviii. 24.
[u] Tit. i. 9.
[*] 2 Tim. ii. 4.
[x] *Comber*, on Ordination.
[y] Acts xiii. 2, &c.
[z] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. *Stillingfleet*'s Irenicum.
[a] Gen. xlviii. 14.
[b] Biſhop
[c] Iſa. xi. 2.

mind of their preſent Conſecration to the Service of God; and upon that Account, what an extraordinary Meaſure of Grace and Holineſs is expected from them; that as they are employed in ſuch a ſacred Function, and ſeparated to ſuch a ſingular Dignity, they ſhould excel all other Degrees of Men in their virtuous Carriage and Behaviour, that [a] *they, ſeeing the Light* of their good Works, may be inclined to follow it, *and to glorify their Father, which is in Heaven.*

The Powers and Offices of Chriſt's Miniſters,

III. ANOTHER *Branch* of the Commiſſion, which our Saviour gave his Apoſtles, was to inſtruct their Succeſſors, as he had done them, in the Nature of the *Sacerdotal* Function; to acquaint them with the Powers and *Miniſtries* belonging thereunto, and in what Manner they were to behave towards the People, committed to their Charge. Now the

1. to preach.

1. FIRST miniſterial Act or Power, mentioned by our Saviour in the Commiſſion he gives his Apoſtles, is that of *preaching the Goſpel.* In Obſervance of which Commiſſion, we find St *Paul* telling the *Corinthians*, that he [c] *was not ſent to baptiſe, but to preach*; meaning, that his *chief* Buſineſs was to make Converts by his Sermons and Diſcourſes, which others of an *inferior* Order were to receive into the Church by Baptiſm; and therefore he declares, that [f] *a Neceſſity was laid upon him*; *yea, woe unto me,* ſays he, *if I preach not the Goſpel*; whereupon he lays this ſtrict Injunction upon his Son *Timothy*; [g] *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the quick and the dead, preach the Word, be inſtant in Seaſon, out of Seaſon, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all Long-ſuffering and Doctrine.* The *Biſhop* indeed, as being the *chief Steward* of the Lord's Houſhold, was *primarily* concerned to give every Member thereof *his Portion of Food in due Seaſon*; but as the *Preſbyters* were admitted to a Copartnerſhip with him in the Care of the Church, ſo, both in the Scripture and *Primitive* Fathers, they are deſcribed as Aſſiſtants *in feeding the Flock of Chriſt*; and therefore there is no Doubt to be made, but that the Power of Preaching belongs likewiſe to their Office. Since *Deacons* however were not ordained to be *Paſtors of the Flock of Chriſt*, Preaching in the publick Congregation, which inſeparably accompanies the Cure of Souls, cannot *of Right* belong to them, though they were often *commiſſioned* by the Biſhop to exerciſe that Function, when any of them were found ſufficiently qualified.

Lay-Men *not ordinarily allowed to preach.*

[h] THAT *private* Chriſtians would inſtruct and admoniſh one another in their Converſation and Conferences, is much to be wiſhed; and happy it were, both for themſelves and the Church, if they would thus employ the Time, which is often ſpent in vain and trifling, not to ſay, ſinful and immodeſt Talk: But that *Lay-Men* may take upon them the Office of preaching the Goſpel of *Chriſt* in publick Congregations, except upon ſome emergent Occaſions, we can by no Means allow. [i] Before the Church was ſettled indeed, and when extraordinary Gifts prevailed, private Men took upon them to expound the Scriptures, and to teach and inſtruct publickly: In the Times of *Perſecution* too, when there was not a ſufficient Number of *Preſbyters* left, Lay-Men were permitted to exerciſe that Office; nor is there any Queſtion to be made, but that they might do the ſame now, if there were the like raging Perſecution, and Chriſtians were deprived of their regular Miniſters; but abſtracting from this, and the like Cauſes, it is certainly true, that Lay-Men have no Authority to adminiſter publickly in ſacred Things. For, when St *Paul* ſays, [k] *How then ſhall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? How ſhall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? How ſhall they hear, without a Preacher? And how ſhall they preach, except they be ſent?* Theſe Queſtions being an emphatical *Denial* of the Things in Queſtion, he plainly enough intimates, that to *preach* the Goſpel, without being *ſent*, is as impoſſible, in a *Chriſtian* or *Moral* Senſe, as it is, in a *natural* Senſe, for a Man to *believe* what he never *heard*, or to *hear* what was never *preached*, or ſpoken to him. So that before Men can preach *with Authority*, they muſt ſhew their *Commiſſion*, which is a regular *Ordination*, conferred by *Impoſition of Hands.*

The Manner of the Apoſtles preaching.

IN what Manner the Apoſtles preached may beſt be learned from the Effects of it: For when St *Peter*, at one Sermon, * converted *three thouſand Souls*; when St *Paul* [l] baffled all the Learning of *Athens*, and finally ſucceeded wherever he came; when

[a] Matth. v. 16. [c] 1 Cor. i. 17. [f] Ibid. ix. 16. [g] 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2, &c. [h] Archbiſhop *Potter*, on Church-Government. [i] *Edwards's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [k] Rom. x. 14, 15. * Acts ii. 41. [l] Ibid. xvii. 22, &c.

when the ſeveral Synagogues at *Jeruſalem* [m] *were not able to reſiſt the Wiſdom and Spirit, by which St Stephen ſpake*; when the whole *Roman* Empire, in ſhort, in a ſmall Tract of Time, was over-run, and ſome in every Place converted by the Labours of the firſt *Planters* of the Goſpel; it muſt needs be owned, that [n] *their Speech, and their Preaching*, as St *Paul* expreſſes it, *was in Demonſtration of the Spirit and Power*. As their Buſineſs was to convert the World to the Chriſtian Faith, their Method was vaſtly different from what has obtained now. They made their *Text*, (if we may ſo ſay) any Hint, any Occurrence, that preſented them with an Opportunity of proving the *crucified Jeſus* to be the Son of God. St *Paul*, from the Inſcription of an Altar, [o] TO THE UNKNOWN GOD, took Occaſion to explain and magnify the Divine *Attributes*, and thence gently to fall upon the particular Tenets of Chriſtianity. His uſual Way was [p] *to reaſon* with the People, to whom he addreſſed himſelf, *out of the Scriptures, opening, and alledging, that Chriſt muſt needs have ſuffered, and riſen from the dead, and that Jeſus, whom they preached, was the Chriſt.*

AFTER Churches were ſettled, and Congregations gathered, the *Method* of preaching of courſe varied; and Sermons were commonly then the *Expoſition* of ſome ſelect Portion of Scripture, which was read in the Aſſembly that Day. Sometimes [q] they preached on whole *Chapters*, or a very large Portion of them, and proceeded in Order through a whole *Book*, inſiſting on ſeveral Parts of it at different Times. Sometimes [r] they preached without any Chapter or Text at all, only exhorting the People to ſome religious and virtuous Practice, or declaiming againſt ſome prevailing Vice, or diſcourſing upon ſome emergent Occaſion; and, at other Times, they entertained their Audience with general Diſcourſes of the Truth and Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, againſt *Jews* and *Pagans*. Theſe were Compoſitions ſtudied and elaborate, but their Preaching for the moſt Part was popular, eaſy, and extemporary. The Manner of Preaching on the Places of Scripture, which were read to the People, as *proper Leſſons* for the Day, continued in the Church until, in the time of *Charles the Great*, about the Middle of the *ninth Century*, *poſtillary* Diſcourſes, (as they were called) or Comments upon the Goſpels and Epiſtles, came in their Room, and theſe remained until the Reformation. When this flat and inſipid Way began to be laid aſide, and as Churches recovered out of Ignorance and Error, Preaching *revived*, and was a long while improving, till it ſettled at laſt in the *Method*, we now uſe, of taking only a Verſe or two as a Text, which is firſt expounded, and then enlarged upon from Topicks of Reaſon and Scripture, and ſo applied. By this Means, Sermons are [s] reduced, 1. To a plain opening of the *Senſe* of the Text, in a few ſhort Illuſtrations of its Coherence with what goes before and after, and of the Parts, whereof it is compoſed: To which is joined, 2. A clear ſtating of ſuch *Propoſitions*, as ariſe out of it, as to their Nature, Truth, and Reaſonableneſs: To all which, 3. *Applications* are added, tending to the reproving, directing, encouraging, or comforting the Hearers, according to the ſeveral Occaſions that are offered. This is indeed all that can be truly intended in preaching, *viz.* to make ſome Portions of Scripture to be rightly underſtood; to make thoſe Truths contained in them to be more fully apprehended; and then to lay the whole Matter home to the Conſciences of the Hearers; for [t] *to teach clearly, to convince ſtrongly, and to perſuade powerfully*, (as a great Maſter of the Art informs us) *is the principal, if not the only Scope of a Divine Orator.*

How it altered.

What it is now.

HOW eminent the Divines of the Church of *England* are in this Kind of Performance, we leave to the learned of other Churches, who have attained to the Knowledge of the *Engliſh* Tongue, to declare and admire; and ſhall only go on to obſerve, that there is another *Form* and Method of teaching the Goſpel, which our Excellency in *ſermonizing* ſhould not ſuperſede; and that is, inſtructing the younger, and more ignorant Sort, in the great and fundamental Principles of Chriſtianity, which we call *Catechizing*: An Office, not ſo appropriated to the ſacred Function, but that all Parents and Maſters of Families may, and ought to execute it, but what, in the earlieſt Times of Chriſtianity, when Religion was not ſo well underſtood by the *Laity*, was generally devolved upon the *Clergy*, and in ſome Places upon Perſons of

Catechizing.

[m] Acts vi. 10. [n] 1 Cor. ii. 4. [o] Acts xvii. 23. [p] Ibid. *ver.* 2, 3.
[q] Of this Nature are *Chryſoſtom*'s Homilies, or Expoſitions on the Book of *Geneſis*, on the Pſalms, and on St *Matthew*, all which were Diſcourſes to the People. And *Origen*, and *Baſil*, and other Fathers did the ſame. [r] Of this Sort are ſome of the Sermons of *Chryſoſtom*, *Ambroſe*, *Auguſtin*, *Gregory the Great*, &c. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [s] *Burnet*'s Paſtoral Care. [t] *Wilkins*'s Eccleſiaſtes.

of [u] the greateſt Eminence in the Church, whoſe Buſineſs it was to inſtruct ſuch, as were called *Catechumens* in thoſe Days; and thoſe were of two Sorts: 1. Thoſe, that were *Converts* and *Proſelytes* to Chriſtianity from *Gentiliſm* and *Judaiſm*, whom theſe *Catechiſts* were to inſtruct, before they were baptiſed, as being Perſons *adult*, and capable of underſtanding the Nature of the Chriſtian Faith: And, 2. Thoſe, that were Children of Chriſtians, and born in the Body of the Church, who, being firſt baptiſed, as they advanced in Years, were taught the *Rudiments* of Religion, and trained up in the Knowledge of *Chriſt*, till they were prepared for *Confirmation*, and thence admitted to the *Holy Communion*.

The primitive Manner of it.

IN what Manner the *Catechiſts* proceeded in the Inſtitution of their Scholars and Hearers, we have not that clear Account from Antiquity, as to determine; but this we have ſome Countenance from Scripture to ſuppoſe, that having given them a *Compendium*, or Summary of the Chriſtian Doctrine, which the Apoſtle calls * *the Form of ſound Words, which was delivered to them*, to be diligently peruſed, if not got *memoriter*; they afterwards examined, whether they underſtood what they ſaid or repeated, and where they found their Underſtanding fail, there they explained and *inculcated*, (as [x] the Word *catechize* ſeems to ſignify) the ſame Thing over and over again, in different Words perhaps, and ſuch as they thought more eaſy and familiar to their Apprehenſions; and hence, very probably, the conveying of the Knowledge of the Principles of Religion, by Way of Queſtion and Anſwer, came to be named *Catechizing*. The Points, which they firſt began with, the Author to the *Hebrews* hath ſet down in this Order: [y] *Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt, let us go on unto Perfection, not laying again the Foundation of Repentance from dead Works, and of Faith towards God, of the Doctrine of Baptiſms, and of laying on of Hands, and of Reſurrection of the dead, and of eternal Judgment.* Here are ſix *catechetical* Heads, or fundamental Principles of the Doctrine of *Chriſt*. *Repentance*, which includes in it all the Doctrines relating to Regeneration, Sanctification, Mortification, and all holy Converſation and Godlineſs: *Faith*, which implies our full Aſſent to all the Truths of the Goſpel, with a firm Confidence and Reliance on the Mercy of God, and the Merits of *Jeſus Chriſt*: *Baptiſms*, which denote the ſacred Inſtitution and Ordinance of admitting Children and others into the Church of *Chriſt*, by *waſhing*, or *ſprinkling* with Water; as well as the other ſolemn Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: *Impoſition of Hands* in *confirming* the Adult, in *ordaining* Miniſters, and in *conferring* the miraculous Gifts of the Spirit, which was cuſtomary in the Apoſtles Times: The *Reſurrection of the Dead*, which compriſes all our Comforts and Aſſurances, relating to another Life: And *eternal Judgment*, whereby we ſhall be irreverſibly conſigned to Miſery or Happineſs for ever, according as the Tenor of our Actions ſhall be found to be: Theſe, I ſay, were the *Principles*, which the *Catechiſts* firſt propounded to their *Scholars*, and made them perfect in, before they proceeded to the more abſtruſe and myſterious Articles, ſuch as the Doctrine of the Trinity, the *hypoſtatic* Union of the two Natures, *&c.* and from this one Place, as *Calvin* in his Comment upon it obſerves, we may infer, that the Cuſtom of *catechizing* was of *Apoſtolic Inſtitution*.

The Uſe and Neglect of it.

OF what ſingular Uſe and Neceſſity this Method of Inſtruction is, needs no Detail of Arguments to prove. "The Reaſon of the Thing itſelf, ſays our late excellent "Metropolitan, ſufficiently ſpeaks it; [z] and yet, alas! how has this prudent and "uſeful Method been ſlighted by many, and neglected by more; and, inſtead of "theſe *catechetical* Inſtitutions, a *ſecond* Sermon been introduced for the Afternoon, "and a new Sort of Teachers ſet up, under a new Character of *Lecturers*, to "preach it, and that oftentimes not ſo much to the real Benefit, as to the Fancies "and Inclinations of thoſe, by whom they are to be paid! I cannot, I ſay (as the "judicious Prelate proceeds) that this is altogether contrary to our preſent Eſtabliſh-"ment, becauſe [a] the laſt *Act of Uniformity* has given Directions for the *licencing* "and allowing of them; but ſure I am, it is a manifeſt Incroachment upon our "good

[u] *Euſebius* acquaints us, that there were very eminent Perſons in the Church, who undertook this neceſſary Office. He relates, that, at *Alexandria*, the firſt *Catechiſt* was *Patenus*, a Chriſtian Convert from the *Stoick* Philoſophy: After him, *Origen*, in the famous School of *Alexandria*, had the Office of inſtructing late Converts to the Chriſtian Faith. *Optatus* was appointed by St *Cyprian* to be a publick *Catechiſt*, and Inſtructor of the Youth; and St *Jerom* mentions *Gregory Nazianzen*, and others, who had this Office in his Time, and tells us, that he himſelf was inſtructed and catechized by them. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

* 2 Tim. i. 13. and Rom. vi. 17.

[x] It is derived from Κατηχέω to *reſound*, or ſound often in the Ear of the Learned, the Principles to be imbibed, and fixed in his Mind and Memory. *Bray*'s Lectures on the Church-Catechiſm.

[y] Heb. vi. 1, 2.

[z] Archbiſhop *Wake*'s Commentary on the Church-Catechiſm.

[a] 13 *Car.* II. c. iv.

" good old Conſtitution, which knew no ſuch Perſons, nor made any Proviſion " for them; and the Reſult has been, that the Afternoon-Sermon has almoſt quite " thrown out the much better and more profitable Exerciſe of *Catechizing*, which " has both the *Laws* of the Realm, and the *Canons* of the Church on its Side; " whereas the other has neither." But this is an Abuſe, which might as eaſily be reformed, as complained of, were but the *Canons*, which require of the Clergy the weekly Performance of this Duty, by the Governors of the Church, unanimouſly put in Execution.

2. ANOTHER religious Act, which properly belongs to theſe Servants of God, is the Adminiſtration of the Evangelical Sacraments. It was to his Apoſtles, indeed, and, in them, to their *Succeſſors*, that our Saviour gave the Commiſſion of *Baptizing all Nations, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt*, and of conſecrating and adminiſtering the holy Euchariſt *in Remembrance of him*; but yet it is evident, that this Office was not ſo confined to the *Apoſtolic* Order, as that none but they were allowed to execute it. For, even in the Apoſtles Days, we find not only [b] *Philip*, who was but a *Deacon*, baptizing at *Samaria*, but St *Peter* himſelf commanding the Brethren with him, who certainly were no Apoſtles, to [c] baptize thoſe *Gentile* Converts, *upon whom the Holy Ghoſt deſcended*; and St *Paul* affirming, [d] that he baptized none, in the Church of *Corinth*, tho' himſelf planted it, except *Criſpus*, *Gaius*, and the Houſhold of *Stephanus*; which is a plain Argument, (as we hinted before) that, when the Apoſtles converted Men to the Chriſtian Faith, they generally ordered them to be baptized by the *inferior Miniſters* of the Church. There is no Doubt to be made then, but that *Prieſts* and *Deacons* are both inveſted with a Power of *Baptizing*; but whether *Lay-Men* had the ſame, is a Queſtion, that has been much agitated, and the Reſult of the whole Matter ſeems to be this;—[e] That in Caſes of *extreme* Exigence, when neither Deacon, nor Preſbyter, nor Biſhop can be procured, *Lay-Men* were allowed to adminiſter this Sacrament; that ſo none might be debarred from Admiſſion into the New Covenant, that were diſpoſed and qualified to receive it: But the Church's allowing this to Lay-Men, only *in Caſes of Neceſſity*, is a plain Argument, that none had a ſtanding Authority to adminiſter it, but ſuch as were in holy Orders.

2. To adminiſter the Sacraments.

Lay-Men, when allowed to baptize.

THE *Conſecration* of the *Euchariſt*, when any of the Apoſtles were preſent, was, without all Doubt, ordinarily performed by them; but conſidering how *faſt* Chriſtianity increaſed, and how *frequently* Chriſtians did then partake of this Sacrament, it is not to be ſuppoſed, that the Apoſtles could be preſent in all Places, where it was adminiſtered, nor, conſequently, that they could conſecrate it in every particular Congregation; and therefore there is no Queſtion to be made, but that the *Conſecration*, as well as the Adminiſtration of it, was ordinarily performed by the inferior *Preſbyters*, in the Abſence of the Apoſtles and Biſhops: But the Queſtion then is, how came the *Deacons*, who were permitted to adminiſter the other Sacrament, never to be allowed to conſecrate the Lord's Supper? The other Sacrament, indeed, was not only one of the *loweſt Miniſtries*, and therefore committed, by the Apoſtles, to thoſe of the loweſt Order; but, being the Rite of Admiſſion into the Church, was thought more *neceſſary* than the Lord's Supper, [f] which, among the moſt ancient Fathers, was always ſuppoſed to ſucceed in the room of *Sacrifices*: And therefore, as none, beſide the High-Prieſt and inferior Prieſts, were permitted to offer Sacrifices under the *Jewiſh* Law; ſo the Lord's Supper was conſecrated by none, but Biſhops and Preſbyters, who alone are *Prieſts* in the Chriſtian Senſe of that Name.

Why Deacons might not conſecrate.

3. ANOTHER religious Act, which has always been appropriated to the Clergy, is to offer up the publick Prayers and Interceſſions of Chriſtian Aſſemblies; for, to be ſure, none can be authorized to perform the publick Duties of the Church, but ſuch only as are ſet apart, and ordained to be the publick Officers of it. For that Prieſts, of all Nations, are *Interceſſors* between God and Men, who communicate the Laws of God, and impart his Bleſſings to the People; and, on the other Hand, convey the People's Devotions and Adorations unto God, is a generally-received Notion; and from hence *Philo* [g] obſerves of the *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt, " That the Law required " him to be raiſed above human Nature to a *Proximity* with God, that being placed, " as it were, in a middle Station between God and Man, he might ſupplicate God " in Behalf of Men, and convey unto Men the Graces of God."

3. To offer up the People's Prayers.

[b] Acts viii. 12. [c] Ibid. x. 48. [d] 1 Cor. i. 13, &c. [e] *Scott*'s Mediator. [f] Archbiſhop *Potter*, on Church-Government. [g] De Monarchiâ, Lib. II.

IN his own Cloſet indeed, every Man is his own *Orator*, and, in private Families, the Performance of Divine Worſhip is incumbent on them, to whom the Care and Government of theſe Families belong; but, *in the publick Congregations of Chriſtians*, Divine Worſhip muſt be only celebrated by thoſe, to whom it has pleaſed God to commit that Office. And, indeed, if nothing be regarded, beſides the decent and orderly Performance of this Duty, this alone would make it neceſſary, that the Prieſt ſhould be the *Mouth* of the Congregation, otherwiſe it is not poſſible, that, when Chriſtians meet together, they ſhould have *one Prayer*, and *one Supplication*, as the Ancients call it; and ſince there is no Way for a Congregation to join *in one Prayer*, but by attending to one *Speaker*; for whom can it be ſo proper to preſide in publick Prayers, as for thoſe, whom God hath authorized to govern the Church, and to officiate in all other Parts of Divine Service? And, accordingly, we may obſerve, that [d] *the four and twenty Elders*, in the *Revelation*, who repreſent the Miniſters of the Chriſtian Church, *have every one of them Golden Vials, full of Incenſe, which is the Prayers of the Saints.*

4. *To* Ordain, *which was peculiar to* Biſhops.

THERE are two *Eccleſiaſtical* Offices more, the *Ordination* of ſuch, as are appointed to ſerve in the Church, and the *Confirmation* of ſuch, as have been baptized and inſtructed in the Chriſtian Faith; both done by *the Impoſition of Hands*, and both productive to the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Ghoſt, which are not, as other *miniſterial* Acts, to be performed in common, but are peculiarly the Work of the *Biſhops* and *Governors* of the Church. [e] And indeed, as to the firſt, if we may be allowed to reaſon from the Conſtitution and univerſal Practice of *Civil* Societies; we muſt conclude, that the Power of *ordaining* Miniſters belongs to the Biſhops, who are the chief Governors of the Church, becauſe the Power of conſtituting *ſubordinate Magiſtrates* belongs to the ſupreme Governors of all *Civil* Societies; nor can it be thought conſonant to Reaſon, that they, who exerciſe any Authority, whether in Church or State, ſhould derive their Authority from any, but thoſe, in whom the *ſupreme* Authority is lodged.

PURSUANT to this, we find, in the Goſpels, that, whilſt our Saviour lived on Earth, he reſerved the Power of ordaining Miniſters to himſelf, and that though he gave the Apoſtles, and *ſeventy* Diſciples, a Commiſſion to preach, he never allowed them to communicate that Commiſſion to any other. Upon his Removal, the Apoſtles, who were the chief viſible Governors of the Church, ordained Miniſters: For, as they went about preaching through Countries and Cities, (as *Clemens Romanus* [f] calls it) *they conſtituted their Firſt-fruits*, i. e. the firſt of their Diſciples in any Place, *when they had proved them, by the Spirit, to be the Biſhops and Deacons of thoſe, who ſhould believe.* After their Demiſe, Ordination continued, where they had left it, in Epiſcopal Hands, nor do we find any Inſtance, either in Scripture or Antiquity, of inferior Orders pretending to that *Prerogative*. St *Paul* tells *Timothy* indeed, that [g] *the Gift which was in him, was given him by Propheſy, with the laying on of the Hands of the Preſbytery*; whence ſome may conclude, that the *Preſbytery ordained* even thoſe who were to ordain others: But it muſt be remembered, that the Gift, which is here ſaid to have been conferred by *the Hands of the Preſbytery*, in another Place, is affirmed to have been given him [h] *by the laying on of St* Paul's *Hands*; ſo that the utmoſt, which can be inferred from this Paſſage, is, that *Preſbyters* ſometimes, together with an Apoſtle or Biſhop, laid their Hands upon the Perſon to be ordained; but that they always did ſo, or that they ever did it without a Biſhop, there is not the leaſt Colour to conclude.

[i] THE Truth is, *That Ordination, in St* Cyprian's *Time, was properly the Biſhop's Right*, we have the Confeſſion of ſome of the ableſt *Patrons* of Preſbytery; and, from the Apoſtles to *Cyprian*'s Days, the Biſhops, as we ſaid before, were ſo poor, and perſecuted, and pious withal, that we cannot ſuppoſe they would, in that Period, have *uſurped* and *monopolized* an Authority, that had not been left them by their Predeceſſors. And, in like Manner, that the Rite of *Confirmation* is the Biſhop's ſole *Prerogative*, we may perceive, by this one Inſtance, that [k] when St *Philip*, by preaching and doing Miracles, had converted the *Samaritans*, and afterwards baptized them, St *Peter* and St *John*, two of the Apoſtles, were ſent *to lay Hands* on them; upon which it is ſaid, that *they received the Holy Ghoſt:* From whence it appears, that this Miniſtry of Confirmation appertained to the Apoſtles only, ſince St *Philip*, though

5. *And to* Confirm.

[d] Rev. v. 8. [e] Archbiſhop *Potter*, on Church-Government. [f] Ep. 1. ad Corinth.
[g] 1 Tim. iv. 14. [h] 2 Tim. i. 6. [i] Blundel, citat. à Dr Hammond, in Epiſt. præfix. Diſſert. de Epiſt. & Daillé de Cult. Latin. Relig. Lib. II. c. xiii. [k] Acts viii. 12, 17.

though a Worker of Miracles, a Preacher, a prime Deacon, and, if we may believe St *Cyprian*, one of the *ſeventy-two Diſciples*, would not preſume to aſſume it, but left it to the Apoſtles, as their peculiar Province.

THUS beſides the Buſineſs of Ordination and Confirmation, which is peculiar to the Biſhops; to preach the Goſpel, to adminiſter the Sacraments, to bleſs the Congregation, and to offer up the Prayers of the People, is the common Office and Employment of the whole Clergy: And how ſacred and tremendous an Office this is, how much Learning, and Wiſdom, and Zeal, and Holineſs is required to the due Performance of it, is what we ſhall juſt take upon us to ſuggeſt.

WHEN the Prophet [l] *Malachi* tells us, that *the Prieſts Lips ſhould keep or preſerve Knowledge, becauſe he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts*; there is ſomething, methinks, more *emphatical* in the Expreſſion, than is commonly imagined: It ſeems to imply, that the Prieſt ſhould be a Kind of *Repoſitory*, or *Treaſury* of Science, richly furniſhed with Knowledge himſelf, and able likewiſe to furniſh and ſupply abundantly the Wants of thoſe, that *ſhall ſeek the Law at his Mouth*, or have, at any Time, Recourſe to him for Inſtruction in their Duty. Our bleſſed Saviour (though it be in a Parable) has excellently expounded this Text; [m] *Every Scribe*, ſays he, *that is inſtructed in the Kingdom of Heaven*, i. e. furniſhed and prepared for the preaching of the Goſpel, *is like a Man, that is an Houſholder, which bringeth forth, out of his Treaſure, Things new and old:* He is like an *Houſholder*, who, for the Maintenance of his Family, and the Entertainment of his Gueſts all the Year long, is ſuppoſed to have an Ἀποθήκη, or *Repoſitory* for Proviſions, and there to have laid in a great Store, and Abundance of all Sorts and Kinds, in order to keep a well-furniſhed Table for all Comers: And indeed if we conſider a little the Compaſs of his Profeſſion, and the Nature of the Science which he teaches, we ſhall ſoon be convinced of this Truth. The Science which he teaches is *Theology*, the *Queen of Sciences*, and Perfection of all other Knowledge, as the Ancients call it: And here, to give our Thoughts a Tract in ſo ſpacious a Field, we may divide it into *Poſitive*, *Polemical*, *Moral*, and *Caſuiſtical*.

What is required of a Divine, *in the Execution of his Office.*

Learning.

[n] POSITIVE *Divinity*, or the Knowledge of thoſe *ſpeculative* Truths, which are revealed in Scripture, is ſo neceſſary to this Profeſſion, that a Man can no more be a *Divine* without it, than he can be a *Grammarian*, who underſtands not the very firſt Elements of *Grammar*; and yet of ſo abſtruſe and ſublime a Nature are theſe *Truths*, that rightly to apprehend, and clearly to explain them to Capacities even of a moderate Size, is no very eaſy Matter. *Polemical*, or *Controverſial* Divinity, eſpecially in theſe Days, when there are ſo many [o] *vain and unruly Talkers, and Deceivers, whoſe Mouths muſt be ſtopped*, is what he muſt be acquainted with, otherwiſe theſe *Deceivers*, when they ſpread their erroneous and ſtrange Doctrines, will *ſubvert whole Houſes*, and, with Triumph and Oſtentation enough, carry Souls captive to the Diſgrace of his Function, yea, of Truth itſelf, which is wounded thro' his Sides, and bleeds thro' his Weakneſs and Folly. *Moral*, or *Practical Divinity*, is to furniſh him with the Matter and Subſtance both of his private Exhortations, and publick Diſcourſes; and *Caſuiſtical*, with an Ability to reſolve his People, what their Duty is, in difficult and perplexed Caſes. Without a ſufficient Knowledge of theſe, he can by no Means proceed in his Profeſſion; and yet to attain a competent Knowledge herein, he muſt know moſt of the learned Languages, wherein the Holy Scriptures were written, or into which they have been tranſlated; he muſt be well read in all Parts of *natural*, *rational*, and *moral* Philoſophy; well read in the *claſſical* Authors, eſpecially the *Orators* and *Poets*, whence excellent Matter may be extracted; and in ſome of the choiceſt *Critics*, which treat of the Words and *Phraſes*, and more eſpecially of thoſe Rites and *Cuſtoms*, that tend to illuſtrate the holy Text. Nor muſt he be unacquainted with *Hiſtory* of all Sorts, and eſpecially with the Hiſtory of thoſe Ages, which are coincident with the Times, and of thoſe Countries, which are adjacent to Places, made Mention of in Scripture, to which *Geography* and *Chronology* will exceedingly conduce. In ſhort, there are few Parts of human Learning, that are not, ſome Way or other, neceſſary to accompliſh [p] a Divine: And

[l] Chap. ii. 7. [m] Matth. xiii. 52. [n] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [o] Tit. i. 10, 11.

[p] As a Divine, ſays a very good Judge, he muſt be well verſed in all Writers, *Syſtematical*, *Textual*, *Hiſtorical*, *Polemical*, and *Practical*. The *Syſtematical* are the Catechiſts, ancient and modern, and the Authors of whole Bodies of Divinity. The *Textual* are the learned and laborious Commentaries of the holy Fathers, and later orthodox Divines. The *Hiſtorical* are ſuch, as have writ the ſacred Hiſtory of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Church in general, or the Lives of the Fathers, and moſt eminent Biſhops and Doctors; together with the Collectors

And from hence it follows, that he ſhould be poſſeſſed of a liberal Maintenance, in order to furniſh him with ſome of the beſt Books, in all Sciences, both ſecular and ſacred. For what the *Italian* Proverb ſays of a well-furniſhed Houſe, [q] *that it makes a notable Dame*, is very true of a well-filled Study, that it makes an *eminent Divine*: And doubtleſs we muſt aſcribe the Ignorance of ſome, and the Looſeneſs of others in Holy Orders chiefly to the Want of this; becauſe it cannot be ſuppoſed, that Men of ingenuous Education ſhould either be ſo dull, as not to improve with ſuch Helps, or ſo wretched, as to keep mean Company, when they have at home the Benefit of converſing with the moſt learned and beſt Men of all Ages.

Wiſdom. 2. BUT Learning is not the only Qualification in a Divine. As he is the *Paſtor* and Teacher of a People, he muſt be endued with a *Spirit of Wiſdom*, leſt, by any Indiſcretion of his, he obſtructs that, which ought to be his great Deſign and Buſineſs, the Salvation of thoſe Souls, that are committed to his Charge. And therefore [r] *he muſt be wiſe*, ſo to frame his Diſcourſes, eſpecially in Publick, that he ſpeak nothing, which may either offend the *Weak*, or give Advantage to the *Malicious*; that his Sermons may not only be good in themſelves, but adapted and fitted to the Neceſſities of his Hearers. *He muſt be wiſe* in the Government of his Carriage and Actions, diſtinguiſhing eſpecially between *Lawfulneſs* and *Expediency*, and ſhunning, not only that which is directly ſinful, but whatſoever is ſcandalous and offenſive. *He muſt be wiſe* in his common Converſe with his People, that he be neither of too eaſy, nor of too moroſe and difficult Acceſs; but eſpecially he muſt be careful of this, in his freer Converſation, that he indulge not himſelf any Liberty more than ordinary among thoſe, that will make an ill Uſe of what was never ill intended. *He muſt be wiſe* in the Choice of his Friends, not to admit any Man into that Number, who may reflect a Diſparagement on his Perſon or Function. *He muſt be wiſe* eſpecially in the Government of his own Family; for, as the Apoſtle excellently reaſons, [s] *If a Man know not how to rule his own Houſe, how ſhall he take care of the Church of God? He muſt be wiſe* to enquire into the State of his Flock, to diſcern their particular Tempers and Conſtitutions; and even to ſearch into their Hearts and ſecret Inclinations: And laſtly, *he muſt be wiſe* to adminiſter private Counſels and Reproofs, duly obſerving the Circumſtances of Time, of Place, of Perſon, of Diſpoſition; for [t] *a Word fitly ſpoken*, ſays the wiſe Man, *is like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver*.

Holineſs *and* Zeal. 3. THERE are theſe two Qualifications more, requiſite in the Miniſter of *Chriſt*, without which all his Wiſdom and Learning will be of ſmall Avail, and that is *Holineſs* in the Tenor of his Life, and *Zeal* in the Execution of his Duty: For a Prieſt, that is not *cloathed with Righteouſneſs*, tho' otherwiſe richly adorned with all the Ornaments of Human and Divine Literature, and thoſe gilded over with the Rays of ſeraphic Prudence and Sagacity, is yet but a naked and deſpicable Creature, of no Authority, no Intereſt, no Uſe, or Service in the Church of God. 'Tis a black and diſmal Picture, which the Prophet gives us of the Shepherds of *Iſrael*; [u] *Wo to the Shepherds of Iſrael, that do feed themſelves: Should not the Shepherds feed the Flock? Ye eat the Fat, and ye cloath you with the Wool, but ye feed not the Flock. The Diſeaſed have ye not ſtrengthened; neither have ye healed that which was ſick; neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away; neither have ye ſought that which was loſt; but with Force and with Cruelty have*

of the Councils, and Eccleſiaſtical Laws of Chriſtian Princes. The *Polemical* are the ancient Apologiſts, and thoſe Orthodox Fathers, who defended the Chriſtian Religion againſt Paganiſm and old Hereſies; as alſo ſuch, as have maintained the Doctrine and Rites of the Reformed Church of *England*, againſt Papiſts and Diſſenters. Finally, the *Practical* Authors are the Editors and Explainers of Liturgies, the Compilers of Offices for private Devotion, and ſuch as write about Piety, and an holy Life in general, or concerning any particular Virtue or Vice. And that he may not loſe Time, either by an ill Method of Study, or an ill Choice of Books in all Faculties, there are ſome very uſeful Writers, ſuch as *Hug. Grotii, & alior. Diſſertationes de Studiis Inſtituend. Apparatus ad Theolog. per Steph. Penton*, Biſhop *Barlow*'s Directions for Study, Dr. *Bray*'s Parochial Library, and Biſhop *Wilkins*'s *Eccleſiaſtes*, &c. which will direct him in theſe Matters. But he muſt not forget to keep *Common-Places*, or methodical Repoſitories of all the choice Things, he would remember; for which there are very good Rules in *Drexelius*, [*Aurifodina, Tom.* IV.] but the beſt Method of Common-placing is that by our Countryman, Mr *Locke*. Let the young Divine then be provided with a Bible, a Concordance, a Common Prayer-Book, and the Articles and Canons all interleaved, with a large Common-Place-Book that may lie ready: The 1ſt, to note down all choice Explications of any Text; the 2d, for the Signification of Words and Phraſes; the 3d, for what is agreeable to our Offices, eſpecially in the primitive Fathers; the 4th, for ſuch Things, in Antiquity chiefly, as vindicate our Doctrine and Diſcipline: and the 5th, for a general Repoſitory of all *Philological* and *Moral* Notions; by the daily Uſe of which, a ſtudious Man will not only ſurely retain whatever he reads, even to his old Age, but will always be furniſhed, by conſulting theſe Collections of his own, with Variety of proper Matter for Sermons, Diſputations, or Diſcourſes upon any Subjects in a few Hours Time. *Comber*, on Ordination.

[q] Camera adorna fa Donna Savia, *Prov. Ital. G. Torrian.* [r] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [s] 1 Tim. iii. 5. [t] Prov. xxv. 11. [u] Ezek. xxxiv. 2, &c.

have ye ruled them; wherefore *I am againſt the Shepherds, ſaith the Lord.* And well may his Face be againſt them, when, by their looſe and irregular Lives, they make *the Offering of the Lord to be abhorred*; or, by their ſupine Negligence, ſuffer the Souls, committed to their Cuſtody, to fall into Perdition. St *Paul*, taking leave of the Biſhops, that met him at *Epheſus*, gives them this in Charge: * *Take Heed to yourſelves, and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt has made you Overſeers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own Blood.* [x] The Words are very *ſolemn*, and the Conſideration, enforcing them, is a mighty one. They import the Obligations of the Clergy, both to an Exactneſs in their own Deportment, and to earneſt and conſtant Labours, in Imitation of the Apoſtle, who, during the three Years of his Stay in this Place, *had been ſerving God with all Humility of Mind, with many Tears and Temptations; had taught them publickly, and from Houſe to Houſe; and had not ceaſed to warn every one, both Day and Night: Wherefore I take you to Record*, ſays he, *this Day, that I am pure from the Blood of all Men.*

To excite his Care and Diligence, therefore, let every Man, appointed to this holy Office, think, and think often, *that he is accountable for Souls committed to his Charge:* For Souls! methinks in that one Word there is a Sermon; for *immortal* Souls! for *precious* Souls, one whereof is of more Worth than all the World, beſides *the Price of the Blood of the Son of God:* "Have always therefore in Remem-
" brance, as our Church exhorts the new-ordained Prieſt, how great a Treaſure is
" committed to your Charge; for they are the Sheep of *Chriſt*, which he bought
" with his Death, and for whom he ſhed his Blood. The Church and Congrega-
" tion, whom ye ſerve, is his Body: And if it ſhall happen, that the Church, or
" any Member thereof, ſhould take any Hurt or Hinderance, by Reaſon of your
" Neglect, you know the Greatneſs of the Fault, and alſo the horrible Puniſhment
" that will enſue," [y] *Feed* therefore *the Flock of God, which is among you, taking the Overſight thereof, not by Conſtraint, but willingly; not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind: neither as being Lords over God's Heritage, but being Enſamples to the Flock, and when the chief Shepherd ſhall appear, ye ſhall receive a Crown of Glory, that fadeth not away.*

IV. ANOTHER Branch of the Apoſtles Commiſſion is, that they and their Succeſſors ſhould make ſuch Laws and Conſtitutions; ſhould appoint ſuch *Rites*, and impoſe ſuch *Cenſures*, as ſhould be thought conduceable to the good Government of the Church. —— [z] For this is implied in the very Nature of Government, that, in itſelf, it ſhould have a *Legiſlative Power*, to command and oblige the Subject to *do* and *forbear* ſuch Things, as it ſhall judge conducive to the Preſervation or Diſturbance of the Commonweal; without which Power, no Government can be enabled to obtain its End, which is the Good of the Publick. Since therefore the Church, by *Chriſt*'s own Inſtitution, is a *regular* and well-ordered Society of Men, either we muſt ſuppoſe, that its Government is defective, which is a ſad Imputation upon our Saviour's Wiſdom, or allow, that it has a *Legiſlative* Power inherent in it. This Power, however, muſt not be ſuppoſed to extend to every Thing: [a] It cannot change any of thoſe Laws, which God has given us: It cannot impoſe any *Article* of Faith, or Rule of Moral Duty; nor can it preſcribe any Condition of Salvation, which is not either expreſſly contained in the Scriptures, or, by neceſſary Conſequence, may be deduced from them. All that it pretends to do, is to *limit* thoſe Things, which are left *indefinite*, and to preſcribe ſuch Rules, as are found requiſite for the Maintenance of Peace, Order, and Decency: And if in theſe Particulars it has no Power, it has in Effect no Power at all. The Scripture is very frequent and expreſs in requiring us *to ſubmit ourſelves to thoſe, that rule over us, and watch for our Souls:* But now there is no room for this Submiſſion, if we will not allow them to interpoſe their Authority in ſuch Things, as in themſelves are confeſſed to be indifferent. [b] What the Scriptures *command*, that we are obliged to *do*, though our Governors ſhould not require it, or though they ſhould forbid it: What the Scriptures *prohibit*, that, though the Church ſhould exact it, we may *not do*, becauſe we *are to obey God rather than Man:* Either therefore the Governors of the Church have Authority in Things, neither commanded nor forbidden by the Word of God, or, as we ſaid, they have no Authority at all. That they have no original, abſolute, deſpotic Authority over the Conſciences of Men, is readily

4. *To appoint religious* Rites, *proved from Reaſon.*

 acknowledged;

* Acts xx. 28, &c. [x] Biſhop *Burnet*'s Paſtoral Care. [y] 1 Pet. v. 2, &c. [z] *Scott*'s Mediator.
[a] Archbiſhop *Potter*, on Church-Government. [b] Biſhop *Smalridge*'s Sermons.

acknowledged; but they that have a derived, delegated, limited Authority in such Things, as God hath left *undetermined* by any Rules of Scripture, so that their Decisions, when no Ways repugnant to God's Word, ought to be obeyed by all their Subjects, is plain from all those Scriptures, which require Subjection to *higher Powers*. *Primarily*, and of itself, the Law of God only obliges our Consciences, because God only hath a direct Power over the Conscience; but *Ecclesiastical* Laws do also oblige us *indirectly*, by Force of the Law of God. God, by appointing Governors in the Church, hath directed us to whom we ought to pay our Obedience: When therefore, in such Cases, we obey the Commands of our Governors, we do not so properly obey them, as God: Either therefore we must expunge out of Holy Writ all those Passages, which make Obedience to Governors a Part of our Christian Duty, or we must submit to their Commands, in Observance of those *Usages*, which God hath no where forbid, and which they, by that Authority, wherewith God hath invested them, do think it proper to enjoin.

[c] WHO that God is, whom alone we are to worship; with what Affection of Mind we ought to worship him; with what Devotion of Soul, and Humiliation of Body, we are to perform our Worship to him, we are perfectly instructed by the Scriptures: But concerning the Circumstances of Worship, in what *Place* we shall meet together to worship him, at what *Times* we shall assemble at such a Place, what particular *Gesture* of Body we shall use, what he, who officiates, shall wear in the publick Worship, the Scriptures no where determine. Either therefore we may lawfully do something, which the Scriptures do not expressly command, or it is not lawful for us to worship God at any fixed Time, and to say our Prayers together in any appointed Place, because the Scriptures have no where determined the Hour of the Day, when we should meet to worship God; nor the precise Place, where we should pray unto him; and therefore, in Things of this Nature, the constant Custom has been, for Churches, in all Ages, to be determined by the Wisdom of their Governors.

The Practice of the Jewish, [d] THE Religion of the *Jews* was delivered to one Nation, the chief Parts of it confined to one Place, and the Rites and Ceremonies of their Worship strictly limited, lest they should fall into the idolatrous Practices of the Neighbours round about them: And yet we find, in our Saviour's Time, many Rites (such as the whole Constitution of their Synagogues, with Offices and Services appropriated to them, the Institution of Baptism, and many Observances in the Paschal Solemnity) which were not prescribed by *Moses*, nor mentioned in any Part of the Old Testament; and these our blessed Lord was so far from condemning, merely because they were *super-added* to the Law, that himself observed many of them: For he not only frequented the *Temple-Service*, but their *Synagogues* likewise; and consecrated both their Baptism, and their Custom of blessing Bread and Wine, after the *Paschal* Supper, to be *fœderal* Rites of the Christian Covenant. And, if so much Liberty was allowed in so *limited* a Religion, it seems highly suitable to the sublimer State of the Christian Liberty, that there should be room left for such Appointments or Alterations, as the different State of Time and Places should require.

and Christian *Church.* IF we look into the Practice of the Apostles, we shall find, that, besides the standing Rules of the Gospel, they appointed sundry Things, as the several Occasions of the Churches under their Care seemed to require. That Converts from *Gentilism* should *abstain from Blood*, in order to their more easy *Incorporation* with the *Jews*; that there should be an Order of *Deaconesses*, who should minister to the first Preachers of the Gospel, and assist them in *converting* or *baptizing* Women; that it was customary, by *a Kiss of Charity*, for the Primitive Christians to express their mutual Love to one another; that in several of St *Paul*'s Epistles, especially those to the *Corinthians*, he prescribes particular Rules for the Decency of Divine Worship, and other Things, which were not determined by *Christ*; and that, in the next Ages after the Apostles, the Governors of the Church used the same Liberty, and made several Laws and *Canons* for the more orderly conducting it, long before the Emperors became Christians, is too plain to need any Proof. [e] Nay, in some Cases, they exercised this Authority with universal Approbation, even to the laying aside *Apostolick Usages*; for the *Kiss of Charity* and the Order of *Deaconesses* have

[c] *Smalridge*'s Sermons.
[e] Archbishop *Potter*, ibid.
[d] Archbishop *Potter*, on Church Government; and Bishop *Burnet*, on the Articles.

have for many Ages been diſuſed, and the World is ſatisfied, to this Day, with the Reaſons for letting them fall. And if the Church may lay aſide Apoſtolic Practices, in Matters relating to Order, it has certainly Authority to make new Rules about ſuch Things; ſince it is an higher Attempt to alter what was ſettled by the Apoſtles themſelves, than to eſtabliſh new Rules in Matters, that are left undetermined.

Cenſures.

AND if the Church has Authority to make Laws, it can hardly be ſuppoſed, but that it has a Power to put them in Execution; to *cenſure* Offenders, and to *exclude* them from its Communion, in Caſe they are *incorrigible*. When the *Jewiſh* Law was in its full Force and Vigour, there was no Need for excluding notorious Offenders from all civil and religious Communion, becauſe ſuch Perſons were not ſuffered to live; [f] *the Soul, that doeth ought preſumptuouſly, (whether it be born in the Land, or a Stranger) the ſame reproacheth the Lord, and that Soul ſhall be cut off from among his People:* But after the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, when the *Jews* could not fully execute their own Laws, then began they firſt to *ſeparate* Men *from the Congregation* for *groſs Impieties*, as they had done for *legal Impurities* before. [g] In our bleſſed Saviour's Time, the Puniſhment of *Excommunication* was very frequent; and, according to the Tradition and Practice of the *Jewiſh* Maſters, there were three Kinds or Degrees of it. The *firſt* and loweſt was what they called *Niddui*, the *Greeks*, ἀφορισμὸς, a Separation of great Offenders from all civil and religious Commerce. The *ſecond* was what they called *Cherem*, the *Greeks*, ἀνάθεμα, or *Execration*, becauſe, over and above the aforeſaid Separation, there were, in this Form, certain *Curſes* out of the Law of *Moſes* pronounced over the Head of the Offender, to affect him more ſenſibly with the Dread of Divine Vengeance. The *third* was what they called *Schammatha*, which was a Sort of *Proſcription*, whereby the Sinner, whom the former Methods did not reclaim, was for ever cut off from the People of God, his Name razed out of the Book of Life, and himſelf conſigned to Deſtruction, and the *Coming of the Lord in Judgment* againſt him; for ſo the Word meaneth.

The Practice of the Jewiſh *Church herein,*

and of the Chriſtian.

WHETHER our Saviour, among other Rites, might adopt this likewiſe into his Religion, is not ſo material here to enquire; that he has eſtabliſhed a Juriſdiction in his Church, and given the Rulers thereof full Power to take Cognizance of its Members, is evident from this Paſſage: [h] *If thy Brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee, go tell him his Fault between him and thee alone; if he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that, in the Mouth of two or three Witneſſes, every Word may be eſtabliſhed*, i. e. that thou mayeſt be able, in caſe he does not then amend, to produce ſufficient Teſtimony of his Guilt before the Church's Tribunal: *And if he ſhall neglect to hear them*, i. e. to promiſe Amendment upon their Admonition; take them along with thee, and *tell it to the Church*, that ſo ſhe may examine the Matter, and, upon thy proving his Guilt by ſufficient Witneſs, may *authoritatively* admoniſh him to amend: *But if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee an Heathen Man, and a Publican*, i. e. give him over for a ſad and deſperate Sinner, as one, that is to be ejected from the Communion of the Church, and no longer to enjoy the common Benefits of a Chriſtian: *For I ſay unto you*, i. e. to you of the Church, before whom this obſtinate Offender is to be cited and accuſed, *whatſoever ye ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven, and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven.* From which Paſſage it appears, that our Lord is here inſtructing his Church to exerciſe a *judicial* Power over its Members; for this is a manifeſt Deſcription of a judicial Proceſs. He who has been *injured*, is firſt directed to tell the Offender of his Fault *privately* between themſelves; if that have no Effect, to *admoniſh* him before Witneſs; if this Admonition likewiſe proves unſucceſsful, to *complain* to the Church; if the Church's Interpoſition be not regarded, then follows the *Sentence*, whereby the obſtinate Offender is ſeparated from the Communion of the Faithful, and reduced into the State of Heathens; which Sentence *Chriſt* promiſes to confirm and ratify in Heaven.

AND as our Saviour gave his Apoſtles a *judicial* Power over the Members of the Church, ſo we find St *Paul*, in the Caſe of the *inceſtuous Corinthian*, exerciſing it to the full. The *Corinthians*, as the Apoſtle tells them, ought to have *lamented* for the great *Scandal*, which their offending Brother had given to the Enemies of Religion, and for the Danger, to which he had expoſed himſelf, and thereupon to have excluded him from their Communion; but they having neglected this Part of their

[f] Numb. xv. 30. [g] *Comber*, on Excommunication. [h] Matth. xviii. 15, &c.

their Duty, he himſelf proceeds to paſs Sentence on him; [i] *I verily, as abſent in Body, but preſent in Spirit, have judged already, as though I were preſent, concerning him, that hath ſo done this Deed; in the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when ye are gathered together, and my Spirit, with the Power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to deliver ſuch an one unto Satan, for the Deſtruction of the Fleſh, that the Spirit may be ſaved in the Day of the Lord Jeſus.*

To atteſt the Church's Authority, in the earlieſt Days of Chriſtianity, [k] God was pleaſed to permit Satan to torment thoſe, that were *excommunicated*, with ſome great Pain, or Diſeaſe of Body, both to deter others, and to bring the Offender to a Senſe of his Sin; which accordingly had Effect upon this *Corinthian*; for in the ſecond Epiſtle, which the Apoſtle writes, he tells the Church, that [l] *ſufficient to ſuch an one is this Puniſhment, which was inflicted of many*; and therefore he directs them *to comfort and forgive him*, viz. by reſtoring him to their Communion, *leſt he ſhould be ſwallowed up with over-much Sorrow*, and *leſt Satan*, by that Means, *ſhould get Advantage to deſtroy him*, by tempting him to Deſpair. As therefore he had before decreed him to be *cenſured*, in the Name, and by the Authority of *Chriſt*, ſo now he remits the Cenſure, by the ſame Authority; [m] *to whom ye forgive any Thing, I forgive alſo; for if I forgive any Thing, to whom I forgive it for your ſakes forgive I it, in the Perſon of Chriſt.* So that here is a full Evidence of the Apoſtle's employing his Juriſdiction, both in *cenſuring* an Offender, and upon his Repentance, in *remitting* the Cenſure; and therefore, when we find him in other Places threatening the Wicked, if they perſiſted in their evil Courſes, that *he would come with a Rod, and would not ſpare, but* would *uſe Severity*, and *revenge all Diſobedience*, and this, by the Authority, *which the Lord had given him, to Edification, and not to Deſtruction*; he very plainly declares, that the Power of Excommunication was in his Hands, wherewith, as he tells us, he chaſtiſed *Hymenæus* and *Alexander*, two buſy *Hereticks* in the Church of *Epheſus*, whom [n] *he delivered unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaſpheme.*

An Objection. " BUT this Method of Proceeding, *ſome may ſay*, was peculiar to the Apoſtles, " and to continue no longer in the Church, than they lived. They had Power to " inflict Diſeaſes, and even Death itſelf upon Offenders, and ſo could execute their " own Sentences themſelves, in ſuch a Manner, as would effectually be felt. But ſince " this Power is departed from the Church, the bare Sentence is mere *brutum fulmen*, " and of no Uſe or Signification at all." *Anſwered.* Now the Pretence of the *temporary* Duration of this Authority in the Church can be no more, than a mere Cavil, ſince Government, in its own Nature, is equally neceſſary at one Time, as at another, and cannot ſubſiſt without a Power of *animadverting* upon Offenders. The Primitive Church was three hundred Years without the Protection of a Civil Magiſtrate; Moſt of that Time it was actually perſecuted; for the Remainder it was barely connived at; and the mildeſt Emperors were at moſt but like *Gallio*, who was an Officer under one of the gentleſt of them, Men, *that cared for none of theſe Things*; and ſhall we ſay, that the Governors of the Church could not exerciſe a Power over its own Members, whilſt it continued in this Condition, when we ſee that St *Paul* directed both *Timothy* and *Titus*, how they ſhould proceed in *cenſuring* Offenders? Or, becauſe Men are not now ſtricken dead with a Word's ſpeaking, like *Ananias* and *Saphira*; or blind, like the Sorcerer *Elymas*; nor afflicted with ſore Diſeaſes, like thoſe, whom the Apoſtles *delivered over to Satan*, ſhall we therefore conclude, either that the Church has no Power, or that her *Cenſures* are of no Avail? Three ſeveral Times has our Saviour repeated it, that the Sentence, which is given by a proper Officer below, he will confirm and ratify in Heaven; and if to be ſecluded from the Prayers and Sacraments of the Chriſtian Church; if to be debarred all Commerce and Society with thoſe, for whom we have the greateſt Love and Eſteem; to be reduced to the Condition of *Heathens*, and, without Repentance, delivered over to eternal Damnation, be a Puniſhment of no Terror, what can we imagine terrible? So dreadful a Senſe had the Primitive Chriſtians of this Expulſion from all civil and religious Communion, that, when any lay under the Sentence of it, [o] they conſtantly appeared in all the Formalities of Sorrow and Mourning; in a ſordid and ſqualid Habit, with a ſad Countenance, and Tears in their Eyes, ſtanding without the Church-Doors, (for they were not ſuffered to enter) falling down upon their Knees to the Miniſter, and begging the Prayers

[i] 1 Cor. v. 3, &c. [k] *Cave*'s Primitive Chriſtianity. [l] 2 Cor. ii. 6, &c. [m] Ibid. *ver.* 10. [n] 1 Tim. i. 20. [o] *Cave*, ibid.

Prayers of all good Chriſtians, as they went in, with all the Expreſſions and Demonſtrations of a dejected Mind; reckoning, *the lower they lay in Repentance, the higher it would exalt them, and the leſs they ſpared themſelves, the more God would ſpare them.*

AND queſtionleſs, the Severity of the *Primitive Diſcipline* was a powerful Means, not only to make Offenders themſelves ſenſible of the Heinouſneſs of their Crimes, but, by their exemplary Puniſhment, to guard and terrify others from falling into the like Condemnation; to ſtop the Infection from ſpreading, by enjoining a Separation from all notorious Propagators of Vice; and to provide for the Credit of a Religion, by animadverting upon the diſobedient and unruly, and ſetting a Brand upon ſuch as *blaſphemed the Name of God*, and brought Scandal upon their holy Profeſſion. If this ancient Ordinance has in theſe our Days loſt its Terror, and fallen into Contempt, this muſt proceed from that *Male-Adminiſtration* of it, whereby it degenerates either into an *uſeleſs* or *miſchievous* Inſtrument: And therefore, to retrieve its loſt Credit, it may not be improper to cloſe up this Subject with theſe important Rules, *viz.* [a] that this *Eccleſiaſtical Cenſure* be *impartial*, without Reſpect of Perſons, or inflicting it on one, rather than another; that it be not exerciſed in *ſecular* Affairs, which is a groſs perverting of this ſacred Inſtitution; that it be not inflicted for *Trifles*, for diſputable Matters, but for ſuch important Cauſes, as will juſtify ſo awful a Sentence; that it be executed by a proper *Adminiſtrator*, i. e. by a ſacred Perſon, a Biſhop, or Preſbyter, and not by a *Lay-Deputy*, as is done too often; and laſtly that it be uſed with great Gravity and Seriouſneſs, with great Tenderneſs and Charity; for, as it is a ſacred Inſtitution, it is to be adminiſtered with a becoming Solemnity and Reverence, and, as it is a *fatherly* Cenſure, muſt be diſcharged with a proportionable *Affection*, and *Concernedneſs* for the Welfare of Offenders.

V. ONE Part more of the *Commiſſion*, which our Saviour gave his Diſciples, was the *Promiſe*, which he made them, and their Succeſſors, of the *Perpetuity* of his Church, and of his continual protecting and aſſiſting them in all Ages, [a] *for lo, I am with you even unto the End of the World:* For it is impertinent to ſuppoſe, that the Συντέλεια τῦ αἰῶνος, ſhould mean no more, than *the End of the Jewiſh Age*, or Oeconomy, which laſted only till the Deſtruction of the Temple and City of *Jeruſalem* by *Titus*, as ſome would have it, on Purpoſe to confine this Promiſe to the Perſons of the Apoſtles only; [b] whereas this Phraſe is never once in the whole Bible uſed in this Senſe, but very often, and even by this Evangeliſt too, to denote *the laſt Conſummation of all Things.* Since the Apoſtles therefore, all of them died within the Compaſs of fourſcore Years after this Promiſe was made, there is no other Way, wherein it could be *fulfilled*, but by our Lord's being with their Succeſſors, in the Goſpel-Miniſtry, till the World's End. So long then as the Promiſe of God is true, [c] though many Thouſands of Profeſſors have abandoned the Faith, and *apoſtatized* from the Church; though many particular Churches have been loſt, and ſome bright and glorious *Candleſticks* quite *removed from their Places*; yet will not he permit the Church *in general* to periſh, *nor the Gates of Hell to prevail againſt it.* In all Ages he will preſerve to himſelf a Number of true Worſhippers, and, in all Exigences, raiſe up ſuch powerful Defenders of his holy Religion, as its moſt inveterate Enemies ſhall not be able to withſtand. And to ſatisfy ourſelves how far this Promiſe is already verified, we will take a ſhort View of the ſeveral *Dangers* and *Viciſſitudes*, which Chriſtianity has undergone, ſince its firſt ſetting Foot in the World, in order to perceive the *Watchfulneſs* of God's Providence and Protection over it.

The Perpetuity *of Chriſt's Church.*

AFTER the Apoſtles had, for ſome Time, preached in *Jeruſalem*, and the Regions thereabout, the Church-Hiſtory acquaints us, that they went abroad to convert other Nations, and took each Man his particular Diſtrict; that *Peter* preached to the *Jews*, diſperſed in *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Bithynia*, *Cappadocia*, &c. *Andrew*, to the *Scythians*; *John*, in *Leſſer Aſia*; *Philip*, in *Phrygia*; *Thomas*, in *Parthia*, &c. inſomuch, that the ancient Prophecy was fulfilled, [d] *God ſhall enlarge Japheth, and he ſhall dwell in the Tents of Shem*, i. e. the Poſterity of the *Gentiles* ſhall worſhip the true God, and be received into Covenant with him. [e] But no ſooner did the

An hiſtorical Account of the ſeveral Dangers, *Chriſtianity has been in, and of God's* protecting *it in all Ages.*

[a] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. Government. [b] Archbiſhop *Potter*, on Church-
[c] *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [a] Matth. xxviii. 20.
[d] Gen. ix. 27. [e] *Edwards*, ibid.

1. *From* Hereſy.

Chriſtian Religion begin to appear in the World, but *Seducers* and *Hereticks* ſprang up in the Church, who might have endangered the *common Faith*, had not God raiſed up eminent Men to withſtand and confute their Errors. In theſe early Times, we read of ſome, who held, *that the general Reſurrection was paſt*; and of others, who denied, *that Chriſt was come in the Fleſh*; of ſome, who maintained the Difference of Meat, and the Unlawfulneſs of Marriage, and even ſuch Opinions, as might be called the *Doctrines of Devils*: But St *Paul* ſtood up and oppoſed them all. *Simon Magus*, whom the Ancients call the *Ring-Leader of all Hereſy*, denied the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, and affirmed, that himſelf was God; but St *Peter*, and other noted Champions, encountered and defeated him. From him however proceeded a numerous Offspring of *Hereticks*, all differing from one another, as much as they did from Truth; and among theſe, were *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*, who held, that *Chriſt* was a *mere Man*, and that the Obſervation of the *Moſaic* Law was neceſſary; but as St *Paul* confuted the *latter* Aſſertion, and St *John* the *former*, ſo St *Jude*, the Survivor of all the Apoſtles, except St *John*, and now grown old in the Profeſſion and Defence of the Goſpel, animated the Chriſtians, in thoſe Times, to this juſt and glorious Conflict; [f] *when I gave all Diligence*, ſays he, *to write to you of the common Salvation*, i. e. of the great and important Cauſe of Chriſtianity, which concerns us all, *it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that you ſhould earneſtly contend for the Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints*; which Exhortation was ſo well obſerved, that [g] in ſucceeding Ages, no ſooner did any Hereſy ſhew its Head, but it preſently met with a ſtrenuous Oppoſition.

2. Perſecutions.

THAT the Chriſtian Religion ſhould engage its Followers in Miſeries and Sufferings, is obvious to any, that conſider the Nature of its Doctrines, and the Tendency of its Deſign. The *Severity* of its Precepts, ſo directly oppoſite to the corrupt and vicious Inclinations of Men; the *Purity* of its Worſhip, ſo flatly contrary to the looſe and obſcene Rites and Solemnities of the *Heathens*; and its abſolute *Inconſiſtency* with thoſe Religions, that had ſo long obtained in the World, raiſed a general Indignation againſt it, and provoked the *Great ones*, in thoſe Times, to conſpire its Ruin. *Ten* bitter Perſecutions were *ſucceſſively* raiſed againſt its Profeſſors, in which all, that the Wit and Malice of Man could invent, by Way of Torture, was inflicted; and ſo far had the *Roman* Emperors proceeded once, as appears by the *Trophies*, and [h] *Triumphal Arches*, erected to perpetuate the Memory of their Conqueſt over it, as to think, they had quite extinguiſhed *Chriſtianity*; but it ſtill revived, and grew afreſh. The Cruelties of Adverſaries increaſed the Number of Chriſtians, and the more they ſuffered, the more they flouriſhed; till, at length, an Edict was publiſhed, in *Conſtantine*'s Time, giving Liberty and Encouragement to all Chriſtians to worſhip God, God, according to their own Manner.

3. Hereſies *again.*

THUS *had the Church Reſt* from Perſecution; but, not long after, there aroſe *heretical* and falſe Doctrines, which not only diſturbed the *Peace*, but impaired the *Purity* of it. The *Arian Hereſy*, which blaſphemed the ſacred *Trinity*, and denied the *Divinity* of our bleſſed Saviour, ſoon after the general Peace, broke out: But here the Care of Divine Providence was very remarkable, in raiſing up able Champions, ſuch as *Athanaſius*, *Gregory Nyſſen*, and *Nazianzen*, *&c.* to protect inſulted Truth;

[f] Jude ver. 3.

[g] Thus, in the next Centuries, *Marcian* and *Valentine* were attacked by *Polycarp*, St *John*'s Scholar; and *Irenæus*, *Polycarp*'s Diſciple, wrote againſt the Hereſies of *Simon Magus*, *Menander*, *Baſilides*, *Carpocrates*, &c. *Tertullian* encountered *Marcion*, *Hermogenes*, and *Apelles*; and when the Doctrine of *Ebion* and *Cerinthus* was renewed by *Sabellius*, and *Paulus Samoſatenus*, theſe Hereticks were oppoſed by *Gregory* of *Neo-Cæſarea*, and *Dionyſius* of *Alexandria*, and ſo of all the reſt. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

[h] Two Inſcriptions, belonging to theſe *Triumphal Arches*, were found in *Clania* in *Spain*, the one of which is thus:

DIOCLESIANUS JOVIUS. ET MAXIMIAN. HERCULEUS CAES. AUG. AMPLIFICATO PER ORIENTEM ET OCCIDENTEM IMP. ROM. ET NOMINE CHRISTIANORUM DELETO, QUI REMP. EVERTEBANT.

The other thus:

DIOCLESIAN. CAES. AUG. GALERIO IN ORIENTE ADOPT. SUPERSTITIONE CHRIST——UBIQUE DELETA, ET CULTU DEORUM PROPAGATO.

The Meaning of both which is to ſhew, that *Dioclesian*, and his Colleague, *Maximianus*, had every where extinguiſhed the *wicked Superſtition* of Chriſt, as they called it, ſo pernicious to the Commonwealth, and had reſtored *Paganiſm*, and the Worſhip of the Gods; *Cave*'s Primitive Chriſtianity. But theſe very Emperors, we are told, being tired and wearied out with perſecuting the Church to no Purpoſe, betook themſelves to a private State, and ſpent the reſt of their Lives in Gardening.

Truth; and a ſufficient Number of learned *Apologiſts*, both [i] of the *Greek* and *Latin* Church, to defend it, when it was aſſaulted by *Pagans*.

WHILE Matters were in this Situation, a new Storm threatened very grievouſly the Church of *Chriſt*. For *Conſtantine the Great*, having removed his Army from the *Northern* to the *Eaſtern* Territories, and himſelf from *Rome* to *Conſtantinople*, gave the *Goths* and *Vandals*, and other barbarous Nations, an Opportunity to invade *Italy*, and lay waſte the *Weſtern Empire*; while, in the *Eaſt*, the Errors and Hereſies, the Quarrels and Contentions, that prevailed among Chriſtians, made Way for *Mahometiſm*, and deſtroyed the moſt flouriſhing Churches, even thoſe that are mentioned in the *Revelation*. Mahometiſm *and* Idolatry.

THUS while, in the *Eaſt*, the World fell off to *Mahometiſm*, and in the *Weſt*, to *Superſtition* and *Idolatry*, the Church, one would think, was in imminent Danger: But, how much ſoever it might ſuffer by theſe Defections, it was ſtill preſerved from Deſtruction. For, even in the Ages of the greateſt Corruption, [k] ſome generous Souls always appeared, who abhorred the Errors, which then prevailed, and contended earneſtly for the *Faith*, which *was once delivered to the Saints*; till, at length, their Zeal and Writings awakened others, to enquire into the Truth of Things, and ſo meditate a *Reformation*; which was both begun and continued with ſuch a Series of wonderful and ſurprizing Events, as proclaimed God to be the great Author and Director of it.

THUS, in all the Revolutions that have happened, true Religion has ever been preſerved: In all Storms and Tempeſts, the Church has *rode* ſecurely, and the *Gates of Hell* have not *prevailed againſt it*: And, if we enquire into the Grounds and Reaſons hereof, we ſhall find, that the Truth and Faithfulneſs of God are concerned in the Preſervation of it. For when he tells us expreſſly, that he [l] *will eſtabliſh it for ever*, and that [m] *no Weapon, formed againſt it, ſhall proſper*; that [n] *he hath ſet up a Kingdom, which ſhall never be deſtroyed*; that [o] *he will reign over the Houſe of Jacob for ever, and of his Kingdom there ſhall be no End*; when theſe and ſuch-like Promiſes do every where meet us, we cannot entertain the leaſt Doubt of the *perpetual* Subſiſtence of God's Church for the Time to come, ſince his watchful Care and Providence over it has been ſo wonderfully conſpicuous, for the Ages that are paſt. Amidſt the ſtrangeſt Occurrences and Revolutions therefore, we may confide in this great Truth, *That God's Church ſhall never fail.* Say, that, for a Time, it is corrupted with Error and *Hereſy*; ſay, that it is endangered by Perſecution and Tyranny; ſay, that it is undermined by Stratagem and Policy; yet, it being the ſingular Charge and Care of Heaven, it ſhall never be deſtroyed; and, for this Reaſon, it is repreſented under the *Emblem* of the *Woman* in the *Revelation*, [p] *clothed with the Sun, and the Moon under her Feet, and upon her Head a Crown of twelve Stars*; who, when ſhe was perſecuted by *the Dragon, had two Wings of a great Eagle given her, that ſhe might fly into the Wilderneſs, into her Place, where ſhe is nouriſhed for a Time, and Times, and half a Time, from the Face of the Serpent.* *The Reaſons of God's protecting it.*

[i] Of the *Greek* Church were *Athenagoras, Tatianus, Theophilus Antiochenus, Juſtin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Euſebius, Athanaſius, Theodoret*; and of the *Latin, Tertullian, Arnobius, Lactantius, Minutius Felix, Auguſtinus*, &c.

[k] When the *Popiſh* Corruptions ſeemed to overſpread the Churches of *Europe*, God ſtirred up the *Waldenſes* in *France*; *Wickliff*, in *England*; *Huſs*, in *Bohemia*; *Zuinglius*, in *Helvetia*; *Luther*, in *Saxony*; *Calvin*, in *France*; *Knox*, in *Scotland*, &c. who vigorouſly made Oppoſition againſt the Errors and evil Practices of the *Roman* Church. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

[l] Pſal. xlviii. 8. [m] Iſa. liv. 17. [n] Dan. ii. 44. [o] Luke i. 33. [p] Rev. xii. 1, 14.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Gifts and Graces of the HOLY GHOST.

The Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt.

OUR Bleſſed Saviour, being about to aſcend into Heaven, in order to take Poſſeſſion of his *Mediatorial* Kingdom, ſupports the drooping Spirits of his Diſciples with a Promiſe, that he would ſend a *Comforter* to them, who ſhould protect and aſſiſt them with his Almighty Power, and enlighten their Minds with his infinite Wiſdom and Knowledge. [a] *Be of good Cheer*, ſays he, for [b] *I will not leave you comfortleſs, but will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever*: Only [c] *tarry ye in the City of* Jeruſalem, *until ye receive the Promiſe from the Father, and be endowed with Power from on High.* Purſuant to this Order, the Apoſtles, after they had ſeen their Lord aſcend into Heaven, [d] *returned to* Jeruſalem; and, *continuing, with one Accord, in Prayer and Supplication*, were, no Doubt, met together for this Purpoſe, when, *on the Day of* [e] *Pentecoſt*, ſo called, becauſe it was the *fiftieth* Day after the Feaſt of the Paſſover, [f] *ſuddenly there came a Sound from Heaven, as of a ruſhing mighty Wind, and it filled all the Houſe where they were ſitting. And there appeared unto them cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, and it ſat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and began to ſpeak with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them Utterance.*

Why ten Days after Chriſt's Aſcenſion.

WHY our Bleſſed Saviour did not, immediately after his Aſcenſion, ſend the Holy Ghoſt to ſupply his Place, but left his Diſciples, for ſome Time, in this diſconſolate Condition, may, in a great Meaſure, be aſcribed to his Deſign of exerciſing their *Faith*, and preparing them for a more joyful Reception of the *Heavenly Gift*, when it came. [g] For, as to be ſhut up in Darkneſs makes the Light more pleaſant and welcome, when we come to enjoy it again; ſo to have been, for ſome Time, deſolate and deſtitute of our wonted Comforts, makes the Return of them, or the Coming of other Comforts in their Place, much more refreſhing and ſatisfactory to us. The ten Days, from the Aſcenſion of our Lord to the Coming of this Bleſſed Spirit, were, by the Apoſtles, as the Scripture ſeems to intimate, moſtly ſpent in Prayer; by which Exerciſe their Expectations were raiſed, their Deſires inflamed and heightened, their Hearts opened and enlarged, and the Value of the Mercy, prayed for, wonderfully inhanſed; and ſo, in all Reſpects, they were now better prepared to receive this Divine Gueſt, which the Father was to ſend in his Name. But this is not all.

THE *ſecond* of thoſe *three* great Solemnities, in which all the Males of *Iſrael* were required to *appear before the Lord, in the Place which he ſhould chuſe*, was now approaching; and therefore the Divine Wiſdom thought proper to delay the Miſſion of the *Comforter*, until a large Concourſe of People, at *Jeruſalem*, might give a better Opportunity for an Event ſo extraordinary more generally to be obſerved, more nicely *examined*, and more ſpeedily *publiſhed* Abroad, through the many diſtant Regions, whither the People, now aſſembled, would ſhortly be diſperſed. And, by this Means likewiſe, thoſe very Perſons, who, at the laſt great Feaſt of the *Paſſover*, had been Eye-Witneſſes of our Saviour's Sufferings and Shame, would have now the ſame Evidence of his Truth and Glory, by thoſe Powers of the Spirit conferred, and thoſe Miracles wrought in his Name, at their Attendance on this *ſecond Feſtival*, which would be an Over-balance to the *Scandal* of his *Croſs*.

The Circumſtances of his Deſcent, and the Import of them.

BUT, whatever the Reaſons of the Holy Ghoſt's Delay might be, 'tis certain, that the *Appearances* of his Deſcent, when he came, were very ſurprizing, and very inſtructive. The *Suddenneſs of the Sound*, and the Point of Direction, whence he came

[a] John xvi. 33. [b] Ibid. xiv. 16. [c] Luke xxiv. 49. [d] Acts i. 12, 14.

[e] Concerning the *Pentecoſt*, we read this Ordinance, [*Levit.* xxiii. 15, 16.] *Ye ſhall count unto you, from the Morrow after the Sabbath, from the Day that ye brought the Sheaf of the Wave-Offering, ſeven Sabbaths ſhall ye compleat; even unto the Morrow after the ſeventh Sabbath, ſhall ye number fifty Days, and ye ſhall offer a new Meat-Offering unto the Lord.* Hence, from the ſeven Weeks Interval, this was called *the Feaſt of Weeks*, and was obſerved, in Memory of the Delivery of the Law from Mount *Sinai*, juſt fifty Days after the Children of *Iſrael* had left *Egypt*. *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III.

[f] Acts ii, 2, &c. [g] *Conant*'s Sermons.

came, were of Uſe to ſtrike an Awe upon the Perſons, and prepare them, with more profound Humility and Reverence, to receive the Approaches, God was making towards them. The Reſemblance *of Wind* is, of all others, moſt *familiar* in Scripture to figure the Spirit of God, his Power, and his Effects. Our Saviour himſelf makes uſe of the Similitude: And indeed, what can be more proper to repreſent the *Freedom* of Divine Grace, as well as the *Power* of its Operations, thoſe refreſhing, thoſe cleanſing Influences, which fill and penetrate, and move the Hearts of Men, which raiſe a new and happy *Ferment* there, and lift them up to Heaven, by infuſing pious Diſpoſitions, than *Wind*, which, like that Spirit, is itſelf inviſible, wonderful, and unaccountable in its Manner of *working*, but, in its *Force* and Efficacy, notorious and undeniable?

THE like Propriety [h] ſome have obſerved in the Emblem of *cloven Tongues ſitting on the Heads of the Diſciples, in a bright Reſemblance of Fire.* The *Tongues* might denote the Readineſs and Aptneſs of their Expreſſions and Arguments; the *Clefts in the Tongues*, the Diverſity of the Languages they were to ſpeak; and poſſibly the *Sitting of theſe Tongues upon them* might ſignify the Permanency of this Gift; that it was not to *vaniſh* immediately, but allowed to continue, and by their Miniſtry, to be diffuſed and communicated to others, ſo long as the Neceſſities of the Church, and the Propagation of the Chriſtian Faith ſhould require it. Nor can it be imagined, but that *Fire* was a very fit Reſemblance of the *Light*, theſe Diſciples received by the Acceſſion of the Holy Spirit; of the clear, unerring *Knowledge*, they attained *of all Things*, that it concerned Perſons in their high Character, and Truſt, to underſtand; and of that *Zeal* and fearleſs *Courage*, which ſpread itſelf into their Hearts, and kindled ſuch a vital and vigorous Heat therein, that, from thenceforth, we hear no more of any of them trembling at the Charge of belonging to Jeſus, no more aſſembling privately for *Fear of the* Jews, but putting themſelves forward, induſtriouſly preaching and working Miracles boldly in the Temple, in the Synagogues, in the Streets; declaring, that they muſt, and would ſpeak *what they had ſeen and heard*; and when treated as Malefactors, upon that very Account, *rejoicing that they were counted worthy to ſuffer for the Sake of a* crucified Maſter.

The Deſcent itſelf, what.

THESE are the Obſervations, which ſome have thought fit to make, concerning the Circumſtances attending the Holy Ghoſt's *Deſcent*: But by the Deſcent itſelf we muſt not apprehend any *local* Motion, or Mutation of Place: For ſince, as we had Occaſion to prove elſewhere, the Holy Ghoſt is a *Divine* Perſon, and, conſequently, every where preſent, it cannot be properly ſaid to remove, or to go from one Place to another; for then muſt it come to a Place, where it was not before, which would deſtroy its *Omnipreſence*; and therefore the *Deſcent* muſt be interpreted only of the *efficacious Preſence* of that bleſſed Spirit, or rather, of the Diſcovery and Manifeſtation of that Preſence, by ſome ſtrange Effects, and uncommon Operations.

The different Sorts of Gifts, what.

NOW the Operations aſcribed to this Spirit are, ſome *extraordinary*, ſome *ordinary*; [i] ſome *ſpecial* to ſome Times and ſome Perſons, others *common* to all Chriſtians in all Ages; ſome *neceſſary* for the firſt Planting of the Goſpel, others *requiſite* to the ſpiritual Growth of true Believers; ſome *miraculous Gifts*, by which, thoſe, that were furniſhed with them, were qualified to promote the Salvation of other Men; others, *ſaving Graces*, by which thoſe, who are endued therewith, are enabled to work out their own Salvation: The *former*, ſuch, as we ought to thank God for having heretofore beſtowed on the *Apoſtles*, and firſt Preachers of the Goſpel, for the more effectual and ſpeedy Propagation thereof; the *latter*, ſuch, as we ought to pray to God to beſtow upon *ourſelves*, as neceſſary to diſpoſe our Underſtandings rightly to *apprehend*, our Wills chearfully to *obey*, and our Affections duly to *entertain* the ſaving Truths and Precepts of the Goſpel. The *former* not to be pretended to, in theſe our Days, without *Enthuſiaſm* and *Fanaticiſm*; the *latter* not to be neglected, wanted, or uncultivated by us, without Hazard of our everlaſting Salvation: The *former*, Signs, whereby to diſtinguiſh true Prophets from falſe Perſons, Men really commiſſioned by God, from arrogant Pretenders to Divine Revelation; the *latter*, ſure Characters, whereby to diſtinguiſh the Regenerate from the Unregenerate; the *ſincere* Chriſtian, from the *Hypocrite*; the *real* Believer, from the *nominal*; the *ſpiritual* Perſon, from the *carnal*; the *Child of God*, and Heir of

[h] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III. and *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. III.

[i] *Smalridge*'s Sermons.

Glory, from the *Child of Wrath*, and Son of Perdition. And therefore, in treating of this Argument, our Buſineſs muſt be,

I. To obſerve what theſe *extraordinary* Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt were; and how highly neceſſary, at that Time, for the firſt Plantation of Chriſtianity. And,

II. What his *ordinary* Operations are, how highly neceſſary, at this Time, to enable us to perform the Conditions of the Goſpel; and in *what Manner* we may moſt reaſonably ſuppoſe, that they aſſiſt us herein.

The extraordinary *Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt.*

I. The Apoſtles then, we muſt imagine, and others intruſted with the great Affair of converting the World to the Chriſtian Religion, ſtood in need of many Gifts, which were not ſo neceſſary in future Ages. As [l] they were to be the firſt *Planters* of the Goſpel, it was requiſite, 1. That they ſhould be able to ſpeak the ſeveral *Languages* of the Nations, to whom they were to preach. 2. That they ſhould be fully and clearly inſtructed in the *Doctrines*, they were to teach. 3. That they ſhould be able to give the moſt convincing Evidence of the Truth and Divinity of their Doctrines. And, 4. That they ſhould be conducted by *infallible Advice*, thro' all the emergent Difficulties of their *Miniſtry*: Againſt all which Neceſſities the Holy Ghoſt abundantly ſupplied them. For,

Of Languages.

1. He inſpired them with the Gift of *Tongues*, without which, they muſt have ſpent a great Part of their Lives, before they could have been capable of preaching the Goſpel to the World, in learning the ſeveral Languages of the ſeveral Nations they were to preach to. The Holy Ghoſt therefore, upon his miraculous Deſcent, did, *in an Inſtant*, infuſe into them the Habit of ſpeaking ſeveral Languages, inſomuch that, without any Rules or previous Inſtruction, they were heard to ſpeak, to the great Aſtoniſhment of their Hearers, in the [m] fifteen ſeveral Tongues of fifteen ſeveral Nations; and though it was not long before they were diſperſed abroad in the World, and ſome of them into remote Countries, whoſe Names perhaps they never heard of before, yet, wherever they came, they were inſtantly inſpired with the Language of the Country, and ſpake it as *freely*, as if it had been their *Mother-Tongue*.

Of Knowledge.

2. What the firſt Preachers of the Goſpel taught, was to be the Standard of Truth and Falſhood to all ſucceeding Generations; and therefore the Holy Ghoſt took care to inſtruct them perfectly in all *Points* of Doctrine, that ſo their Succeſſors, in all Ages, might ſafely rely on their Authority. And, to this Purpoſe, he not only converſed with their Spirits, and repreſented Things *nakedly* and *immediately* to their Underſtanding, but raiſed their Underſtanding likewiſe to comprehend his *Revelations*; for ſo we are told, that, upon their Reception of the Holy Ghoſt, they [n] *ſpake with Tongues*, and *propheſied*, *i. e.* explained the deep *Myſteries* of the Goſpel.

Of Miracles.

3. Becauſe it was requiſite, [o] that thoſe, who offered a new Religion to the World, ſhould have it in their Power to convince others, that their Commiſſion was from Heaven; God was pleaſed, by this Miſſion of his Spirit, to endow them with a Power of *working Miracles*, for the Confirmation of their Doctrine: And, in this Reſpect, they even excelled the Works of Chriſt himſelf, to the full Accompliſhment of his Promiſe; [p] *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that believeth on me, the Works that I do, ſhall he do alſo; and greater Works than theſe, ſhall he do, becauſe I go to the Father.* For whereas before, the greateſt Part of the miraculous Signs of the Divinity of the Chriſtian Doctrine were performed by Chriſt himſelf, and, conſequently, confined to the Place where he happened to be; the Holy Ghoſt, by impowering ſo many Perſons, in ſo many different Parts, to perform ſo many wonderful Things in *Chriſt*'s Name, did, as it were, carry him in Triumph through the World, and, at once, diſplay his Majeſty and Power over the Face of the whole Earth.

Of Wiſdom.

And, 4. Becauſe the Work, wherein the firſt *Propagators* of the Goſpel were engaged, was ſuch, as had Difficulties attending it inſuperable to human Prudence and Wiſdom, ſuch as required an invincible Courage, and firm Integrity of Mind, a watchful Prudence, and ſpotleſs Purity of Manners; under all theſe Exigencies, the Holy Ghoſt ſerved the primitive Church in the ſame Capacity, as the *Urim* and *Thummim* did the ancient *Jews*, *i. e.* as an *Oracle*, to adviſe them in all Caſes of Difficulty, what they were to ſay and do; for ſo our bleſſed Saviour ſeems to

[l] *Scott*'s Mediator. [m] Acts ii. 4, &c. [n] Ibid. xix. 6. [o] *Scott*'s Mediator. [p] John xiv. 12.

to promiſe, [q] *when they bring you before Magiſtrates, take no Thought what ye ſhall anſwer; for the Holy Ghoſt ſhall teach you, at the ſame Hour, what ye ought to ſay.*

THESE were the *Aſſiſtances*, which the Spirit of God extended to the Apoſtles, and other Planters of the Chriſtian Faith, without which the great Affair of converting the World muſt, in all Probability, have proved *abortive*. Had the Chriſtian Religion indeed, like the *Jewiſh*, been intended for one Nation only, [r] a Diverſity of Languages had been of no farther Uſe, than any other *Evidence of the Spirit*, whereby the Truth and Miſſion of the Apoſtles were confirmed: But ſince the Deſign of this Religion was to be *Univerſal*, the firſt Step to make it ſo muſt, in Reaſon, be, to *qualify* the Propagators of it to converſe with all Nations. Now, the Capacity of talking clearly, tho' but in one, or a very few ſtrange Languages, is an Attainment that coſts much Time and Pains, even to the moſt acute Parts, and unwearied Application: And therefore, without the Gift of Languages, the Converſion of Foreigners muſt have been a tedious, if not impoſſible, Work to ſuch Undertakers, as the Apoſtles were, and whoſe Commiſſion extended to every Nation and Language under Heaven.

The Neceſſity *of theſe Gifts to the firſt Chriſtians.*

Of Languages.

[s] BUT put the Caſe, they could have acquired a Readineſs of expreſſing themſelves by their own Induſtry, this might, indeed, procure them Applauſe and high Eſteem, but what is Eſteem and Applauſe towards prevailing with Men to embrace new Doctrines and myſterious Truths; to root out inveterate and agreeable Corruptions, and to plant *Mortification*, *ſevere Virtue*, and *Self-denial*, in their Stead? No Authority, leſs than *Divine*, is ſufficient to perſuade ſuch a Change: No Faculty, attained by Human Methods, can prove a Divine Authority: But when clear Evidence is made of this in one Inſtance, no Difficulty will be found in believing it in others. Allowing therefore, that the Apoſtles *ſpake* with other Tongues, by Divine Inſpiration, the natural Conſequence of this would be, that the Matter *ſpoken of* was of the ſame *Original*; it being inconceivable, how God would be at the Expence of a Miracle, to furniſh Men with *Words* to expreſs any Doctrine, which was not of his own *dictating*.

THAT the Apoſtles, as well as the reſt of the *Jews*, were under many Miſtakes in Matters of Religion, is plain from ſeveral Places of Scripture, where we find them ignorant of the Propheſies concerning the *Meſſias*, and never once imagining, that he was to ſuffer Death upon the Croſs. This ſhocking Circumſtance, happening to our Saviour, ſo contrary to their Expectations, made them almoſt deſpair of any Deliverance from him: [t] *We truſted*, ſay they, *that it had been he, who ſhould have redeemed* Iſrael; which is as much as to ſay, that they deſpaired of it now. We have frequently taken Notice, from whence this Miſapprehenſion of theirs proceeded, *viz.* From an Opinion, generally received among the *Jews*, that the Meſſias was to be a *temporal Prince*, who was to deliver them from the *Roman* Servitude, and make them a more glorious and triumphant Nation, than ever they had been. The private Appearance, however, of our Saviour's Life, and the Ignominy of his Death, one would think, might have rectified this Notion, and fully ſatisfied them, that his *Kingdom was not of this World:* But this flattering Expectation of ſecular Greatneſs was ſo agreeable to Fleſh and Blood, this Prejudice was ſo ſtrongly fixed, by being generally received, that it continued with them, even after our Saviour's Reſurrection, as we ſee by the Queſtion they put to him, [u] *Lord, wilt thou at this Time reſtore again the Kingdom to* Iſrael? So that there was a plain Neceſſity, upon their Lord's Removal, for the Miſſion of another *Teacher*, to rectify the Miſtakes they lay under, concerning the Nature of Chriſt's Kingdom; to give them right Apprehenſions of what they were to preach; and to inform them more fully, in what were the *Myſteries* and Secrets of our holy Religion.

Of Knowledge.

AND as the *Aſſiſtance* of the Holy Spirit was neceſſary to *enlighten* the Minds of the Apoſtles, and firſt Preachers of the Goſpel; ſo was it no leſs neceſſary to *fortify* their Hearts, and make them act with Conſtancy and Reſolution. For how much Undauntedneſs ſoever we may imagine a righteous Cauſe may give, yet there is ſufficient Reaſon to think, that the Apoſtles, and firſt Planters of Chriſtianity, would not have had Courage enough to go on in their Undertaking, had they not been ſupported by the miraculous Workings and Conſolations of the Holy Spirit.

Of Courage.

They

[q] Luke xii. 11, 12.
[r] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III.
[s] *Collier's* Sermons.
[t] Luke xxiv. 21.
[u] Acts i. 6.

They were Men inconſiderable both in Fortune and Intereſt: They never acted in publick Stations, and were therefore unpractiſed in that Addreſs, and graceful Application, which gives Aſſurance, and gains Reſpect. They had no *Subtlety* of Reaſoning, nor Flouriſhes of *Rhetorick* to ſet off their Defence: Their Defence too was of ſuch a Nature, that they could not prove themſelves *innocent*, without making their Judges *guilty* of the moſt horrid Murther: Yet all theſe Diſadvantages did not, in the leaſt, diſcourage them from maintaining their Cauſe, and purſuing their Deſign. For, upon the Holy Ghoſt's Deſcent, * when they were made experimentally ſenſible of its Divine Influence, when they perceived their Minds enriched with a new Stock of unſtudied and ſupernatural Knowledge, and their Tongues able to expreſs it in all the Languages they converſed with, we ſoon find them quitting their *Retirement*, frequenting the moſt *publick* Places, and ſpeaking plainly in Defence of their Doctrine. 'Tis ſtrange to obſerve, with what a generous Aſſurance they behaved, when they were ſummoned before Perſons of the greateſt Quality, and the higheſt Authority; with what Freedom they pleaded their Maſter's Innocence, and proclaimed his Honour; with what Undauntedneſs they charged the Court with the Blood of the greateſt and moſt righteous Perſon; with what Unconcern, in ſhort, they expoſed themſelves, and with what Bravery they ſuffered.

Of Miracles. NEITHER were they remarkable only for the *Reſolution*, they expreſſed upon all Occaſions, but for the *miraculous Works* they exhibited to the World, and which were highly neceſſary for the firſt eſtabliſhing of a Religion, that was to oppoſe the Vices, and encounter the prevailing Prejudices of the Age. The Religion of the *Jews* and *Gentiles* was in preſent Poſſeſſion, had Preſcription on their Side, and, over and above that, gave a much greater Freedom than the *Chriſtian*. The Heathen Nations had Antiquity and Authority, the Protection of the State, and *oracular* Reſponſes, to plead for their Errors, and, what is of no ſmall Weight, had ſtrong Inclinations to wiſh them true: So that the Reaſoning of the Apoſtles would have hardly convinced their Hearers; the World would never have believed, that ſuch unpromiſing Perſons were the Embaſſadors of Heaven, had they produced no other Argument but their own *Teſtimony*: But, when they were heard to ſpeak with Tongues, they never learned; when they could cure Diſeaſes, or inflict them; kill, or make alive, as they thought fit; when, in ſhort, they ſeemed to have the Power of Life and Death delivered into their Hands, and to carry a Kind of *Omnipotence* about them; this muſt needs draw the Eyes of the People, and awaken in them a ſerious Attention to what was delivered. They could not but conclude, (as we obſerved before) that the Doctrine muſt have no vulgar Meaning, which was ſo wonderfully atteſted; and that thoſe Truths muſt be of more than ordinary Concern, which ſtood recommended by ſo viſible a Countenance of a Divine Power.

The Time of their Continuance *in the Church.* HOW long theſe ſeveral Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, *viz.* [x] *the Gift of divers Kinds of Tongues*, and *their Interpretation*; *the Gift of Propheſy*, and *diſcerning of Spirits*; the *Gift of Healing* and *working Miracles*; and the *Gift of Wiſdom* and *Knowledge*, as the Apoſtle enumerates them, continued in the Chriſtian Church, is not ſo eaſy a Matter to determine: This, however, we may reaſonably conjecture, [y] that the *Gift of Tongues* continued until the Goſpel was ſo far eſtabliſhed, that each Country had Natives of their own *ordained* to the Work of the Miniſtry, and capable of teaching others in their Mother-Tongue: That *the Gift of Propheſy* was not withdrawn, till the whole *New-Teſtament* was *revealed*, and the ſeveral Parts of it *collected* into one Volume: That the *Gift of Wiſdom*, or Direction, remained, till the Government of the Church was every where ſettled, and its Affairs reduced to a ſtated Courſe and Method: And, laſtly, that the *Gift of Miracles*, and among them, *of ejecting evil Spirits*, abode in the Church, till the Frauds and Impoſtures of the Idol-Gods were diſcovered, and the Heathens had received ſufficient Conviction of the Falſity of their *own*, and the Truth of the *Chriſtian* Religion: At leaſt till, the Prejudices of *Education* being worn off, the *Chriſtian* Religion ſtood upon equal Terms with the *Heathen*; under which Situation, its own natural Force could not fail of turning the Balance, and giving it an Advantage.

BUT here we are not to ſuppoſe, becauſe the miraculous Powers of the Holy Ghoſt have long ſince ceaſed, that therefore he hath totally withdrawn himſelf from the Church of Chriſt. He has recalled, indeed, the more viſible Signs of his Preſence, but ſtill he continues the ſame Influence, as *certainly*, though not as *ſenſibly*, as

* *Collier's* Sermons. [x] 1 Cor. xii. 8. [y] *Scott's* Mediator.

as before: For it is by him, that our Saviour promiſes [z] *to be with us to the End of the World*, and for that Reaſon calls him [a] *the other Comforter, who is to abide with us for ever.* Which leads us to conſider,

That the Holy-Ghoſt is communicated now.

II. THE *ordinary* Operations of God's bleſſed Spirit, which the Schools call *Graces.* That there is a *ſanctifying* Principle communicated to Believers, preparing and aſſiſting them to the *Fruits of Holineſs*, and therefore called [b] *the Seed of God*; that this Principle is more than all *moral* Endowments, or any Improvements of Nature, that are merely *Human*, and therefore called [c] *the Gift of God*; [d] that this is more than the *objective* Influence of revealed Truths, or of all the outward Actings of Providence, and therefore called *the Gift within us*; that this Principle is wrought in us by the Operation of the Holy Spirit, and therefore all Virtues are called [e] *the Fruits and Works of the Spirit*; and Chriſtians, [f] *the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt*, and [g] *an holy Habitation to God, through his Spirit*; theſe are Truths that will appear, to any indifferent Enquirer, as plain and evident, as any that are recorded in the Bible. In the Old Teſtament indeed, though there be not that expreſs Declaration of this inward aſſiſting Principle, proceeding from God, and co-operating in Man's *Sanctification*; yet, when we find *Moſes* telling the *Iſraelites*, that [h] *the Lord their God would circumciſe their Heart, and the Heart of their Seed, to love the Lord their God, with all their Soul*; when we find *David* making his Supplications to God, [i] *to open and turn his Eyes, to unite and incline his Heart, to quicken him, to make him go, to guide, and lead him,* [k] *to create a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within him*; when we find *Jeremiah* promiſing from God, that he would [l] *put his Law in their inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts*, ſo that they ſhould *all know him, from the leaſt of them unto the greateſt*; and *Ezekiel*, giving us this Aſſurance, [m] *I will take away the ſtony Heart out of your Fleſh, and I will give you an Heart of Fleſh, and I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my Statutes, and ye ſhall keep my Judgments, and do them*; we cannot but ſuppoſe, that the Doctrine of *Grace*, aſſiſting Men to Goodneſs, was generally received among the Holy Men of old.

A GREAT deal, we acknowledge, of our Saviour's [n] Diſcourſe concerning the Spirit, which he was to pour on his Diſciples, [o] does certainly belong to that *extraordinary* Effuſion at *Pentecoſt*, and to thoſe wonderful Effects, which were thereupon to follow; yet, as he had formerly given this, as an Encouragement to all Men to pray, that [p] *his Heavenly Father would give this Holy Spirit to every one that aſked him*; ſo there are many Parts of that Diſcourſe, ſuch as relate to the Guidance, the Conviction, and the Comforts of that Spirit, which ſeem to belong to the conſtant Neceſſities of all Chriſtians. St *Peter*, on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, having converted a great Number to the Chriſtian Faith, ordered them to be baptiſed, and gave them Aſſurance, that *they ſhould receive the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt*; by which he means, the *ſtanding* and *ordinary* Influence of that Spirit; [q] *for the Promiſe*, ſays he, *is to you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off*, all ſucceeding Generations, at what Diſtance ſoever, *even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* What Language St *Paul* in his Epiſtles ſpeaks, 'tis needleſs to recite, when in every Page we find him declaring, that our Underſtandings are enlightened, our Wills conducted, our Affections diſciplined, and all by the Miniſtry of this Divine Principle; that [r] *of ourſelves we can do nothing*, but [s] *are led by the Spirit*; [t] *through him are ſtrengthened with Might in the inward Man*; [u] by him *are ſealed unto the Day of Redemption*; and, in one Text to compriſe the Senſe of many, * *are waſhed, and ſanctified, and juſtified, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and by the Spirit of our God.*

The Imperceptibleneſs of his working no Objection.

WE acknowledge indeed, that there is an *Obſcurity* ſitting upon the Face of this Diſpenſation of Grace. We cannot feel the *Impreſſions*, nor trace the Footſteps of its diſtinct Working in us. The Meaſures of our Proficiency in Goodneſs ſeem to depend entirely upon thoſe of our own *Diligence*; and God requires as much Diligence of us, as if he gave us no Grace at all. But then we are to conſider, that there is the ſame Obſcurity upon every Diſpenſation of God's *temporal* Providence, that there is upon this. † They, who will not allow, that God affords us his

[z] Matth. xxviii. 20. [a] John xiv. 16. [b] 1 John iii. 9. [c] 2 Tim. i. 6. [d] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [e] Gal. v. 22. [f] 1 Cor. vi. 19. [g] Eph. ii. 22. [h] Deut. xxx. 6. [i] Pſal. cxix. 18, 25, 32, 35, 36. [k] Ibid. li. 10. [l] Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. [m] Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. [n] John xiv. [o] *Burnet*, on the Articles. [p] Luke xi. 13. [q] Acts ii. 38, 39. [r] 2 Cor. iii. 5. [s] Rom. viii. 14. [t] Eph. iii. 16. [u] Eph. vi. 30. * 1 Cor. vi. 11. † *Young*, ibid.

Spirit to aſſiſt us in the Work of our Sanctification, do nevertheleſs allow, that he gives us all the *temporal* good Things we ſtand in need of: But how, in the mean while, does this appear, more than the other? For, when God intends to bleſs a Man with Riches, he does not open the Windows of Heaven, and pour them into his Treaſure; he does not enrich him with ſuch a diſtinguiſhing Providence, as that wherewith he watered *Gideon's Fleece*, when all the Earth round it was dry: But he endues ſuch a Man with Diligence and Frugality, or elſe adorns him with ſuch acceptable Qualifications, as may recommend him to the Opportunities of Advancement: And thus his Riſe to Fortune is made *purely* natural, and the *diſtinct* Operations of God in it do not at all appear. And, in like Manner, when God does, by the inward Aſſiſtance of his Grace, promote a Man to Goodneſs, he does not thereupon ſuddenly *change* the whole Frame of his Temper, *chain* up all the Movements of his natural Affections, and *infuſe* into him ſuch a Syſtem of virtuous Habits, as may make him good without any Pains or Application; but he works his ſpiritual Work by a *gradual* Proceſs; inſtilling into ſuch a Man, firſt a conſidering Mind, then a ſober Reſolution, and then a diligent Uſe of all ſuch moral Means, as conduce to the forming and perfecting of every particular Virtue. And now, while God, in theſe, and ſuch-like Inſtances, does work in an human and ordinary Way, never ſuperſeding the Power of Nature, but only moving and directing, and aſſiſting her, where ſhe is weak, his Grace is like a *little Spring*, covered with a *great Wheel*; though it does all, yet it is not commonly ſeen to do any Thing; and Man, when he pleaſes to be vain and ungrateful, may impute all to his own Power and Application; but with as good Reaſon may he aſcribe all the other Bleſſings of God's ordinary Providence to his own Skill and Acquiſition.

Nor our Ignorance of its Manner.

WE acknowledge again, that there is another *Obſcurity* upon the Face of his Diſpenſation. [x] We know not the *Philoſophy* of ſanctifying Grace, nor can we tell, when, or how long, or in what Manner, it operates upon our Minds. This is a Speculation, that our Saviour himſelf argues us ignorant of, as ignorant as we are of the *Iſſues* and *Retreats* of the *Wind*; and yet he thought fit to leave us ſo, whether the Knowledge of it were too excellent for us, or whether it were too uſeleſs: But this hinders not, but that we may be ſure there is ſuch a *Principle* in us, as ſure as we are, that there is ſuch a *Meteor* as the Wind, when we hear it blow, though we cannot tell *whence it cometh, or whither it goeth.* Our Saviour here takes it for granted, [y] that the Noiſe and Sound is Proof ſufficient that the Wind blows; the ſhaking and rattling of Boughs, tearing up Trees, and rocking of Houſes, all convince us, that the Air is in a violent Agitation; and yet we are not privy to the firſt Beginnings of it: We cannot tell what raiſed this mighty Ferment, nor where it ſet out, nor how far it intends, nor what becomes of it, when it ceaſes. And, in like Manner, [z] though we pretend not to declare, but thankfully to admire, by what *Ray* the Divine Spirit opens, and ſhines in upon our Underſtanding; by what *Motion* it inſpires good Thoughts, and ſuggeſts holy Reſolutions; by what welcome *Violence* it draws our Wills, ſteers our Appetites, and checks our Paſſions; by what *Diſcipline* it extinguiſhes ſinful Imaginations, and looſe Deſires; by what *Heat* it kindles Love, and Deſire, and Chearfulneſs of Endeavours; by what *Power* it awes the Devil, and foils Temptations, and removes Impediments, and ſtrengthens and exhilarates amidſt all Difficulties; and, finally, by what *patient Art* it turns, and moulds, and transforms our ſtubborn Nature into new Notions, new Savours, new Powers, new Acts, new Aims, new Joys, as if we were entirely new Creatures, and deſcended from another Race: Though we pretend not to comprehend, *I ſay*, the manifold Effects of this [a] *unſpeakable Gift*; though we readily acknowledge, that it is a Gift ſurpaſſing our Apprehenſion, as much as it does our Deſerts; yet the Man muſt be a Stranger to his own Compoſition, as well as the Power of God that made him, who pretends to call in Queſtion the Reality of the Thing, becauſe of its Abſtruſeneſs. Our own Soul, we know very well, moves, and yet we do not feel it by any Impulſe, that makes a ſenſible Impreſſion upon our outward Structure; nor can we ſay, how this Motion is conveyed from an *immaterial* to the fineſt *corporeal* Subſtance; how *that* commands ſo powerfully, and every Part of *this* obeys ſo readily. And ſurely then, he, who created Soul and Body both, and found out a Way to move Matter by that which is not Matter, cannot want a Method of making his Spirit correſpond

[x] *Young's* Sermons, Vol. II. [y] *Stanhope's* Sermons, on ſeveral Occaſions. [z] *Young*, ibid.
[a] 2 Cor. ix. 15.

correſpond with ours, the Spirit *creating* with that *created* by it, no, nor of carrying on this Correſpondence in ſo eaſy and familiar a Manner, that we ourſelves ſhall not be able to diſcern diſtinctly, *whence this Wind cometh, or whither it goeth.*

That the Holy Ghoſt operates upon our Minds.

IT muſt be allowed, that though the Devil cannot lay us under a Neceſſity to do wickedly, [b] yet he is frequently repreſented in Scripture, as *tempting* us to ſin; which he can only do *mediately*, by raiſing ſuch Ideas in our Brain, as may move, and diſpoſe us to engage in ſomething that is criminal. To this Purpoſe he is ſaid [c] *to work in the Children of Diſobedience*, and to [d] *lead them captive, εἰς τὸ ἐκείνου θέλημα, to do his Will.* Now the ſame Scripture that acquaints us with this, tells us likewiſe for our Comfort, that [e] *ſtronger is he that is in* us, *than he that is in the World*, i. e. that the good Spirit, which dwells in pious Men, is more powerful in them, than Satan is in the Wicked; and therefore, when Satan is repreſented as [f] *a lying Spirit in the Mouth of Ahab's Prophet*, as [g] *moving David to number the People*, as [h] *entering into Judas*, and [i] *filling the Heart of Ananias to lye to the Holy Ghoſt*; as theſe Expreſſions cannot be accounted for, without allowing him a Power to work upon the Spirits of thoſe Men; ſo, on the other Hand, when God is ſaid to [k] *create in us a clean Heart, and to renew a right Spirit within us*, &c. if he, by the *Spirit*, raiſes no good Motions and Ideas in us; if he vouchſafes us no inward Illuminations, by attending to which, we may *diſcern the wonderous Things of his Law*; we can hardly conceive what the Meaning of theſe Words can be: Nay, how can his Spirit be ſaid [l] *to help our Infirmities*, [m] *to purify our Hearts*, to be unto us a *Comforter*, a [n] *Spirit of Sanctification*, and [o] *of Power*, and of a *ſound Mind*; how can he, I ſay, be all, or any of theſe Things to us; how can he do all, or any of theſe Things for us, unleſs he works ſomething in us? For ſince *Conſolation* ariſes only from the *inward* Teſtimony of the Conſcience; ſince *Sanctification* conſiſts in the renewing of the inward Man, and hath the Soul for its Subject; and ſince *the Heart is purified* by inward Change and Temper, which render it averſe to Sin, and ſet the Deſires and Inclinations of the Soul againſt it, either the Spirit muſt operate upon the Mind of Man with ſome Kind of *Energy*, or theſe Effects would never follow.

In all Ages.

TO ſay that theſe Things and Expreſſions concern only the Times, in which the *extraordinary* Gifts and Operations of the Holy Spirit were vouchſafed, is to make future Ages, ſince the ceaſing of theſe Gifts, *deſpair* of being comforted, or ſanctified, or even enabled to purify their Heart; and, conſequently, to deſpair of being now the Sons of God, united to *Chriſt Jeſus*, or poſſeſſed of any of the Fruits of the Spirit. [p] In the *primitive* Times, the Spirit of God was needful [q] *to ſtrengthen Chriſt's Servants in the inward Man*, to comfort them under Tribulations, to ſupport them under fiery Trials, and to preſerve them, both from the Subtleties of Satan, and the Temptations of the World: In our Days, there is the ſame Need of his gracious Aſſiſtance for the like Purpoſes, therefore the like Reaſon to expect it; for, as God is *the ſame Yeſterday, To-day, and for ever*, there is in him, and ever will be, the ſame Benignity of Temper *now*, as there was in all former Ages, and the ſame good Will and Readineſs of Mind, to give his Holy Spirit to thoſe that aſk it, in order, 1. to illuminate their Underſtandings; 2. to ſanctify their Wills; 3. to excite them in the Ways of Godlineſs; 4. to comfort them under Difficulties; and 5. to enable them to pray with devout and fervent Affections; which are the *ordinary* Operations of this bleſſed Agent upon Mens Minds.

The ordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt,

1. ONE Office and Gift of the Holy Spirit is, to enlighten our Minds, that we may ſee the great Myſteries of Chriſtianity, and that we may underſtand our Duty aright. For being not only *ignorant* by Nature, and *inattentive* to Divine Truths, but *prepoſſeſſed* likewiſe with Paſſions and Prejudices, which obſtruct our Reception of them; we ſhould hardly attain a competent Senſe of what concerns our eternal State, without the Aſſiſtance of this Divine *Inſtructor*: And therefore we find the Apoſtle making this the Subſtance of his Prayer for the *Epheſians*, [r] *That the God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of Glory, might give unto them the Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation, in the Knowledge of him; and that, the Eyes of their Underſtanding being enlightened, they might know what is the Hope of his Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints.* For the Excellency of this heavenly Teacher is,——That he

Illumination.

[b] *Whitby*'s Appendix, on 2 Cor. vi. [c] Eph. ii. 2. [d] 2 Tim. ii. 26. [e] 1 John iv. 4. [f] 1 Kings xxii. 21. [g] 1 Chron. xxi. 1. [h] Luke xxii. 3. [i] Acts v. 3. [k] Pſal. li. 10. [l] Rom. viii. 26. [m] 1 Pet. i. 22. [n] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [o] 2 Tim. i. 7. [p] *Whitby*, ibid. [q] Eph. iii. 16. [r] Ibid. i. 17, 18.

he not only removes thoſe falſe Notions and Perſuaſions, which *preclude* Conviction, and thoſe unruly Paſſions and Affections, which *darken* the Mind, but *opens*, as it were, the Eye of the Soul, to let in the glorious Light of the Goſpel, and by it to diſcern the true Nature of divine Objects. When this is done, he makes choice of the beſt and moſt convincing Arguments, and enforces theſe with the ſtrongeſt and moſt prevailing Motives; *Motives*, that are fetched from the other World, as well as this, and have the *Terrors of the Lord*, as well as the *Hope of their Calling* in their Hand. By this Means he diſpoſes Mens Minds to conſider, and think a long Time of ſuch a Doctrine, ſuch a Reproof, ſuch an Exhortation. He urges the Thing upon them, and will not ſuffer them to *baniſh* it from their Thoughts; ſo that, at length, it comes to be firmly impreſſed in their Souls, and riveted in their Heart and Conſcience: and what gives this Divine Inſtructor an Advantage, above all human Eloquence and Methods of Perſuaſion, is, that as he is no Stranger to their ſecret Conditions, but better acquainted with the inmoſt Receſſes of their Hearts, than they themſelves are; ſo he can adapt his Convictions to them, and order and methodize them according to the particular Temper and Complexion of their Souls; and hence no doubt it is, that he hath brought, in all Ages, ſo many diſſolute Livers to a Sight of their Errors, and Remorſe for them. *The Sword of the Spirit* has been ſo happily directed by his Almighty Influence and Operation, that, to ſpeak in the Apoſtle's moſt expreſſive Language, [t] *it hath pierced, to the dividing aſunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints and Marrow*, and ſo *hath become a Diſcerner of the Thoughts, and Intents of the Heart*, rifling the Sinner's Conſcience, and ranſacking all the Privacies of his Soul, diſturbing his Security, and powerfully captivating him into the *Embraces* of the Truth.

Sanctification. 2. ANOTHER of theſe *ordinary* Operations of the Spirit is *Sanctification*, which conſiſts in purifying our Wills and Affections from thoſe wicked and inordinate Luſts, which ſet us *at Enmity with God*. For though our Religion furniſhes us with ſuch *Motives*, as are infinitely ſufficient to perſuade us; and though our Minds and Wills are not ſo depraved, but that we are ſtill capable to conſider, and free to follow thoſe Motives; yet ſo vain and deſultory are our Minds as to all ſerious and *ſpiritual* Thoughts, and ſo averſe and inflexible are our Wills as to the *ſpiritual* and difficult Duties, which theſe Motives perſuade; that, did not the Holy Ghoſt frequently impreſs them on our Minds, and urge and apply them to our Wills and Affections, we ſhould never, of ourſelves, ſo thoroughly conſider them, as to be conquered and perſuaded by them. 'Tis with very good Reaſon therefore, that the Holy Scriptures have aſcribed the Work of [u] *our Sanctification*, and * *Renovation of our Mind* to the Efficacy of this bleſſed Spirit; ſince he not only *mollifies* our Hearts, and *bends* our ſtubborn Wills to a Compliance with the Divine Precepts; but, by his ſecret Inſinuations, is continually exciting ſuch Deſires and Affections in us, as both exalt and purify our Nature. [x] He excites our *Love to God*, and to all that is truly worthy of that noble Paſſion, and ſtirs up our *Hatred* to every Thing, that is contrary to the Purity of his Nature. He enlarges our Hearts with *Joy and Gladneſs*, while we are ſerving our Maker, but filleth our Souls with *Grief* and *Bitterneſs*, whenever we tranſgreſs his Laws. He raiſes in us a *Fear* of offending the Divine Majeſty, but makes us fearleſs and undaunted in the Diſcharge of our Duty, or in ſuffering for *Righteouſneſs Sake*. He kindles in us an holy *Anger* and Indignation againſt Sin, eſpecially if it be of an *heinous* Nature; and, at the ſame Time, inſpires us with an *even* and *calm* Temper, which enables us to live peaceably with all Men; for [y] *the Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-Suffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Meekneſs*, &c.

Excitation. 3. ANOTHER ſtanding Office of the bleſſed Spirit, is to *quicken* and *aſſiſt* us in the Duties of Religion. For [z] though it may appear from the Lives both of *Heathens* and *Hypocrites*, that all Men may advance farther in a State of Virtue, by the bare Conduct of *civil Prudence*, and the Force of ſuch Reſolutions, as are merely *human*, than moſt Chriſtians do attain, amidſt the great, but neglected Advantages of Divine Grace; yet, when we conſider, that Religion is not ſatisfied with many good *Acts*, no, nor with many good *Habits*, but only with an *Integrity* of Goodneſs, and an equal Reſpect to all that is commanded: When we conſider, how hardly reconciled our Underſtandings are to the *principal* Duties of Chriſtianity, I mean the

[s] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [t] Heb. iv. 12. [u] 1 Cor. vi. 11. * Tit. iii. 5.
[x] *Edwards*, ibid. [y] Gal. v. 22. [z] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

the Duties of the *Croſs*, and, under the Notion of their being cruel, or needleſs, or indiſcreet, are apt to ſhift off their Obligation: When we conſider how difficult it is for our weak unſteady Souls to refine themſelves in ſuch a Pitch, as to love God above all thoſe *Idols*, after which we naturally *go aſtray from the Womb*; and yet, without ſuch a Love, we have no *Principle* in us, that can either ſupport, or recommend our Services: When we conſider all theſe Difficulties, the great Taſk before us, the great Indiſpoſitions within us, the Avocations, Seductions, Snares, and Violences, that are always ready to divert us from the Work; we muſt confeſs, that they are Difficulties, purely inſuperable by our own Strength, and muſt therefore require ſome *ſupernatural* Principle to aſſiſt us in the Performance of them. [a] And this, in ſome Meaſure, God may be ſaid to do, either by admoniſhing, and putting us in mind of our Duty, which, in the Crowd and Hurry of our worldly Occaſions, is apt to be forgotten; or by ſuggeſting to our Minds ſuch Conſiderations of Religion, as are apt to quicken our Endeavours, allure our Hope, alarm our Fear, affect our Ingenuity; and, by theſe ſecret *Springs*, provoke our Zeal, and encourage our Aſſiduity.

4. ANOTHER of the common Operations of God's Spirit upon Mens Minds, is to inſpire them with ſuch Joys and Refreſhments, as are neceſſary to ſupport and *comfort* them under ſuch Temptations and Difficulties, as would otherwiſe overwhelm them. For this was the Promiſe, which our Saviour, as we ſaid before, gave his Diſciples, [b] *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; for he dwelleth with you, and ſhall be in you:* And, accordingly, the Apoſtle makes his earneſt Prayer to God for his Chriſtian *Romans*, that [c] *he would fill them with all Joy and Peace in believing, that they might abound in Hope, through the Power of the Holy Ghoſt.* This is the *Spirit of Conſolation, which* made the firſt Chriſtians rejoice *in Afflictions, in Tribulations, in Diſtreſſes.* [d] This made the primitive *Saints* undergo the moſt exquiſite Torments with Patience and Magnanimity: This made the whole Army of *Martyrs* engage ſo valiantly, and come off with Conqueſt and Renown. For it is not conceivable, how ſo many tender Virgins, and delicate Matrons, and aged Biſhops, could have endured thoſe long and dolorous *Martyrdoms*, as they many Times did, without a Sigh or Groan; could have ſung in the *Flames*, and *ſmiled* [e] upon *Racks*, and *triumphed* upon *Wheels* and *Calaſtas*, inſenſible of Pain, and Strangers, as it were, to their own Bodies; had they not been ſupported by an inviſible Hand, and refreſhed with ſuch ſtrong Conſolations, as not only *abated*, but even quite *extinguiſhed*, what, at other Times, they muſt have felt. Now the ſame Comforts, tho' perhaps not in the ſame Degrees, other good Men have frequently experienced; ſometimes upon their *undertaking* an *heroick* Work of Piety or Virtue; ſometimes in their *Conflict* with great Trials and Temptations; ſometimes under the *Preſſure* of mighty Sorrows and Afflictions; and many Times (it is to be hoped) at the momentous Hour and Extremities of Death. On theſe, and ſuch-like Occaſions, there is no Doubt, but that, as this Divine *Comforter* has Acceſs to our Minds, he can give us ſuch tranſporting Ideas of the Favour of God, and the Beatitude of another Life, as ſhall even *raviſh* us from our Senſe, and ſo *ingroſs* our whole Attention, that we ſhall be altogether mindleſs of any Pain or Pleaſure of the Body. For if we ourſelves, by intenſe Meditation, can ſometimes abſtract our Minds from Senſe, and the Conſideration of any Thing without us, it can be no hard Matter to ſuppoſe, that the Holy Ghoſt, who has the full Controul of our Minds, can ſtamp a joyous Thought ſo vigorouſly upon them, as that it ſhall inſtantly tranſport us into an Exſtaſy: But this (as we ſaid before) is not to be expected, but in great and urgent Extremities; a ſtable Serenity and Satisfaction

Comforting.

[a] *Scott*'s Mediator. [b] John xiv. 16, 17. [c] Rom. xv. 13.

[d] Vid. *Cave*'s Primitive Chriſtianity, Part II. c. 7. That the firſt Chriſtians did bear all Kinds of Tortures with an invincible Courage and Conſtancy of Mind, is plain from the Teſtimony of their greateſt Enemies. *Porphyry*, in his Book, he wrote againſt Chriſtians, calls their Religion τὸ βάρβαρον τύφωμα, a Piece of *barbarous Boldneſs*: *Barbarous*, becauſe it differed from the Way of Worſhip among the *Greeks*, with whom every Thing was *barbarous*, that agreed not with their Inſtitutions; and *Boldneſs*, becauſe the Chriſtians ſhewed an undaunted Bravery in bearing Miſeries and Torments: And though the Heathen, in *M. Felix*, thinks it Folly and Madneſs, yet he cannot but acknowledge their fearleſs Conduct in this Reſpect: *Is it not*, ſays he, *a ſtrange Folly and incredible Boldneſs? They deſpiſe Torments, that are preſent, and yet fear thoſe, that are future and uncertain; and while they fear to die after Death, in the mean Time, they are not afraid to die; ſo ſillily do they flatter themſelves, and cajole their Fears by a deceitful Hope of ſome unknown Comforts, that ſhall ariſe to them.* And, in like Manner, *Arrian*, in his Collection of *Epictetus*'s Diſſertations, confeſſes it to be true of thoſe, whom, in the Stile of *Julian*, he calls *Galileans*, that they underwent Torments and Death with a mighty Courage. What the Rack, the Wheel, and the Calaſta were, as well as the other Methods of Torture, to which the firſt Chriſtians cheerfully ſubmitted, *Vid.* Cave, *ibid.* [e] *Scott*, ibid.

of Mind, Peace of Conſcience, and a continued Pleaſure in Well-doing, being Comforters ſufficient for the ordinary Caſes of Chriſtians.

Interceſſion. 5. ONE common *Operation* more of the Holy Spirit upon Mens Minds, is to *enable* them to offer up their Supplications to God, with Affections ſuitable to ſuch an Exerciſe. For, [f] as Prayer is the immediate Converſe of our Souls with God, wherein we are obliged to withdraw them from all ſenſible Objects into a divine and ſpiritual World, there is no one Duty whatever, to which our carnal Affections are more averſe. Nor are we only averſe to this Duty, but, as *Elihu* obſerves, [g] *we cannot order our Speech to God, by reaſon of Darkneſs*; or, as one better inſtructed tells us, [h] *we know not what to pray for, as we ought*, and therefore the greater is the Reaſon, that, in this Office more eſpecially, *the Spirit ſhould help our Infirmities, and make Interceſſion for us, according to the Will of God.* And to this Purpoſe [i] he not only ſanctifies our Wills and Affections, in order to make us both apprehend and deſire what we ought; but, having begotten in us a fit Diſpoſition of Mind, he, even in the Time of Prayer, [k] excites in us all thoſe Graces and good Affections (ſuch as Shame and Sorrow, in the *Confeſſion* of our Sins; a Senſe of our Need of Mercy, and Hope of obtaining it, in our *Supplication* for Pardon; Reſignation to God's Will, and Dependance on his Truth and Goodneſs, in our *Addreſſes* for temporal Mercies and Deliverances; *Hunger* and *Thirſt* after *Righteouſneſs*, in our *Petitions* for his Grace and Aſſiſtance; as well as Love and Gratitude, and Admiration of God, in our *Praiſes* and Thankſgivings for his Loving-kindneſs) wherein are compriſed *thoſe Groanings, which cannot be uttered*, and wherein the very Life and Spirit of all Prayer does conſiſt. [l] For it is a miſtaken Notion to think, that the mere Ability to conceive a Prayer, and to utter it with great Readineſs and Warmneſs, is *to pray by the Spirit*; which, in the Senſe we are to underſtand it *now*, (when all extraordinary Gifts and Endowments are ceaſed) is to offer up our Petitions and Addreſſes to God (let them be never ſo weak and imperfect) with an *awful Fear* and Dread of the Divine Majeſty, before whom we appear; with a *due Veneration* and Reverence of all his glorious Attributes and Perfections; with a *deep Apprehenſion* of our own Sinfulneſs and Guilt, and, conſequently, of our Unworthineſs to approach his Preſence; with a *lively Senſe* of our Wants and Neceſſities, which we come to have ſupplied; with an *hearty Deſire* of the Bleſſings and Favours we crave, and yet with an *entire Reſignation* of ourſelves to his Diſpoſal and heavenly Pleaſure. This is *to pray by the Spirit*, and as many as pray in this Manner, whether they uſe a *ſet Form* of Words, or their own immediate Conceptions, they have the *Spirit of Prayer and Supplication*, which will open their Mouths, and enlarge their Hearts, and inflame their Affections, and make them fervent and importunate, happy and ſucceſsful, in all their Addreſſes *to the Throne of Grace*.

The Neceſſity of theſe ordinary *Gifts and Graces.* THUS we have ſeen what the ſeveral *Gifts* and *Operations* of the Holy Spirit are, which every good Chriſtian may, in all Ages, depend on, to relieve the Infirmities of his Nature, and to ſtrengthen him in the Performance of his Duty. And how indiſpenſably neceſſary they are to theſe Purpoſes, tho' we have, in ſome Meaſure, obſerved already, we ſhall now proceed more fully to conſider. The Man, indeed, who is not convinced of this, muſt be a Stranger to himſelf, as well as the Word of God, and a careleſs Obſerver of what paſſes in his own Breaſt, as well as of what is recorded in the holy Scriptures. [m] For, when he gives himſelf Leiſure to take a Survey of his own *Faculties*, and obſerves how dark-ſighted he is in the Perception of Divine Truths; with what Reluctance he chuſes what his Underſtanding plainly repreſents as *Good*, and refuſes what his own Conſcience directly pronounces to be *Evil*, and how apt his Affections are to rebel againſt the Dictates of his Reaſon, and to hurry him another Way, than he knows he is directed to go; when he ſets before his Thoughts the great Variety of Duties commanded, and of Sins forbidden, and the Perverſeneſs of his own depraved Nature, which gives him an *Antipathy* to thoſe Duties, and a ſtrong *Inclination* to thoſe Sins; when he reflects on the Power, and Cunning, and Vigilance of his ſpiritual Enemies, always alluring him to Sin, and ſeducing him from the Practice of Virtue; when he weighs with himſelf the Neceſſity of practiſing every Duty, and forſaking every Kind of Wickedneſs, in order to ſecure a good Title to the Promiſes of the Goſpel; when he takes a View of thoſe particular *Obſtacles*, which hinder him in the Exerciſe of ſeveral Graces, and of the ſtrong

[f] *Scott*'s Mediator. [g] Job xxxvii. 19. [h] Rom. viii. 26, 27. [i] *Wilkins*, on the Gift of Prayer. [k] *Scott*, ibid. [l] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [m] *Smalridge*'s Sermons.

ſtrong *Temptations*, which prompt him to the Commiſſion of ſeveral Sins; when he conſiders the Aptneſs of human Nature to grow weary of performing the ſame Things, though in themſelves never ſo pleaſant, and its ſtill greater Diſpoſition to grow faint, when the Actions, continually to be repeated, are burthenſome to Fleſh and Blood; when he compares the Neceſſity of *Perſeverance*, with the Difficulty of it, the Prevalence of Things preſent and ſenſible, with the Weakneſs, wherewith ſuch as are abſent and ſpiritual, affect us: When, I ſay, a conſidering Man puts all theſe Things together, he cannot but be convinced, that [n] *narrow is the Path, which leads unto everlaſting Life*, and that, without *Illumination* from the Spirit of God, he ſhall not be able rightly to diſcern it; that *ſtrait is the Gate*, which opens an Entry into Heaven, and that he cannot, by the Force of his own natural Strength, without new Power given him from above, and the ſecret Influences of God's holy Spirit, adding Force and Energy to his own Endeavours, force his Way through it: Conſcious therefore of his Weakneſs, he will acknowledge the Neceſſity of God's Grace; and being ready to ſink through his own natural Weight, unleſs ſupported by foreign Help, he will cry out with St *Peter*, [o] *Lord ſave me, elſe I periſh.*

The Platonic *and* Pelagian *Notion confuted.*

[p] SOME Philoſophers of old flattered the Pride and Vanity of Men, by teaching them, that they wanted nothing to make them *virtuous*, but only a firm and ſteady *Reſolution* of being ſo; that this Reſolution they themſelves were *Maſters* of, and might exert at their own Pleaſure. They confidently boaſted, that their Happineſs was a Thing wholly in their own Power. "*Quid opus eſt votis?* Say they to their "Diſciples, what Need is there to pray? Make thyſelf a good Man. It is idle to "petition God for that, which thou canſt beſtow upon thyſelf." The *Pelagians* afterwards raiſed their *Hereſy* upon the Principles which theſe Philoſophers broached: They engaged in the Quarrel of depraved Nature againſt Divine Grace, and maintained, that all our evil Inclinations were capable of being ſubdued by our own unaſſiſted Reaſon. "How ugly is Envy? [q] How tormenting is Revenge? How brutal "is Drunkenneſs? How pernicious is Luſt? On the contrary, Meekneſs, Tempe-"rance, and Beneficence, how ſerene are they in their State? And how commodious "in their Effects? And needs any Man now, ſay they, any Infuſion of ſupernatural "Light to determine his Choice? All that he ſeems to need, is only this, that he "do not turn Fool, and deſert the Uſe of thoſe Faculties and Powers, which Nature "has given them." But the ſober Chriſtian hath learned from the Scriptures, to ſpeak and think more humbly of himſelf, and more becomingly and magnificently of God. We are therein taught, that [r] *we are not ſufficient of ourſelves to think*, much more to do, *any Thing as of ourſelves, but all our Sufficiency is of God*; that it is [s] *God, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good Pleaſure*; that [t] *it is by the Spirit we muſt mortify the Deeds of the Body, if we would live*; and that [u] *it is God, by his Spirit, who maketh us perfect in every good Work, to do his Will, working in us that which is well-pleaſing in his Sight*: From whence we may infer, that the moſt *prudent* Advertency, and the moſt *manly* Reſolution, the moſt *rational* Love, and the moſt *generous* Indignation, that ever opinionative *Moraliſt* could conceive, and fortify his Breaſt withal, can never be able to ſecure a Man againſt the ſubtle Approaches, or the violent Aſſaults of Sin; that it is the Divine Grace only, which is our *Caſtle* and *Defence* in this Reſpect; and whoever terminates his Hopes, even of ſerving and pleaſing God, upon the Confidence of any other Strength, than what is derived from above, his Hope is impious, and he muſt miſcarry.

The Manner and Meaſure of the Operation of Grace.

"BUT is the Spirit of God ſo entirely the Agent in this Affair, as to allow the "Man no Partnerſhip in it? Is there no Uſe to be made of his Reaſon, his Conſcience, "and other natural Faculties in the Work of his Sanctification? Is there no Light "in his Underſtanding, to direct his Will, no Power in his Will, to influence his "Actions, no Part of the Action, if it be good and Praiſe-worthy, imputable to "him? Then farewell all Liberty and Freedom of Choice; farewell all Senſe and "Conſciouſneſs of Guilt; all Obligation to Reward or Puniſhment. Upon this "Suppoſition, the Man is a mere *Machine*, on whom all the Promiſes and Threats, "all the Exhortations and Admonitions, all the Calls and Importunities, and Ex-"probrations of the Word of God are thrown away: For, till ſome ſudden and "irreſiſtible *Impulſe* of this ſanctifying Spirit come upon him, to controul his na-"tural

[n] Matth. vii. 14. [o] Ibid. viii. 25.—xiv. 30. [p] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [q] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol II.
[r] 2 Cor. iii. 5. [s] Phil. ii. 13. [t] Rom. viii. 13. [u] Heb. xiii. 21.

" tural Propenſions, and give a new Turn to his Thoughts and Deſires, he muſt " for ever deſpair of taking one Step towards his own Reformation." It is no eaſy Matter, indeed, to define preciſely, in what Manner, or to what Degree, the Spirit of God works upon the Minds of Men; both becauſe the Silence of Scripture is too great, and our Knowledge of the Nature and Intercourſe of Spirits too ſcanty, to afford us any clear and diſtinct Perception of it. But, notwithſtanding this *Obſcurity*, there are ſome Propoſitions, deducible from Scripture and Reaſon, which may poſſibly tend to illuſtrate this Argument, and, according to which, we may venture to aſſert,

Suitably to our rational Faculties.

1.* THAT the Manner, in which the holy Spirit acts upon the Minds of Men, is ſuitable to their rational Faculties, eſpecially their *Underſtanding* and *Will*. It is a received Maxim, I think, in all Morality, that what naturally makes the Underſtanding to *perceive*, is *Evidence* propoſed and attended to; and what makes the Will to *chuſe* or *refuſe*, is ſomething repreſented by the Underſtanding either as Good, or Evil. To ſay, that *Evidence* propoſed and conſidered, is not ſufficient to make the *Underſtanding* approve; or that the greateſt Good propoſed, or the greateſt Evil threatened, when equally believed, and reflected on, are not ſufficient to engage the *Will*, to chuſe the Good, and refuſe the Evil, is a Contradiction in itſelf, and therefore cannot be true.

PUT the Caſe then, [x] that we have ſuch an *Averſion* to the Truths propoſed to us in the Goſpel, as can only make us *indiſpoſed* to attend them, but cannot hinder our Conviction, when we do attend; that we have ſuch a *Renitency* to the Good, we are to chuſe, and ſuch a *Propenſity* to the Evil, we ſhould decline, as only *indiſpoſes* us to believe the one the chiefeſt Good, and the other the worſt of Evils; but yet what we do really believe to be our chiefeſt Good, will ſtill be *choſen*, and what we apprehend to be the worſt of Evils, while we continue under that Conviction, will ſtill be *refuſed* by us: Suppoſing this, I ſay, all that ſeems requiſite to theſe Ends, is, that the holy Spirit ſhould *ſo illuminate* our Underſtandings, that we, attending to, and conſidering what lies before us, ſhould apprehend, and be convinced of our Duty; and that he ſhould *ſo propound* the Bleſſings and Miſeries of the Goſpel, that upon due Conſideration we may be convinced, that the former are the chiefeſt Good, the latter the worſt of Evils, and thereupon be excited to chuſe the one, and refuſe the other. But now *to conſider*, in order to Approbation and Conviction; *to chuſe*, in order to our Good, and *to refuſe*, that we may avoid Miſery, muſt be the Action, *not* of God, *but* of Man; though the *Light*, which does convince, and the *Motives*, which do engage him thus to chuſe, and to refuſe, are certainly from God. All therefore that can be expected from God to do in this Caſe, without offering Violence to our rational Faculties, is to propoſe ſuch *Motives*, as are ſufficient to engage our *Choice*, and to infuſe ſuch *Light* into our Minds, as may be ſufficient to work our *Conviction*.

SINCE then the many Motives, contained in the Scriptures, to engage fallen Man to return from the Evil of his Ways, were certainly deſigned for that End; either they muſt be ſufficient to engage him ſo to do, or elſe the higheſt *Motives*, that can be offered, muſt be inſufficient, becauſe all other Motives, to deter us from an Action, as pernicious to us, are *nothing*, in Compariſon of, *Depart from me, ye wicked, into everlaſting Fire*; all the Evils, we can ſuffer from the Hands of Men, are Trifles, in Reſpect of his Inflictions, who *can deſtroy both Body and Soul in Hell-Fire*. And, in like Manner, ſince the Promiſes of eternal Happineſs, as the Reward of our Obedience, were certainly deſigned to make us obedient to the Will of God, either they muſt be ſufficient to that End, or no Inducements can be ſufficient; becauſe this one Motive of *Heaven* eminently contains in it all others, and *the Enjoyment of God, and everlaſting Happineſs*, when ſeriouſly conſidered, cannot but have a more *conſtraining* Power in it, to the Performance of our Duty, than all the united Strength of worldly Greatneſs, and Honours, and Pleaſures, can offer us.

BUT then, becauſe the Bleſſings and Miſeries of another World are of an *inviſible* Nature, and only to be diſcerned by the *Eye of Faith*; becauſe they are *moral* and ſpiritual Motives, which are only preſent to our Minds by actual Conſideration and Reflection; and becauſe they are not always preſent, when Temptations *invite*, and ſenſual Objects, which we ſo much affect, do cloſely *beſet* us; it ſeems therefore neceſſary, that the Divine Spirit ſhould aſſiſt us on theſe Occaſions; either, 1. by *repreſenting*

* See *Clagget* againſt *Owen*, Vol. I. and *Whitby*, of Grace.

x *Whitby*, ibid.

repreſenting the divine Truths, which the holy Scriptures contain, and preſs upon us more clearly to our Underſtandings; that we may have a fuller Evidence, ſtronger Conviction, and Aſſurance of them: Or, 2. By *bringing* theſe Truths to our Remembrance; that ſo they may be preſent with us, when it is requiſite, to enable us to reſiſt Temptations, and to encourage us to the Performance of our Duty.

THUS, one Way or t'other, the Holy Spirit's working upon our Minds, ſuppoſing him to work according to their *Natures*, muſt be, by inſpiring and impreſſing them with ſuch Thoughts and Ideas, as are moſt apt to engage us to believe and obey the Goſpel; which Ideas, as they are *Inducements* to the Performance of our Duty, which we are not a little averſe to, may be properly called *exciting Grace*; as they are *Reſtraints* to our Commiſſion of Sin, which we are but too ſtrongly inclined to, may as fitly be ſtiled *reſtraining Grace*; as they are given, before we deſire them, and are often raiſed up in us, when we think nothing of them, they fall under the Notion of *preventing Grace*; as they *help* us in the Conſideration of our Duty, and forward our Endeavours and Inclinations to perform it, they may be reputed *aſſiſting Grace*; and, laſtly, as they continue to do this more and more, after the firſt Converſion from Sin, and ſome prevailing Diſpoſitions to ſerve God with Sincerity of Heart, they may likewiſe be called the *ſubſequent Grace of God*. *How Thoughts infuſed by the Spirit may be termed different Kinds of* Grace.

2. SINCE it is evident, from the Holy Scriptures, [y] that God requires and expects, that we ſhould put forth our own Endeavours after all thoſe Things, which the Spirit is given to work in us; it follows, that ſuch is the Nature of his Operations, that, without our own Care and Aſſiduity, they will not avail us. The Reaſon is, becauſe it were high Preſumption to ſay, that, altho' God requires us to be *active* and diligent, it may be never the worſe for us, tho' we be ſupine and lazy; which might well enough be ſaid, upon Suppoſition, that the Graces of the Spirit might be attained without any Application of our own. When therefore God promiſes his People, [z] *A new Heart and a new Spirit will I put within you, and cauſe you to walk in my Statutes*, and yet, by the very ſame Prophet, requires them, [a] *to caſt away from them all their Tranſgreſſions, and to make themſelves a new Heart, and a new Spirit; for why will you die, O Houſe of Iſrael?* From hence it is plain, that, notwithſtanding God's Promiſe of giving them *a new Heart*, it was neceſſary for them to renew their own *Hearts*; and what can this ſignify, but that the Promiſe is not *abſolute*, but ſuppoſes the Concurrence of their own Endeavours, and, conſequently, was given to *encourage* them, but not to make them *negligent?* In like Manner, when the Apoſtle tells us, that [b] *God will work in us both to will and to do*, he nevertheleſs requires us, *to work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling*; this he certainly would not do, unleſs our own Induſtry were neceſſary to the Attainment of thoſe Graces which he is ſaid to be the Author of. In ſhort, ſince the Holy Spirit is not only promiſed to produce in us all needful Qualifications for eternal Life, but we are alſo commanded, exhorted, intreated, and that with the moſt ſerious and affectionate Importunity, to repent and be converted, and to abide and perſevere in Holineſs; and all this, with *Promiſes* of an eternal Reward, if we do, and with *Threatenings* of everlaſting Puniſhment, if we do not; it follows, that the Spirit is not promiſed to work his Graces in our Hearts in ſuch a Manner, as to make our own Endeavours unneceſſary to the Attainment of them: For this were to make all the Commandments and Exhortations of God's Word a ſolemn Piece of *Pageantry*, and, in Effect, to ſay, that God hath required us, under the greateſt *Penalties*, and with the moſt alluring *Promiſes*, to obtain thoſe Qualifications, which will, nevertheleſs, be thruſt upon us, though we do nothing to obtain them. *With our own Endeavours.*

3. SINCE, by the Experience we have of Human Nature, we ſee, that *Cuſtoms* are not eaſily and preſently put off, and that Matters of Difficulty cannot be made *familiar* to us, but by long Uſe and Practice; that they particularly, who are *accuſtomed to do Evil*, cannot, on a ſudden, *learn to do well*; that the Difficulties of a religious Life preſs moſt upon us, when we firſt enter upon it, and wear away inſenſibly by Continuance in Well-doing; as, on the contrary, that Virtue is improved by Exerciſe, and [d] *the Path of the Juſt*, as the Wiſe Man ſpeaks, *is as the ſhining Light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect Day:* Since Experience, I ſay, teaches us theſe Truths, we muſt needs acknowledge, that the Holy Spirit does not produce the Effects of his Grace, in the Minds of Men, *all at once*, but accommodates *Gradually.*

[y] *Clagget* againſt *Owen*, Vol. I. [z] Ezek. xxxvi. 26. [a] Chap. xviii. 31. [b] Phil. ii. 12, 13. [d] Prov. iv. 18.

commodates his Operations to the State, in which they are at preſent, and prompts them in that Amendment, which the Meaſure of their Capacity will admit.

WHEN therefore the Holy Scripture requires us, *to grow in Grace,* [e] *to be ſtrong in Grace,* [f] *to go on to Perfection,* and *to abound in the Work of the Lord*; when it acquaints us, that there are [g] *Babes in Chriſt,* as well *as perfect Men*; ſuch as require *the ſincere Milk of the Word,* that *they may grow thereby,* as well as ſuch, [h] *as have arrived to the Meaſure of the Stature of the Fulneſs of Chriſt*; when our Bleſſed Saviour compares the Attainment of a State of Grace, to the growing [i] *of Seed ſown in the Ground,* [k] *which ſprings up, and ripens gradually*; and to a [l] *Piece of Leaven,* which diffuſes itſelf through the whole Maſs of Bread, by a ſecret and imperceptible working; we can hardly ſuppoſe, that a Riſe to any eminent Degree of Goodneſs, from a contrary Habit, can be *inſtantaneous.* For though we pretend not to limit the *Poſſibilities* of God's acting, yet, in the ordinary Courſe of Things, [m] the Sinner muſt firſt learn to be afraid of God's angry Juſtice, muſt be heartily ſorry for his Sins, muſt attentively conſider the Threats and Promiſes of the Goſpel, muſt avoid the Occaſions of Sin, muſt fortify himſelf with ſtrong Reſolutions to forſake his wicked Courſes, and make many earneſt Prayers to God, before he can ſubdue his Luſts, overcome the World, and yield a ſincere Obedience to all God's Commandments: And, by Conſequence, he muſt not expect, that the Operations of the Holy Spirit will make him a good Man, any other Way, than by ſlow Degrees and Advances.

Imperceptibly.

4. ONCE more, ſince our Bleſſed Lord has compared the Spirit to the *Wind,* which none of us can give any tolerable Account of; this, in ſome Meaſure, may acquaint us, that its Operations, even when they abide upon us, are, many Times, remote from our Underſtanding; that they move us without our having any diſtinct Perception of them, or being able to difference them from our natural Reaſoning and Cogitations; and, to convince him of this, let any one conſider, by what Steps he came off from a wicked Life, and proceeded in a good one. For, did not his Change firſt begin with a Conviction of Sin, and the Miſchief of it, and, conſequent hereupon, an Hatred and Deteſtation, grounded upon ſuch Arguments as theſe; that it is repugnant to Reaſon, diſpleaſing to God, deſtructive to both Soul and Body, in making them obnoxious to Divine Wrath and Vengeance, and that Eternity of Miſery, which the preſent fleeting Pleaſures of Wickedneſs are but a ſorry Exchange for? Again, will not his Advance in Virtue be found to owe itſelf to the Contemplation of the Beauty, the Reaſonableneſs, the Advantages of Holineſs, the alluring Rewards it propoſes, and the Happineſs it ſecures, both in this Life and in the next? How then did theſe Arguments prevail at laſt? Was it not by frequent Meditation, by inſinuating themſelves into the Mind by Degrees, by the common Methods of reading, or hearing, and weighing God's Word, by vanquiſhing the Prejudices of our corrupt Hearts, by diſcuſſing and diſplaying the Evidence of Truth, by exciting good Deſires, ſtrengthening thoſe Deſires with holy Reſolutions, and making good theſe Reſolutions by diligent Endeavours, and ſtedfaſt Perſeverance? But ſtill the Finger of God is in all this. It is *He,* that brings theſe Conſiderations into our Hearts at firſt; *He,* that faſtens them upon us when they are there; *He,* that adds new Life and Vigour to our Deſires and Intentions, and gives Efficacy and Succeſs to our (otherwiſe) weak Endeavours. He convinces our Judgments, kindles good Inclinations, perſuades, allures, threatens, deters, terrifies, reproaches, comforts, commands, and performs all other Offices neceſſary to Piety; and all this by Infuſions ſo gentle, ſo ſweet, ſo ſecret, ſo tender, as to fall in with our own Thoughts and Meditations; inſomuch, that if the Scripture had not declared, that all the Good we do, proceeds from God, we could not diſtinguiſh, many Times, between the Motions of this Bleſſed Spirit, and thoſe of our own.

IF then the Spirit of God acts upon our Minds in a Manner ſuitable to our rational Faculties, and in ſo eaſy and familiar a Way, as to be taken oftentimes for the Suggeſtions of our own Breaſts; [n] if it mingles itſelf with our Thoughts, with the inward Dictates and Reaſonings of our Minds; then every Admonition from the Pulpit, every *Advice* from a Friend, every good *Book* we read, every pious *Example* we ſee, every *Motion* and Intention to do well, every Conviction and Check of

[e] 2 Tim. ii. 1. [f] Heb. vi. 1. [g] 1 Pet. ii. 2. [h] Eph. iv. 13. [i] Mark iv. 27.
[k] Matth. xiii. 33. [l] *Clagget* againſt *Owen,* Vol. I. [m] *Stanhope*'s Sermons on ſeveral Occaſions.
[n] *Stanhope,* ibid.

of our own Conſcience, is a Call and Impulſe from above; and, as oft as any Man refuſes to comply with theſe, ſo oft he *reſiſts*, and *grieves*, and *quenches* this Spirit within himſelf. And, in like Manner, if the Spirit of God be communicated in ſuch a *Meaſure*, as is proportioned to every Man's preſent Exigence, and in ſuch a *Manner*, as requires every Man's Endeavours and Co-operation, to make it effectual; then are its Impreſſions upon our Minds neither ſo *ſudden* and *inſtantaneous*, nor yet ſo *violent* and *irreſiſtible*, as ſome may imagine. The Beginning of our Converſion, indeed, may be ſaid to be *inſtantaneous*, there being always a particular Point of Time, wherein the firſt Excitations of Grace come upon us. [o] But all the while that we are tending to a Reformation, and ſtruggling with our Lufts, and confirming our Reſolutions of Well-doing, be it longer or ſhorter, according to the Power of evil Habits, and the different Degrees of divine Aſſiſtance, ſo long may the Work be ſaid to be going on *leiſurely*, and this uſually is a conſiderable Space from its firſt Beginning, to its coming to a ſettled State. During this Time [p] the Spirit acts only as an *Aſſiſtant* to our Infirmities, and not as an *Undertaker* of the Work, and a Bearer of the whole Burthen. Our own Concurrence and Endeavours are required; nor can they derogate from his Glory, ſo long as, with the great Apoſtle St *Paul*, we aſcribe all the Good we do to him, and even account our own Endeavours the Effects of his aſſiſting us, [q] *by the Grace of God I am what I am, and his Grace, which was beſtowed on me, was not in vain; for I laboured more abundantly——yet not I, but the Grace of God, which was with me.*

Not inſtantaneous,

ST *PAUL*, indeed, is the greateſt Inſtance of a *powerful* Converſion, that we meet with in Scripture. He was confounded by [r] *a Light ſhining round about him, brighter than the Sun*, by which he was *ſtruck down to the Earth*, and heard a dreadful Voice from Heaven, ſaying, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* Now in all this he was purely *paſſive*, and the Action done upon him was *phyſical* and *irreſiſtible*. But then when he enquires of the Holy *Jeſus, Lord, what wouldſt thou have me to do?* When he prays earneſtly for the Forgiveneſs of his Sin; when he ſubmits to that Baptiſm, which *Chriſt* appointed for that End, and for the *Dedication* of himſelf to his Service; when, being told what grievous Things he was to ſuffer for the Name of *Jeſus*, he, notwithſtanding, *was not diſobedient to the heavenly Viſion*, but went and preached up that Faith, which he had formerly oppoſed; [s] theſe are Actions of *Deliberation* and free Choice, and do therefore evince, that a ſubſequent Conſent and Concurrence, even in a *miraculous* Converſion, was neceſſary to make it effectual to the Purpoſe of Salvation.

nor irreſiſtible,

BE it then allowed, that the firſt Irradiations of *preventing Grace* come from God, as *ſpontaneouſly*, and enter the Soul of Man, as *irreſiſtibly*, as the heavenly *Viſion* did St *Paul*; yet, upon the Suppoſition, that all the future Proceſs of our Converſion is *compulſory*, our Virtue would be the Effect of *Neceſſity*, not of *Choice*, and conſequently loſe all its Value and Reward; and the Reformation of thoſe, upon whom the Spirit did not work *irreſiſtibly*, would be impoſſible, which is the utmoſt that can be ſaid to excuſe Impenitence. Upon this Suppoſition, I ſay, God's repreſenting it as a Matter of Admiration and Aſtoniſhment, that the Wicked were not reclaimed, and complaining of it, in the Stile of the Prophet, [t] *Hear, O Heavens, and give Ear, O Earth; for I have nouriſhed and brought up Children, and they have rebelled againſt me. The Ox knows his Owner, and the Aſs his Maſter's Crib, but* Iſrael *doth not know me, my People doth not conſider*, is not only highly impertinent and ridiculous, but injurious to his Divine Truth and Veracity, and a Kind of cruel Inſult upon the Infirmities of Human Nature. Some Reſolution therefore muſt be found out, both to *clear* this *Doctrine* from any Reflections upon the Divine *Attributes*, and, at the ſame Time, to make it conſiſtent with the *Freedom* of our own Wills, which can only be done, by reſerving to a Man a partial Agency, by ſuppoſing that the Spirit is the *principal*, and ourſelves *acceſſary* Agents in the Work of our Sanctification.

NOW [u] the Freedom of a rational Nature does not, as ſome may imagine, conſiſt in a Liberty to do, or not to do any Thing, according to Pleaſure, (for as God is an abſolutely free Agent, yet he cannot ſin; and as Angels and Devils are both moral Agents, yet the one cannot, and the other cannot but ſin) but it conſiſts rather in a Capacity to *think*, and in a Liberty to *act* and *chuſe* upon ſuch thinking: So that the clearer the Thought and Conception is, and the more conſtantly his

but conſiſtently with the Freedom of our Wills.

[o] *Newcombe*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [p] *Stanhope*'s Sermons on ſeveral Occaſions. [q] 1 Cor. xv. 10. [r] Acts xxvi. 13. [s] *Whitby*'s Appendix to 2 *Cor.* vi. [t] Iſai. i. 2, 3. [u] *Burnet*, on the Articles.

his Choice is determined by it, the more a Man riſes to the higheſt Acts and Exerciſe of his Liberty. Whether the Will follows the Underſtanding, and chuſes always according to ſome preſent Idea in the Mind, is not ſo entirely to our Purpoſe to enquire: This we know by our own Experience, that we have a Liberty of turning our Minds to ſome Ideas, and of turning them away from others; that we can think longer or ſhorter, more exactly and ſteadily, or more ſlightly and ſuperficially, on the Things that come into our Minds, as we pleaſe; and, in this natural Freedom of directing or diverting our Thoughts, a great deal of our Liberty does conſiſt. When therefore the Spirit of God, which has immediate Acceſs to our Minds at all Times, either upon our hearing or reading the Word, or obſerving the Tendency of ſome *providential* Event, raiſes ſuch Ideas in our Minds, as ſeem to call for our Attention; we have it in our Power, either to entertain or diſmiſs them, either to cheriſh and improve them by Meditation, or to turn to other Objects, and ſo forget them. When the Spirit intermixes itſelf with our Conſciences, and, in order to blend and incline our Wills, infuſes its kind Perſuaſions into our Minds; when we *hear* a ſilent Voice within; * *as we turn to the Right-hand, or to the Left*; THIS IS THE WAY, WALK YE IN IT; it is Matter of our Option, whether we will regard or baffle theſe Admonitions, whether we will ſettle them in our Minds, by ſerious Conſideration, or ſtifle them as they ariſe, and call up, in their room, other Reflections and Amuſements. And ſo again, when the Spirit enters into the Soul in order to reprove us, and, after the Commiſſion of any Sin, lays before us (as it were in a lively Deſcription) all the Aggravations of our Guilt; we may fix, or we may turn aſide the Eyes of our Minds from beholding it; we may enter into good Reſolutions, upon the Conviction it brings, or [x] *with the adulterous Woman* in *Solomon*, we may *wipe our Mouths, and ſay, I have committed no Wickedneſs*. This is a Liberty that God himſelf knows he has put in our *Conſtitution*; and, with Regard to this, all his Commands and Exhortations, his Calls and Invitations, his Threatenings and Exprobrations, are both ſignificant and ſincere. Now, if we take Notice of theſe Ideas; if we liſten to theſe Perſuaſions; if we comply with theſe Reproofs, when at any Time they ariſe in our Breaſts, we encourage the Holy Spirit to come again with freſh and more Supplies, and give Strength and Vigour to its Operations: But if we give theſe Things another Turn, as certainly we may if we pleaſe, we put a Damp upon its Endeavours for our Good, and make the Returns of it, every Time, more ſlow and languid: [y] *For unto every one that hath*, i. e. makes Improvement of what he hath, *ſhall be given, and he ſhall have Abundance; but from him that hath not*, or makes no Uſe of what he hath, *ſhall be taken away, even that which he hath.*

How to know whether we have the Spirit, and how to improve it.

THUS we have conſidered the Exiſtence and Reality, the Nature and Neceſſity of a *Divine Principle* working in the Minds of Men, in order to their Sanctification; and, as far as we can gather, have endeavoured to explain in what Manner, and to what Degree, it operates upon us: And now the final Queſtions are, how we ſhall know whether we have ſuch a Principle abiding in us; if we have not, how we may acquire it; or, if we have, by what Means we may preſerve and improve it? And to this we are the rather incited, becauſe the Apoſtle aſſures us, that *if any have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*. Now, the only Way for any Man to know whether he is under the Care and Influence of the Spirit of Grace, is to judge by [z] his having his Underſtanding enlightened with divine Knowledge; by the right Diſpoſition of his Will and Affections; by the Change which is wrought in his Life and Manners; and by thoſe other Marks and Evidences, which we have mentioned before. [a] When therefore, in reading the holy Scriptures, he finds the *Veil of Darkneſs* removed from before his Underſtanding, thoſe Clouds of Ignorance, that had overcaſt his Mind, diſperſed, and the Doubts, under which he had, for ſome Time, laboured, ſuddenly cleared up; when ſuch pious Thoughts, as were wont to paſs *tranſiently*, are, for a conſiderable Time, dwelt upon, ſo as to leave behind them deep and laſting Impreſſions; when theſe are ſuggeſted to him without his ſeeking, and are urged and impreſſed upon him ſo *importunately*, that he cannot chuſe but liſten to them; when, from a calm and ſerious Conſideration of the State of his own Soul, the Odiouſneſs and Danger of Sin, and the Beauty and Neceſſity of Holineſs, he is led to make good and pious Reſolutions of ſerving God with greater Purity for the Time to come; when he finds

* Iſai. xxx. 21. [x] Prov. xxx. 20. [y] Matth. xxv. 29. [z] *Edwards's* Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [a] *Smalridge's* Sermons.

finds a ſudden *Impulſe* upon his Spirits, rouſing him up to the Performance of ſome important Duty, which he had before neglected, or an unexpected *Check*, ſtopping him in the Midſt of his Courſe, when he is ruſhing on blindly and impetuouſly to the Commiſſion of ſome heinous Sin; when in his *Devotions* he finds his Attention fixed, his Affection inflamed, and his Heart melted within him; when, whilſt the Voice of God's Miniſter, preaching the ſaving Truths of the Goſpel, ſounds in his Ears, he is ſenſible of an inward Voice, ſpeaking with greater Force and Efficacy to his Soul, to his Underſtanding, and to his Heart; when under the Preſſure of any grievous Affliction, he feels unſpeakable Comfort and Conſolation; when, as [b] the Prophet expreſſes it, *Light ariſes up in the Midſt of Darkneſs*, when *Beauty is given* unto *him for Aſhes*, *the Oil of Joy for Mourning*, and *the Garment of Praiſe for the Spirit of Heavineſs*; and all this while his Deſign and Intention is to ſerve God in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs all the Days of his Life: From theſe and the like Indications he may diſcover, that the Spirit of God abideth in him; which if he does, [c] the only Way to retain this *Sacred Gueſt* is, to treat him kindly, and to ſhew himſelf exceeding thankful, that he will be pleaſed to ſtay with him, and confer ſo great a Bleſſing and Dignation on him. And to this Purpoſe he muſt be careful to expel all unclean and impure Thoughts, to cleanſe his Heart from the Love of Sin, to *waſh his Hands in Innocence*, and to preſerve his whole Life and Converſation clear from all wilful Pollution. And not only ſo, but he muſt be very cautious in his Converſe with the World, leſt that engroſſes his Thoughts and Affections, leſt [d] *the Cares of Life and the Deceitfulneſs of Riches choak the Seed, that is ſown in our Hearts, and it become unfruitful:* And, becauſe God will have the Grace, which he hath given, maintained and approved by the Means of his own Appointment, his reading and hearing his Word, receiving the Sacramental Supper, and addreſſing his Prayers and Supplications conſtantly to the Throne of Mercy, will be no leſs neceſſary to *ſtir up the Gift*, and confirm the Divine Principle *that is in us*.

How to acquire it.

And, in like Manner, if it be our ſad Fortune to be deſtitute of this heavenly Gift, our Care and Endeavour muſt be, not to reſiſt its Motions and Suggeſtions, when at any Time they come *caſually* upon us, but to receive them with a willing Mind, and to liſten to them with all Readineſs and Attention; to prepare and cleanſe our Hearts by ſincere *Contrition*, and Remorſe for our Sins, by bewailing the Follies and Vanities of our paſt Life, and by reſolving never to commit the like again. *Grace*, we muſt own, is the chief of God's Benefits, and that which infinitely tranſcends all the other Bleſſings we enjoy: And [e] therefore we may obſerve, that however he thinks fit to beſtow *temporal* good Things *upon the Evil and Unthankful*, upon thoſe, that ſeek them not, and upon thoſe, that do acknowledge them ſent from him; yet *ſanctifying Grace* he accounts a *Pearl* of greater *Price*, than to be caſt away upon the *Regardleſs*. 'Tis a certain Benefit, and a permanent Good; and therefore he beſtows it upon another Sort of Condition; *he gives it only to them that aſk*, *i. e.* to them, who wiſely eſtimate, and worthily value, and earneſtly deſire, this heavenly Gift. Would we then obtain of God a Bleſſing, as neceſſary to the Suſtenance of our *ſpiritual* Life, as our daily Bread is to that of the Body; let us every Day reſort unto him for it, in earneſt, fervent, ſtrong, and importunate Prayer. And indeed this is the only Bleſſing, that can juſtify a Prayer thus *circumſtantiated:* To deſire any other Gift with ſuch a Meaſure of Importunity, would be immoderate, would be ſinful; it is Grace only, that we can deſire *inſtantly*, that we can deſire *impatiently*, and yet not offend: [f] *This is the Kingdom of God that ſuffers Violence, and the Violent take it by Force.* Since therefore, in our daily Prayers, we acknowledge, that *through the Weakneſs of our moral Nature we can do no good Thing* without it, that *all holy Deſires*, *all good Counſels*, *and all juſt Works do proceed* from it; there is this Neceſſity for our conſtant Application to God for its Aid and Aſſiſtance, *that*, *in keeping his Commandments*, *we may pleaſe him both in Will and Deed.*

[b] Iſa. lxi. 3. [c] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [d] Matth. xiii. 22. [e] *Young*'s Sermons. [f] Matth. xi. 12.

CHAP. VII.

Of the STATE *of the Soul after Death, and* RESURRECTION *of the Body.*

In what Senſe the Soul is immortal.

THAT the Soul of Man is a *ſpiritual* and *immaterial* Subſtance, created by God with ſuch Powers, and Qualities, and Operations, as can never ariſe from *Matter*, however moved or organized, is what we had Occaſion, in ſome Meaſure, to prove elſewhere; and, (according to our Promiſe then) ſhall now proceed to enquire farther into its *diſtinct* Nature and *Immortality*: Only we would premiſe, that when we ſay *our Souls are immortal*, [a] we do not mean, that they are by Nature ſuch, as can never periſh or be deſtroyed: For, as God alone has a *neceſſary* Exiſtence, and what is *eſſential* to his very Being, he alone is abſolutely and independently, and of himſelf immortal. All other Beings, whether Bodies or Spirits, have but a *borrowed* Exiſtence, and may loſe it with the ſame Facility, that they had it: The ſame Power of God, which produced them out of nothing, may thither remand them again, when he pleaſes. In this Reſpect our Souls have no more Privileges than our Bodies, nor the whole *Univerſe*, than one ſingle *Atom*. And therefore, when we aſcribe *Immortality* to the Soul, we always include the Will and good Pleaſure of God, in thus making, and thus preſerving it: And with this Reſtriction our Meaning is, [b] "That, when the Body dies, "and falls to the Ground, this *Principle*, which we call the Soul, by God's Order "and Appointment, ſtill remains, and lives ſeparate from it; that it ſtill retains the "Power of underſtanding, of thinking, of reaſoning, of remembering, and is capa-"ble either of Happineſs or Miſery, in its Abſence from the Body." So that in treating of this Argument we ſhall ſhew,

I. THAT the Soul of Man does not die, but, when ſeparated from the Body, has a Place of *Abode* provided by God, till the Reſurrection of its Body again.

II. THAT in this State it does not *ſleep*, and become *inſenſible*, till the Day of the Reſurrection, but is immediately admitted into a happy or miſerable Condition, according as the Man has behaved in his paſt Life. And,

III. THAT its Happineſs or Miſery, in this *intermediate* State, is *partial* only, and not ſo compleat, as it will be after the Re-union of the Soul and Body.

Its Immortality proved.

I. THE Soul of Man, in this preſent State indeed, is very nearly united to the Body, [c] by whoſe Means it communicates with the *material* and ſenſible World: It partakes of its Pleaſures and Pains, and acquires moſt of its Knowledge by the *Ideas* which the Senſes impart to it: But that, in its own Nature, it is ſpiritual, active, and intelligent, and ſo independent on Fleſh and Blood; that, by the Grace and Donation of God, it has the Power of *Immortality* in it, and ſo cannot undergo the Fate of the Body, when it returns *to the Duſt*, from whence it originally came; both *true Philoſophy*, and *Divine Revelation*, the Voice of human Reaſon, and the Teſtimony of the Sacred Scriptures, conſpire to aſſure us. 'Tis certain, however, that he, who made us, beſt knows our Frame, of what Parts we are compoſed, and what Duration he hath aſſigned to each Part; and therefore, when we are diſputing of the Nature and Condition of the Soul of Man, and its Diſtinction from the Body, if we can find, that God, the Creator of both, has engaged in the Controverſy, we ought, with all Submiſſion and Humility, to ſearch after, and ſubſcribe to his infallible *Determination*. To begin then with the Evidence we have from Scripture.

THE

[a] *Martin*, on Natural Religion. [b] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons. [c] *Whiſton*'s Sermons.

From Scripture and Antiquity.

THE Book of *Eccleſiaſtes*, in many Parts of it, is a Kind of *Dramatic* Compoſition, [e] wherein *Solomon* introduces the *Epicurean*, if we may be allowed ſo to call him by *Anticipation*, advancing ſeveral ſtrange Poſitions, and, among the reſt, deriding the Notion of the Soul's Immortality, [f] *Who knoweth the Spirit of a Man, that goeth upward, and the Spirit of the Beaſt, that goeth downward to the Earth?* As if he had ſaid: "As for the Talk of Man's Soul being immortal, who can demon-"ſtrate the Problem? Who can diſcern any Sign of Difference between the Soul "of a Man, and that of a Brute, in order to prove that the one goes *upward*, to "the Regions of permanent and eternal Beings; the other *downward*, *i. e.* periſhes "together with the Body, and moulders in the Earth?" Now what *Solomon* here, in the Beginning of this Book, queſtions in the Perſon of another, towards the Concluſion of it, and where he comes to ſpeak his own ſerious and reſolved Thoughts, he peremptorily determines in theſe Words, [g] *Then ſhall the Duſt return to the Earth, and the Spirit ſhall return to God that gave it*; for the only evident Senſe that they can bear, is this——That "whereas Man conſiſts of two Parts, Body and Soul, "the Condition of theſe two, when he dies, will be very different: For the Body, "being at firſt taken out of the Duſt of the Earth, and ſo of a *corruptible* Conſtitu-"tion, ſhall go back into the Earth again, and moulder into Duſt; but the Soul, "as it is of another and more excellent *Original*, ſhall not periſh with the Body, "but return to that God, from whence it came, and with whom it ſhall continue "ſafe and inviolate, according to the Author of the Book of Wiſdom, [h] *The Souls "of the Righteous are in the Hands of God, and there ſhall no Torment touch them.*"

WHEN our Bleſſed Saviour came into the World, the Contention in the *Jewiſh* Church, between the *Sadducees* and the *Phariſees*, as to this Point of Doctrine, were very fierce; for [i] *the Sadducees*, as St *Luke* has ſtated the Matter in Debate, ſaid, *there is no Reſurrection, neither Angel, nor Spirit, but the* Phariſees *confeſſed both.* [k] The *Sadducees* believed, indeed, that there is a *God*, though whether they believed God himſelf to be *Corporeal*, is not, without good Reaſon, queſtioned by ſome: But this is certain, that, beſides God, they believed nothing ſubſiſted, but what is perceptible to Senſe: And hence they denied Angels to be *permanent* Subſtances, and what they read of their appearing in Scripture, they always imputed to *Phantaſms*, occaſionally formed by God, when he was minded, at any Time, to reveal his Will to Mankind, and then vaniſhing and diſappearing. Agreeably to the ſame *Hypotheſis*, they denied likewiſe the Spirits of Men, as *diſtinct* Subſtances from the Body, and able to ſubſiſt without them; and, hence farther, by a neceſſary Chain of Conſequences, they denied the Reſurrection of the Bodies of Men after Death: For, to what Purpoſe ſhould the Body of Man be raiſed, if there was no Soul in Being to be united to it again, and re-inform it? The *Phariſees*, on the other Side, held a quite contrary Chain of Doctrines, *viz.* That there are certain *immaterial* and *inviſible* Beings, both Angels, and Spirits of Men likewiſe, diſtinct Subſtances from their Bodies, and ſubſiſting after the Death of their Bodies, and that therefore there ſhall be a Reſurrection. He that believed one of theſe Hypotheſes, believed all; and he that denied any one of them, equally denied the reſt. Now, the ſacred Hiſtorian expreſſly tells us, that St *Paul* declared himſelf on the *Phariſees* Side in this Controverſy; and though it cannot be denied, that he made this Profeſſion with a Deſign to ſave himſelf from preſent Danger, yet that his Profeſſion was honeſt and true, and void of all Deceit and Equivocation, will hardly be denied, when it is conſidered farther, that it was entirely agreeable to his Maſter's Doctrine and Determination.

WHEN the *Sadducees* came to our Saviour with an *intricate* Queſtion, as they thought it, and ſuch as implied a Kind of *Impoſſibility* for the Dead ever to riſe again, he reſolves it in this Manner; [l] *As touching the Reſurrection of the Dead, have you not read that which was ſpoken to you by God, ſaying, I am the God of* Abraham, *and the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob; *God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living.* The Words are taken from the third Chapter of *Exodus*, where, out of the flaming *Buſh*, God ſpeaks to *Moſes* concerning *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, many Ages after the Death of theſe *Patriarchs*, and our Saviour lays down this *Hypotheſis*, as the Foundation of his Argument, that *God is not the God of the Dead, but*

[e] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [f] Eccleſ. iii. 21. [g] Ibid. xii. 7. [h] Ibid. ix. 1.
[i] Acts xxiii. 8. [k] *Bull*, ibid. [l] Matth. xxii. 31, 32.

but of the Living. " Since then, *for God to be any one's God*, neceſſarily implies a preſent *Relation* between God and that Perſon, and no Relation can continue, where either of the *Relatives* ceaſe, and is taken away; it muſt certainly follow, that *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* were alive, and did ſubſiſt, *viz.* in their *Spirits*, when God ſpake theſe Words to *Moſes*, *i. e.* many Ages after the Death of their Bodies. Our Saviour therefore, when he arms his Diſciples againſt the Fear of Man, by ſhewing them how contemptible that Diſpleaſure was, which could not reach the Soul, ſaying, " *Fear not them, which kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul; but rather fear him, which is able to deſtroy both Body and Soul in Hell*; makes the ſeparate Exiſtence of our Soul, after the Death of the Body, a neceſſary and *fundamental* Article of our Faith: For if the Soul's Dependence on the Body were ſuch, that the Diſſolution of the one did unavoidably draw on the Death of the other, then he, who kills the Body, would, at the ſame Stroke, murther the Soul too. Nay, there is this farther Argument of the Immortality and Independency of the Soul, ° that all thoſe glorious Acceſſions and Improvements, which the Scripture mentions, as accruing to good Men at the Reſurrection, belong ſimply to the Body. It is ſaid, P *that our Bodies ſhall be changed*, that they ſhall be refined and ſublimated, and ſo prepared to ſuſtain the Joys of Heaven, which otherwiſe they could not do: But no ſuch ſubſtantial Improvements are mentioned of the Soul; which we may take for an Intimation, how noble and excellent a Being the Soul is in its *original* Nature; that it is breathed from God, and impreſſed with his *Image*, and that this Image imports no leſs, than ſuch Perfections as are divine; that in itſelf it is incorruptible and immortal, and of an immenſe Capacity both to know and enjoy. It is conſtituted, indeed, to ſee through the Body *as through a Glaſs*, and that Glaſs, at preſent, is very dark; but when once the Glaſs ſhall come to be brightened, *i. e.* when the Soul ſhall be diſcharged from the Groſſneſs of Fleſh, and the Cloud of Paſſions, and the Stains of Sin, it will need no other *Elevation*, to behold the Face of God; no other *Capacity*, to comprehend all the *Treaſures of Wiſdom*; no other *Strength*, to bear the Weight of eternal Glory.

'TWOULD be endleſs to go on deſcanting upon every Argument, exhibited in Scripture, to prove the ſeparate Exiſtence of human Souls; and therefore, to comprize ſeveral in one Sentence, when our Saviour promiſes the penitent Thief upon the Croſs, ' *Verily, I ſay unto thee, To-day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*; and, at the Point of Death, commits his human Soul to God, ' *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit*; when St *Stephen*, as he was expiring, commits, in like Manner, his Soul to Chriſt himſelf, now exalted to the *Right-hand of the Majeſty on High*, with, ' *Lord Jeſus receive my Spirit*; when St *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, that " *if our earthly Houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a Building of God, an Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens*; and prays for the *Theſſalonians*, that " *their whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body might be preſerved blameleſs unto the Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; when the Author to the *Hebrews* tells us, that, by Virtue of the Catholick Communion, Chriſtians are not only joined * *to an innumerable Company of Angels*, but to the Society likewiſe *of the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*; when St *Peter* plainly enough affirms, × that the *Spirits* of thoſe wicked Men, that were deſtroyed by the Flood, were in Being, reſerved in *Priſon*, and in *Chains of Darkneſs*, to the Judgment of the great Day; and St *John*, in the y *Revelation*, tells us, that *under the Altar he ſaw the Souls of them, that were ſlain for the Word of God, which cried with a loud Voice, how long, O Lord, holy, and true, doſt thou not judge, and avenge our Blood on them, that dwell on the Earth?* When almoſt in every Page of the *New-Teſtament*, I ſay, we meet with ſuch Paſſages as theſe, we cannot but conclude, that the Doctrine of the Immortality

m *Bull's* Sermons. n Matth. x. 28. o *Young's* Sermons, Vol. I. p 1 Cor. xv. 51.
q Luke xxiii. 43. r Ibid. ver. 46. s Acts vii. 59. t 2 Cor. v. 1.

u 1 Theſſ. v. 23. The Apoſtle is here ſuppoſed, by ſome, to juſtify the ancient Philoſophy, that Man (as *Nemeſius* ſtiles him) is τριμερὴς ὑπόστασις, *a Compound of three different Parts*. This was the Doctrine of the *Pythagoreans*, as we learn from *Jamblicus*, who having told us, that Man conſiſts of Soul and Body, adds, *that the Soul conſiſts of two Parts, one endued with Reaſon, and the other without Reaſon*. This alſo was the Philoſophy of the *Platoniſts*, as we learn from *Laërtius*, who informs us, *that there is in Man a Soul irrational, which follows the Affections of the Body, and a Mind, which uſeth the Body, as its Inſtrument, and fights againſt it*. This was alſo the Doctrine of the *Stoicks*, and therefore *Antoninus* makes the three conſtituent Parts of Man to be σῶμα, ψυχὴ, and νοῦς; the *Body*, *Soul*, and *Mind*; which is likewiſe maintained by ſome modern Philoſophers, *Gaſſendus* eſpecially, and Dr *Wallis* [*de Animâ Brut.* c. 7.] beyond all poſſible Contradiction: though this at laſt, perhaps, may be only a Strife about Words, ſince the animal Spirits are included in the Body. *Whitby in Locum.*

* Heb. xii. 23. × 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. y Chap. vi. 9, 10.

Immortality of Man's Soul, its Independency on the Body, and Subſiſtence after its Separation from it, is the Doctrine of *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles, and one of the *Fundamentals*, in that *Form of ſound Words*, which they *have delivered to the Saints*. And, accordingly, we may obſerve, that the Saints of old lived and died in full Aſſurance of the Truth of this Doctrine; that the *Apoſtolic* Biſhop and Martyr *Polycarp*, when brought to the Stake, begins his Prayer thus: [z] *O thou God of the whole Race of righteous Men, who live before thee*, and then, mentioning the Martyrs in particular, he preſently adds, *among theſe may I be received before thee this Day*; that this Doctrine was ſo univerſally maintained by the Church afterwards, that in moſt of her ancient *Liturgies* (wherein it was not fit that any *diſputed* Problem ſhould have Place) ſhe makes publick Profeſſion of it; and that, in thoſe very Liturgies, the Place and Receptacle of the Spirits of juſt Men deceaſed is uſually ſtiled [a] *the Region of the Living, the Region of the Godly*, and *the Boſom of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, and of all thoſe, that have pleaſed God, and obeyed his Will from the Beginning of the World*.

From univerſal Conſent.

NAY more, had we Leiſure to gratify the Curious, we might bring in a large Cloud of Witneſſes from the *Heathen* World, and make it appear, that the Subſiſtence of the Soul of Man, after the Death of his Body, was a Tradition *generally*, we may ſay, *univerſally* received, not only in the *civilized*, but even in the moſt *barbarous* Nations we read of; that in the *Eaſt*, their ancient Prieſts and wiſe Men, the Brachmans, [b] *had ſeveral mythological Accounts, like thoſe of* Plato, *of the Immortality of the Soul, the Judicatures of Hades, and other Matters of the like Nature*; that in the *Weſt*, the *Gauls* and *Britons* were taught by their Maſters the Druids, [c] *that the Souls of Men did not die, but paſs from one to another, by which Opinion they were excited to Valour, and an uncommon Contempt of Death.* That in the *North*, ſome of the *Thracians*, particularly the *Getæ*, ran undauntedly upon Death, by Virtue of this Perſuaſion, [d] *either that the Souls of deceaſed Men returned into Bodies again, or that, if they did not, they were not extinguiſhed, but went into ſome very happy Place*; that in the *South, the Angilæ*, a People of *Africa*, thought the Ghoſts of Men inferior Gods, [e] *by whom they ſwear, to whom they pray, and conſult upon all Occaſions, by lying down on their Tombs, and ſo, whatever they dream, they account an oracular Reſponſe*; and that, if we look into that Part of the World, which, for ſo many Ages, lay undiſcovered, in [f] *China, Peru*, and *Mexico*, as well as in *Braſil, Canada, Virginia*, &c. the People, though ſevered from the reſt of the World by the *vaſt* Ocean, and having no Intercourſe with any civilized Nation perhaps for many Ages, all agreed in the ſame Belief of the Soul's Immortality. So that, conſidering the Diſtance and Remoteneſs of the ſeveral Parts of the World, and the Variety of Men's Tempers, and Manner of Education, we may be allowed to conclude with *Tully*, that Flower of *Roman* Eloquence and Philoſophy both, [g] *as this Opinion is planted in us by Nature*, THAT THERE IS A GOD, *ſo by the Conſent of all Nations, (and the Conſent of Nations is the Voice of Nature) we believe that Souls exiſt after the Body.*

From the Qualities of the Soul.

TULLY indeed, by a due Conſideration of the Powers and Operations of the Soul, brought himſelf to a full Perſuaſion of its *Immortality*. "Many think, [h] *ſays* "*he*, that the Eternity of Souls is incredible, becauſe they cannot comprehend the "*Eſſence* and Qualities of a ſeparated Spirit; but can they, let me aſk them, define "what a Soul is, even when in the Body, of what Form it is, what its Dimenſions "are, or what is the Place of its Abode? For my own Part, when I ſeriouſly reflect "upon the Nature of the Soul, it ſeems to me to be much more difficult and obſcure "to know what it is, whilſt it is in Conjunction with the Body, than to underſtand

[z] Euſeb. Eccleſ. Hiſt. Lib. IV. c. xv. [a] Vid. Conſtit. Apoſt. Lib. VIII. c. xli. [b] Strabo, Lib. XV. [c] Cæſ. de Bell. Gall. Lib. VI. [d] Pomp. Mela. Lib. II. Ibid. Lib. I.

[e] *Vid. Mendoza, de Regno Chinæ, Acoſta. Lerius Navigat. Benzo Hiſt. Nov. Orbis, Harriot Virg. Ranwolf's* Travels, *&c. Lerius* tells us of a very barbarous People in *Braſil*, among whom he lived for ſome Time, and calls them *Toupinamboult*, who are ſaid by ſome Authors (but not upon ſufficient Grounds, I think) to have diſbelieved the Being of a God, and yet theſe People had firm Perſuaſions of the Immortality of the Soul. For their Opinion was, that *the Souls of the Virtuous, i. e.* of thoſe, who have valiantly defended their Country, for this ſeems to be the only Virtue, which they admire, *do, preſently after Death, fly beyond certain very high Mountains, and there are gathered to their Fathers and Grandfathers, and live in pleaſant Gardens, with all Manner of Delights; but that the Souls of cowardly and unactive Men, and thoſe, who do nothing for their Country, are carried to* Aygman, ſo they call the Devil, *and live with him in perpetual Torments.*

[g] Ut Deos eſſe naturâ opinamur, ſic permanere animos arbitramur conſenſu Nationum omnium; conſenſus autem naturæ vox eſt. *Cicero Tuſcul. Quæſt.* [h] Tuſcul. Q. Lib. I. *paſſim.*

" it when it quits its Lodging, wherein it now ſojourns, and takes its Flight home-
" wards to Heaven, the Place of its conſtant Habitation; for, if we cannot under-
" ſtand that which we never ſaw, we may as well diſown all Knowledge of
" God, as of a ſeparated Soul. Whatever therefore that Thing be which *perceives*,
" which *underſtands*, which *wills*, which *remembers*, which is always vigorous and
" active in us, it muſt needs be celeſtial and divine, and therefore eternal: For
" we can form no other Notion of God, but that he is a Mind abſtracted from all
" *material Concretion*, underſtanding all Things, moving all Things, and of whoſe
" Duration there can be no End. Since then the *Celerity* of the Thoughts of the
" Soul, its Memory of Things paſt, and its *Foreſight* of Things to come, are
" wonderful; ſince its Arts and Sciences, and other Inventions, are ſo many; it is
" impoſſible that the Nature, which comprehends ſuch excellent Things, ſhould be
" mortal. The Life of the Soul conſiſts in its Activity and Thought, which are
" inſeparable from its Exiſtence; and therefore being void of all Mixture and
" Allay, and containing nothing *Heterogeneous* to itſelf, it muſt be incapable of Diſ-
" ſolution." If then the Soul of Man be of ſo excellent a Make, and of ſo excel-
lent a Nature, we cannot, without Derogation to its great Creator, ſuppoſe that it
was made for a few Days only, and ſhall not ſurvive the Body: Eſpecially conſider-
ing, that, how great ſoever its Faculties be, [l] it does not, in this Life, attain to a full
Improvement of them; that its Operations and Exertments are weak and deficient,
and have not arrived to their Conſummation; that Truth and Goodneſs, which are
its proper *Nouriſhment*, are not taken in here with that full Guſt and Reliſh, which
the Soul is capable of; that the *Mind*, in ſhort, is receptive of more Knowledge,
the *Will* of more Regularity, and the *Affections* of more Zeal and Fervency, than
they have at preſent, and that theſe Attainments therefore are to be the Acquiſitions
of another Life.

Its Deſire of Happineſs.

[k] WHOM *have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I deſire beſides thee*, is a Reflection of the *Pſalmiſt*'s, naturally ariſing from the Conſideration of the *Emptineſs* of all worldly Enjoyments; and therefore, [l] ſince God has implanted in Men's Minds an eager Deſire of Happineſs, (as we may all perceive by our ſhifting the *Scene* ſo often) and yet has put no Capacity in Things here below to anſwer it, (as our Heart will tell us, whenever we conſider, how by Reaſon either of their offenſive Mixtures, or neceſſary Decays, that leave the Soul lean and pining, in the Midſt of their Enjoyments) as God certainly made nothing in vain; this is a Demonſtration that he deſigned us for another Life, where we ſhall have a more perfect Fruition of the Fountain of all Bliſs, and where he intends to fill up the Meaſure of our Deſires, and to be himſelf the *Delight*, we ſo much long for.

Its Relation to God.

And indeed, when we conſider farther, [m] that God has made Man with a Deſign that he ſhould love, and fear, and worſhip him; that he has given him a Soul capable of knowing him, and reflecting upon his infinite Perfections; that he makes himſelf underſtood to him in a Language known only to God and the Soul, the Language of Fear and Hope, of *Fear*, to reſtrain the Sallies of his Paſſions, and of *Hope*, to encourage him to a regular Performance of his Duty; it is impoſſible to join all theſe together, and make them conſiſtent, without the Suppoſition of an Immortality. For if, after we have experienced the Joy and Conſolation which the Soul receives in its Communion with God; [n] *if, after we have taſted the heavenly Gift*, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, *and have been made Partakers of the Holy Ghoſt; if, after we have taſted the good Word of God, and the Powers of all the World to come*, this Joy and Conſolation muſt be loſt to all Eternity, (as it neceſſarily muſt, if the Soul dies with the Body) then are we of all Creatures the *moſt miſerable*. The Condition of a Brute, which has had no Senſe of theſe *ſpiritual* Comforts, but enjoyed ſuch Delights, as are proportioned to its Nature, is more eligible, than that of Man, whom Death confounds with the Beaſts that periſh. *Beaſts* have no Reſtraint put upon their Appetites, which Man, upon the Proſpect of a future Eternity, is obliged to bring himſelf under: [o] They feel no inward *Reproaches* for tranſgreſſing the Bounds of their Duty, and the Laws of their Nature: They have no uneaſy *Preſages* of a future Reckoning, wherein the Pleaſures they now taſte, muſt be accounted for; and none of their *Satisfactions* are impaired by the Fear of loſing them, or by the dreadful Apprehenſions of Death, which make the *natural* Man *all his Life-Time*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *ſubject unto Bondage*. In a Word, they have no Concern for what is

[l] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [k] Pſal. lxxiii. 25. [l] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[m] *Martin*, on Natural Religion. [n] Heb. vi. 4, 5. [o] Biſhop *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

is paſt, no uneaſy Expectations of what is to come, but are ever tied down to the preſent Moment, and the preſent Enjoyment, and in that they are vigorouſly and totally employed; whereas Man, the Lord of this lower Creation, to whom all theſe Creatures bow and obey, by the very Uſe of his Reaſon, is ſubjected to theſe Inconveniencies, and debarred from theſe Gratifications; is obliged to deny himſelf, and keep in his Appetites, and run through a Courſe of ſevere Diſcipline, all to fit and prepare his Soul for Heaven; and yet, if, when his Body dies, his Soul is involved in the common Ruin, what ſhall we think of the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, in thus forming, thus appointing him?

Its Deſire of Immortality.

THAT we have a natural Deſire of Immortality implanted in us, is manifeſt from [p] all the *monumental* Things we ſee Men do; from the Structures and Buildings, the Statues and Images, the Tombs and Sepulchres, they erect, the Books and Writings they publiſh, and the great hazardous Exploits, they engage in, for the ſake of Fame. [q] Now every Deſire ſuppoſes a natural Capacity in the Subject, wherein it reſides; and therefore, ſince the Soul deſires Immortalily, it muſt be capable of Immortality, and withal *perceive* that it is ſo. But how can it perceive itſelf capable of Immortality, if in its own Nature it finds not a certain Fund of Immortality, which makes this Deſire in it ſo lively, ſo conſtant, ſo univerſal? It feels within itſelf, I ſay, that it does not die with the Body; and, for this Reaſon, by its *Actions* it aims at a Life to come, and by its *Deſires* anticipates an Immortality, which places it above the Reach and Power of Death, when the Body yields to it, and lives no longer: For ſuch is the Senſe of the great *Roman* Orator, in a Book, which he wrote when himſelf was going off the Stage of Life, that [r] *if Mens Souls were not to be poſſeſſed of an immortal Exiſtence in* ANOTHER STATE, *they would not*, IN THIS, *enterpriſe ſo great and noble Things, and aſpire ſo naturally after immortal Renown.*

Its Apprehenſion of Futurity.

ONCE more, we perceive in ourſelves the Conſciouſneſs of Guilt, and an uneaſy Concern at the Proſpect of Things to come: But whence ſhould this ariſe, if the Soul ſees not an Immortality beyond this Life, from whence it is impoſſible for her to withdraw? If ſhe could be aſſured of not ſurviving the Body, her Fears would *terminate* with her Life, and every Day decreaſe, the nearer ſhe approached that Period: Whereas the very contrary is experimentally true. The greater the Diſtance is, wherein the wicked Man looks upon Death, and the longer he thinks he has to live, the leſs his Conſcience is terrified; becauſe the *Idea* of his Soul's Immortality is at preſent too remote, and beheld, as it were, in *Miniature* only; whereas, when Life decays, and draws near to a Concluſion, the Immortality then appearing near, and preſenting itſelf in full View to the Soul, the Conſcience is alarmed; its Stings are redoubled, and while the unhappy Creature has any Thought left, a dreadful Futurity, which he ſees beyond his approaching Death, and is a thouſand Times worſe than Death itſelf, rends his Soul. But now what has his Soul to fear, if it does not ſurvive his Body? Or why is it moſt of all concerned, when the Time of its Deliverance is at Hand, if ſo be, when the Body is deſtroyed, it reſolves into nothing, and vaniſhes into the ſoft Air? In a Word, let Men ſhift the Remembrance of it as much as they pleaſe, yet, at one Time or other, they muſt believe the Immortality of the Soul, becauſe they find it in their Conſcience. But now how came it to be placed there, and to be placed there ſo *ſtedfaſtly*, that it cannot be moved? [s] If it were only *Education*, we might forget it, as we forget Abundance of Things, that are the Effect of Education; but this is ſo far from being forgotten, that Conſcience retains it, even to the laſt Breath: And therefore we may conclude, that *Nature*, or to ſpeak more properly, that God himſelf has imprinted this Perſuaſion in us, and imprinted it ſo *indelibly*, that one muſt deſtroy the very Subſtance of the Soul, and reduce it to nothing, before one can extirpate the Notion of its Immortality from the Conſcience. Now, as we may reaſonably preſume, that this Notion of Immortality, which he hath implanted in us, is not *chimerical* and *deluſory*, we muſt be led to conclude, even from the Light of Reaſon, that both the Nature of our Souls, and the State, which he hath provided for them in the other World, is ſuch, as anſwer the different Forebodings of our Minds, according to our different Behaviour in this. But we have aſſerted our Point before from better Authority; and ſhall now proceed to evince,

II. THAT

[p] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [q] *Martin*, on Natural Religion. [r] *Tully*, de Senectute.
[s] *Martin*, ibid.

Whether the Jews had right Notions of the ſeparate State of the Soul.

II. THAT in its ſeparate State the Soul does not *ſleep*, and become inſenſible, till the Reſurrection-Day, but is immediately admitted into an happy or miſerable Condition, according as the Man has behaved in his paſt Life. Whether the *Jews* of old had any juſt and adequate Notion of the State of ſeparated Souls; whether they believed, that they had different Abodes, according to their different Qualities, where they continued to think, and perceive, and be differently affected with Joy or Grief, with Pleaſure or Pain, according to their different Diſpoſitions and Allotments; or, that they were all thrown into one common Receptacle, where they fell into a Kind of *Lethargy*, and utter Inſenſibility till the general Reſurrection; has been a Matter of ſome Debate among the Learned. [t] The Practice of *Necromancy*, or conſulting with the Dead, which was certainly a Branch of the ancient *Magick*, and [u] uſed by *Saul* in the Caſe of *Samuel*; the Prayer of *Elijah*, when raiſing the Widow's Son to Life, [x] *O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this Child's Soul come into him again*; and that Declaration of God to *Moſes* at the Buſh, [*] *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob*, as our Saviour has expounded it, might give them to underſtand, that the Soul, after Death, was not *annihilated*, but had, ſome where or other, Exiſtence in its *ſeparate State*; yet, when we conſider the Deſcription which Holy *Job*, the great Aſſerter of the Reſurrection, gives of the State of the Dead; [y] *Man dieth, and waſteth away; yea, Man giveth up the Ghoſt, and where is he? Man lieth down, and riſeth not, till the Heavens be no more; they ſhall not awake, nor be raiſed out of their Sleep:* When we conſider what Sentiments the Royal Pſalmiſt, addreſſing himſelf to God, has diſcovered of this Matter; [z] *In Death there is no Remembrance of thee, and in the Grave who ſhall give thee Thanks?* For [a] *the Dead praiſe not the Lord, neither any that go down into Silence:* When we conſider *the Writing of good Hezekiah, King of Judah*, or the Form of his Thankſgiving to God, for his Recovery from a Fit of Sickneſs; [b] *The Grave cannot praiſe thee, Death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down to the Pit, cannot hope for thy Truth: The Living, the Living, he ſhall praiſe thee, as I do this Day*; and thereupon the Advice of the wiſe King *Solomon*, [c] *whatſoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with all thy Might; for there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wiſdom in the Grave, whither thou goeſt:* When we conſider theſe, and ſeveral other Paſſages of the like Import, I ſay, we can hardly forbear believing, that the *Jews* of old, even the beſt and wiſeſt of them, [d] looked upon the *Interval* between their Death and Reſurrection, as a State of perfect *Oblivion* and *Inactivity*; and that their Hopes and Fears, as to the other World, had generally Reſpect to the Reſurrection only, and to thoſe different everlaſting States, that were to ſucceed. It is the Glory and Excellence of the Goſpel therefore, that it has *brought Light* into this [e] *Land of Darkneſs, as Darkneſs itſelf*, according to *Job*'s Expreſſion, and thereby diſcovered, not only what we are to be to all Eternity, but what we are to be likewiſe the very Moment we ſtep out of the Body.

The Chriſtian Doctrine in this Particular.

OUR bleſſed Saviour, [f] who came from above, and therefore underſtood the whole *Oeconomy* of the bright and heavenly Regions, and, by Virtue of his *omniſcient* and *omnipreſent* Deity, as perfectly knew the miſerable State of thoſe Spirits, who dwell in the oppoſite Regions of Darkneſs, in the Parable of the rich Man and the Beggar, has given us a lively Deſcription of both theſe States: [g] *And it came to paſs, that the Beggar died, and was carried into Abraham's Boſom; the rich Man alſo died, and was buried, and in Hell,* in *Hades, he lift up his Eyes, being in Torments, and ſeeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his Boſom; and he cried, and ſaid, Father Abraham, have Mercy on me, and ſend Lazarus, that he may dip the Tip of his Finger in Water, and cool my Tongue; for I am tormented in this Flame. But Abraham ſaid, Son, remember, that thou in thy Life-Time receivedſt thy good Things, and likewiſe Lazarus evil Things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

That

[t] *Whiſton*'s Sermons. [u] 1 Sam. xxviii. 7. [x] 1 Kings xvii. 21. [*] Exod. iii. 6.
[y] Job xiv. 10, 12. [z] Pſal. vi. 5. [a] Ibid. cxv. 17. [b] Iſa. xxxviii. 18, 19.
[c] Eccleſ. ix. 10.

[d] The Author, we laſt quoted, is of Opinion, that the Souls of Men, departed under the Times of the Old Teſtament, did really *ſleep*, or at leaſt enjoy a very inconſiderable Share of Life and Senſation, till our Saviour's Coming; nay, perhaps till his Deſcent into *Hades*, among the Souls of the Dead, between the Time of his Death, and his Reſurrection. But if this Deſcent into *Hades* is to be taken in any other Senſe, than what he imagines, as we conceive it may, (See Page 685, *&c.*) all his Conjecture will prove groundleſs.

[e] Job x. 22. [f] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [g] Luke xvi. 22, *&c.*

[h] That all this Happineſs of the *poor*, and the Miſery of the *rich* Man was in the intermediate State, before the general Reſurrection, ſeems evident, not only from the Series of the Hiſtory, but from the Circumſtances likewiſe of the rich Man's Deſire, that a Meſſage might be ſent to his *five* ſurviving Brethren, in order to their Converſion: And therefore our Saviour's Deſign in this Parable muſt have been, to repreſent the Good, as very happy, and the Bad, as very miſerable, in the *intermediate* State, before the Reſurrection. It is acknowledged, indeed, [i] that this is but a *Parable*, and, accordingly, ſeveral Things in it are *Parabolically* expreſſed: But though every Thing in a Parable be not *Argumentative*, yet all Divines agree, that the main Scope and Intendment of it *is*, which, in *this*, is to ſhew what becomes of the Souls of good and bad Men after Death.

WHILE the penitent Thief was hanging on the Croſs, his Petition to our Lord was only, that he would [k] *remember him, when he came into his Kingdom*, i. e. when he came, in his Royal Power and Majeſty, to judge the World in the laſt Day; but our Saviour grants him more than he aſked; *Verily I ſay unto thee, To-day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*. Paradiſe, among the *Jews*, does primarily ſignify *the Garden of Eden*, that bleſſed Garden, *wherein Adam*, in his State of Innocence, dwelt; and, becauſe it was a very delightful Place, they uſed, by the Word, to repreſent the State and Abode of good Souls, ſeparated from their Bodies, and waiting for their Reſurrection. So that our Saviour's Meaning, in this Promiſe to the penitent Thief, muſt be, that he ſhould preſently, after his Death, enter with him into that Place of Bliſs and Happineſs, which the Souls of the Righteous inhabit. But now, why ſhould our Saviour have made him this Promiſe, had his Soul been to become incapable of the Joys and Felicities of the Place? Paradiſe could have been no Paradiſe to him, had he been to fall into a deep Sleep, as ſoon as he came thither, and ſo loſe the Senſe and Faculty of taſting and perceiving the Pleaſures of it.

NEXT to our Bleſſed Saviour, St *Paul*, who, as himſelf tells us, was caught up, not only in Heaven, but into *Paradiſe* likewiſe, is the beſt able to give us an Account of the State of the Souls dwelling there; and he tells us, that it was ſo far from being a Place of Darkneſs and Obſcurity, Silence and Oblivion, where its Inhabitants are all in a profound Sleep; that, on the contrary, it is a moſt glorious Place, full of Light and raviſhing Viſion; a Place where Myſteries are to be learnt, far ſurpaſſing the Reach of frail Mortals, and where himſelf [l] *heard ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα, Words*, or rather Things *unſpeakable*, ſuch as were *not lawful*, or rather not poſſible, *for Man to utter*. From his own Knowledge and Experience of the Place therefore, he tells the *Philippians*, that [m] *he was in a Strait between two, having a Deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which was far better, though to abide in the Fleſh was more needful to them*: But, how could he think it ſo much *better* to depart from the Body, than to remain in it, if, upon his Departure, he was to be deprived of all Senſe, and to ſink into a *Lethargy*, and utter Oblivion? To diſcharge faithfully the *Apoſtolick* Office; to be an Inſtrument of doing Good, of ſaving Souls, of converting Nations; and himſelf to enjoy, all along, the Comforts of his good Deeds, the Favour of God, and the ſweet Conſolation [n] *of a Conſcience void of Offence towards God, and towards Man*, is certainly a more eligible Thing, than to enter into a State, where one common *Gulph* of Inſenſibility ſwallows up good and bad Souls alike: And therefore if we will allow the Report of an Apoſtle, who himſelf had been in the Place, though [o] *whether in the Body, or out of the Body, he could not tell*, together with the Report of our Saviour, who himſelf knew the Place, to have any Weight and Authority in this Caſe, we cannot but agree in this Sentiment, *viz.* [p] That the Souls of Men do not only *ſubſiſt*, after the Death of their Bodies, but that they are alſo ſenſible of Pleaſure or Pain, of Joy or Sorrow, in that ſeparate State; the Wicked being tormented, at preſent, with a *piercing Remorſe* for what is paſſed, and expecting far more dreadful Vengeance to befal them; and the Good, on the other Hand, being refreſhed with the Peace and Satisfaction of a good Conſcience, and yet joyfully waiting for a greater Happineſs, at the Reſurrection. Which brings us to the other Part of this Argument, *viz.*

[h] *Whiſton's* Sermons. [i] *Ball's* Sermons, Vol. I. [k] Luke xxiii. 42, 43. [l] 2 Cor. xii. 4. [m] Phil. i. 23, 24. [n] Acts xxiv. 16. [o] 2 Cor. xii. 3. [p] *Ball*, ibid.

Different Opinions concerning the Soul's middle *State.*

III. THAT the Soul's Happineſs or Miſery, in this *intermediate* State, is *partial* only, and not ſo *perfect* and *compleat* as it will be, after its Re-union with the Body. [q] It is an Opinion pretty generally received, that the Souls of the Saints, after their Departure out of the Body, are immediately, by the holy Angels, conveyed into the *higheſt* Heavens, and ſo admitted into the glorious Preſence of God, and of his Son *Jeſus Chriſt*; and that they there enjoy the ſame Happineſs and Glory, which they ſhall enjoy after the Reſurrection of the Body; the *ſame*, not only in *Subſtance*, but in *Degree*, barely with this one Difference, that their Bodies are not as yet raiſed from the Dead, and re-united to their Souls. The very contrary to this they affirm to be the Fate of wicked Souls: And, to give their Opinion the better Countenance, [r] they ſuppoſe a *particular* Judgment, previous to the Soul's Conſignment either to Happineſs or Miſery, *i. e.* "They ſuppoſe, that "every particular Soul, as ſoon as it departs from the Body, undergoes ſuch a Trial "before the Tribunal of God, as the whole World will undergo at the laſt Day; "has every Thought, and Word, and Work enquired into, and Sentence paſſed "upon it to the very ſame Rewards and Puniſhments, which the final Judgment "ſhall decree."

That its Happineſs or Miſery is imperfect.

THERE is another Opinion, ſomewhat different to this, not ſo *popular* indeed, but what ſeems more *conſonant* to the Word of God; and that is, that the Happineſs or Miſery of departed Souls is, in the Degree of it, leſs perfect *before*, than it ſhall be *after* the Reſurrection. [s] This Opinion makes the Happineſs of the Righteous, before the Reſurrection, to conſiſt chiefly in theſe Particulars; that, by Death, they are freed from all thoſe Cares, and Troubles, and Dangers, all thoſe Trials and Temptations, all thoſe Doubts and Anxieties, all that Grief, and Sorrow, and Anguiſh, which they are perpetually diſturbed and tormented with in this mortal Life, and, as ſoon as releaſed from their Bodies, enjoy a perfect Quiet and Eaſe; that they are not only freed from Miſery, but, together with their Bodies, put off all thoſe Defilements of Sin, which they had contracted by their dwelling in them, and have the Graces, wherewith they took Care to adorn themſelves while they were upon Earth, by Death very much improved, and their Happineſs thereby proportionably augmented; and that, having now a nearer and more diſtinct View of that Glory, which is reſerved for them till the laſt Day, the ſure and certain Proſpect of it does vaſtly add to their preſent Joy and Satisfaction. For if the good and faithful Servants of God are ſaid [t] *to rejoice*, even in this World, *with Joy unſpeakable, and full of Glory*, as oft as they fix their Eyes upon that diſtant Reward, which they hope for, when *Chriſt* ſhall come in Glory to *recompenſe his Saints*; then undoubtedly the Joy, which this Proſpect will afford them, when by Death it is brought nearer to them, when they ſee it more clearly, when they have no Doubts of compaſſing it, when they have an Earneſt and Pledge of it, in that Tranquillity, which they are actually poſſeſſed of, muſt be ſtill more raviſhing and inconceivable.

ON the contrary, this Opinion ſuppoſes, that by Death the Wicked are removed from all the Pleaſures and gay Amuſements of the World, from all the *Idols*, they were once ſo fond of; from that Riot and Exceſs, that lewd and intemperate Company, which was heretofore their chief Delight; and that finding themſelves naked Spirits, ſtripped of every Thing they love, and expoſed to every Thing they hate, with their Paſſions worrying them, and Conſcience, [u] *like an armed Man*, let looſe upon them, by the Convictions they feel within, *as the terrible Day of the Lord approaches*, they perceive, that *there remaineth nothing* * *but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation to devour them.* Now theſe different States of departed Souls, tho' they be much ſuperior to the Happineſs or Miſery which thoſe who are moſt happy or miſerable in this World, do enjoy, do yet fall much ſhort of that Bliſs or Woe, which theſe Souls ſhall enjoy or ſuffer after the Reſurrection; and, conſequently, what is the intermediate State between Death and Judgment; as we ſhall now endeavour to make appear, is not deſigned to be the *Conſummation* of the Happineſs or Miſery of our immortal Souls.

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[q] Biſhop *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [r] *Lucas*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [s] Biſhop *Smalridge*, ibid.
[t] 1 Pet. i. 8. [u] Prov. vi. 11. * Heb. x. 27.

[x] A CERTAIN *Nobleman*, ſays our Lord, *went into a far Country, to receive for himſelf a Kingdom, and to return; and he called his ten Servants, and delivered them ten Pounds, and ſaid unto them, Occupy till I come. And it came to paſs, that when he was returned, having received the Kingdom, then he ordered theſe Servants to be called unto him*, to reward the Diligent, and puniſh the Slothful; and afterwards commanded his [y] *Enemies to be ſlain*. Now it is too obvious to need any Explanation, that by the *Return* in the Parable is meant Chriſt's ſecond Coming into the World, *to judge it, and to reward every one according to their Works*: And, though, as we ſaid before, there is no arguing from Diſcourſes of this Nature any farther, than their *main Drift* and Deſign leads us; yet, ſince our Saviour *ſpake this Parable*, [z] *becauſe*, upon his Approach to *Jeruſalem*, the People *thought that the Kingdom of God ſhould immediately appear*, we cannot but infer, that this Nobleman's not *rewarding his Servants*, whom he had entruſted with the Management of his Money, and not *puniſhing his Enemies* who had retracted their Obedience to him, until his *Return*, was intended to denote a Purpoſe in the Divine Wiſdom, to delay the appointed Time of Mens final Reward, until Chriſt ſhall return from Heaven, [a] *in the Glory of his Father, and with the Holy Angels*, in order to diſpenſe it. *This proved from Scripture.*

WHEN St *Peter* put the Queſtion to his Lord, what Reward he, and the reſt of the Apoſtles, ſhould have, who had forſaken their *All* in this World to follow him, and be his Diſciples; he received this gracious Anſwer; [b] *Verily, I ſay unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the Regeneration, when the Son of Man ſhall ſit on the Throne of his Glory, ye ſhall ſit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Iſrael.* [c] By the *Regeneration* here ſpoken of, we muſt not underſtand the Benefit, we receive by Baptiſm, nor yet that, which is the Effect of God's Sanctifying Spirit upon our Minds, but our *Reſurrection* only, which will be indeed a παλιγγενεσία, a *Regeneration*, or ſecond Generation of Men to Life, after that Life, which they had in their firſt Generation, is extinguiſhed; and if ſo, then does our Saviour in this Paſſage inform us, that the Dead in Chriſt are not to expect their final Reward until the Reſurrection; ſince the Apoſtles themſelves, thoſe great *Champions* of the Chriſtian Cauſe, are ordered to wait for the full Recompence of their *Labour*, and Suffering, and Self-denial, (though their Recompence, when it comes, will be more eminently great, than others) till the Arrival of that appointed Period. St *Paul* therefore, looking backwards upon his paſt Conflicts, and forwards upon his future Reward, tells us the Time, when he was to expect it: [d] *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, ſhall give to me at that Day, and not to me only, but to all them alſo, that love his Appearing. For* [e] *the Crown of Righteouſneſs* was not then to be ſet upon St *Paul*'s Head, when he had juſt *finiſhed his Courſe*, but was from that Time, to be *laid up for him*; it was not to be given till *that Day*, the great Day of Judgment; not to be given him *ſeparately*, but, at the ſame Time, to him, and to all them, who, when the Judge ſhall come, loved his Appearance. And for this Reaſon it is, that the Saints of God are directed [f] *to look for that bleſſed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. The bleſſed Hope* is the Bleſſedneſs hoped for; and therefore ſince the Apoſtle joins it with the *Appearance* of our Lord, he plainly enough intimates, that the perfect Bliſs we hope for, will not be beſtowed upon us, till the Coming of our Lord. But now, if after the Appearance of Chriſt, there ſhall be no other Acceſſion to the Happineſs of departed Saints, but what ariſes from the Glorification of their Bodies; if, even before his Appearance, their Souls are already poſſeſſed of all the Happineſs, whereof they are capable, and whereunto they are, by the Merits of *Chriſt*, intitled; there can be no ſufficient Reaſon given, why they ſhould be ſaid to expect the Appearance of *Chriſt*, in order to be made Partakers of that Bleſſedneſs, they hope for.

IT

[x] Luke xix. 12, *&c.* [y] Ibid. *ver.* 27. [z] Ibid. *ver.* 11. [a] Matth. xvi. 27.

[b] Matth. xix. 28. Our Tranſlators have manifeſtly miſpointed this Text. For they refer the Words *in the Regeneration* to that which went before, thus: *Ye have followed me in the Regeneration*; whereas they ſhould be joined to the following Words, thus: *Ye, which have followed me, ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ, in the Regeneration, when the Son of Man ſhall ſit upon the Throne of his Glory.*

[c] Biſhop *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [d] 2 Tim. iv. 7. [e] Biſhop *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [f] Tit. ii. 13.

IT would be endleſs to multiply Paſſages to this Purpoſe, and therefore to be ſhort. When St *Peter* tells us, that [z] *our Inheritance is reſerved in Heaven for us*; that [a] *our Praiſe, and Honour, and Glory* are to commence *at the Appearing of Jeſus Chriſt*; and therefore admoniſhes us [b] *to hope to the End for the Grace, that is to be brought unto us, at the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*: When St *John* declares, [c] *Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be, but we know, that, when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is*: When in the *Revelation*, he repreſents the Souls under the Altar, complaining of the Delay of the Day of Judgment, and that [d] *it was ſaid to them, that they ſhould reſt yet for a little Seaſon, until their Fellow-Servants alſo, and their Brethren, that ſhould be killed, as they were, ſhould be fulfilled*: And laſtly, when our bleſſed Saviour informs us, that *our feeding the Hungry*, and *cloathing the Naked*, and *viſiting the Sick*, &c. though [e] Actions, which he himſelf charges to his own Account, will not receive their full Payment and *Recompence*, [f] *till the Reſurrection of the Juſt*; nor the contrary Uſage meet with its Puniſhment, till that Period; we cannot but conclude, that the Happineſs and Miſery of Man (though in ſome Meaſure it commences now) does not receive its Conſummation and Accompliſhment, till that Day: For, in all common Conſtruction, there muſt be ſomething in the Solemnity of the Sentence: [g] *Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you*, that puts the Righteous in Poſſeſſion of what they did not enjoy before; and ſomething in [h] *Depart from me, ye Curſed, into everlaſting Fire*, that condemns the Wicked to what they did not ſuffer before.

The Sum of the whole *Argument.*

THE Amount of the whole then is this, —— [i] that ſome departed Souls are in a State of Happineſs, ſome in a State of Miſery; that, according to their different Demeanour in this mortal Life, their Condition is different, upon their Tranſlation into another World; that they do not, in the Interval between their being ſeparated from the Body by Death, and re-united to it at the Reſurrection, ſleep a profound Sleep, void of all Action and Perception, deſtitute of Life and Thought, inſenſible of Pleaſure and Pain, is evident enough from ſeveral Paſſages in Holy Writ: But that theſe different States are allotted them by any *formal Sentence*, paſſed upon them immediately after their Death; that their Actions are then weighed and examined by the Judge of Heaven and Earth, and Judgment pronounced upon them *ſeverally*, according to the Good or Evil they had done; that the State of Happineſs or Miſery, which they are in, from their Departure out of the World, is *final*, and the ſame, both in Kind and Degree, to which they ſhall be judged to all Eternity; that the Souls of the Righteous ſhall, at the Day of Judgment, be admitted to the Participation of no other, or greater Bliſs, than what they before enjoyed; nor the Souls of the Wicked condemned to endure no other, or ſorer Torments, than what they before felt; is what we have no Authority from the Word of God to affirm, and what we have good Grounds, we preſume, from the plain Declarations thereof, to deny. For when we are told, that [k] *we muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the Things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*; and therefore are cautioned [l] *to judge nothing before the Time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to Light the hidden Things of Darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the Counſels of the Hearts, and then ſhall every Man have Praiſe*, or Diſpraiſe of God; [m] to what Purpoſe, may we ſay, is there a *particular* Judgment, when we are ſo poſitively aſſured of a *general* one? Or why are the Actions of Men examined again, when they were examined once before? *The Works of Darkneſs, and the Thoughts of Mens Hearts*, how can they be ſaid to be *revealed*, when they were particularly laid open before? And how can it be called a *Day of Retribution*, when it is but adjudging Men to the ſame Places, to the ſame Rewards and Puniſhments, which were *judicially* aſſigned them before?

No particular Judgment before the Reſurrection.

The Diſtinction that may be made between ſeparate Souls.

"BUT if there be no *particular* Judgment, how ſhall we determine the Fate of "each Soul, as ſoon as it has left the Body? And by what Characters ſhall we "know, to which of the Regions it belongs?" [n] In this Life indeed, the Holy and Unholy live in the ſame World, have the ſame Snares and Temptations, the ſame

[z] 1 Pet. i. 4. [a] Ibid. *ver.* 7. [b] Ibid. *ver.* 13. [c] 1 John iii. 2. [d] Rev. vi. 11.
[e] Matth. xxv. 40. [f] Luke xiv. 14. [g] Matth. xxv. 34. [h] Ibid. *ver.* 41. [i] Biſhop *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [k] 2 Cor. v. 10. [l] 1 Cor. iv. 5. [m] *Lucas*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [n] *Whiſton*'s Sermons.

ſame Senſes and Appetites, in ſhort, the ſame Body that preſſes down the virtuous Attempts of the one, and diverts the Senſe and Miſery of the other; but, as ſoon as Death has diſſolved the Union with the Body, then, and not till then, will moſt plainly appear their different States; the one, by a Neceſſity of Nature, will aſcend to the Regions of Bliſs and Holineſs, and the other, by a like fatal Neceſſity, will ſink into the Pit of Darkneſs and Miſery. For if [t] *the Spirit of God*, even in this Life, beareth *Witneſs with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God*, how eaſy is it to conceive, that God may make this Judgment of his eternal Spirit brighter and ſtronger upon a good Soul, when out of the Body? And if Conſcience is ſo apt to *miſboad* and condemn the Wicked now, it is no Difficulty to imagine, how it may then be filled with greater and more intolerable Deſpair, partly from God's abandoning it entirely; partly from a clearer Manifeſtation of his Wrath and Diſpleaſure againſt it; and partly from its being poſſeſſed, and invaded by ſome evil Spirits: For, as *good Angels*, which *miniſter* to Holy Souls when in the Body, will naturally reſort, and miniſter to them, when they come out of it; ſo is there little Reaſon to doubt, but that the *evil Spirits*, which tempted and inflamed wicked Souls in this Life, will be ready to ſeize and carry away the helpleſs Wretches, as ſoon as they ſtep into another.

THUS we think we have ſaid enough, both to reſcue the departed Souls of Men from a State of Death and Inſenſibility, and, till the Reſurrection, to put a ſufficient Difference between the Condition of thoſe, *who die in the Lord*, and of thoſe, *who die in their Sins*: But that the Souls of thoſe, who die in a State of Enmity with God, can by any After-Acts of Repentance reconcile themſelves to him; or that departed Souls can, by any Methods of *Purgation* in another World, be cleared from the Defilements, which they contracted in this, and by ſuch purifying be rendered more fit Objects of God's Mercy, and more worthy to be received into the Kingdom of Heaven, are *Poſitions*, which we renounce and diſclaim; ſuch as have been grafted upon this Doctrine of departed Spirits for very bad Purpoſes; ſuch as have no Countenance, no Authority from Scripture; and ſuch as [u] contradict the declared Sentiments of the greateſt Men in the Church, for at leaſt the firſt three hundred Years.

The Place of no Signification to their Happineſs or Miſery.

[t] WHETHER the Place of departed Souls is above, within, or beneath the higheſt Heavens; whether there is one common Receptacle for the Souls of the Righteous

[t] *Lucas*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

[u] St *Clement*, who lived in the *Apoſtolic* Age, in his ſecond Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, (Chap. viii.) ſeems profeſſedly to oppoſe the Fiction of Purgatory. *Whilſt we are upon Earth*, ſays he, *let us repent; for we are as Clay in the Hand of the Artificer: As therefore the Potter, if he makes a Veſſel, and finds it awry, or broken in his Hands, may again faſhion it anew; but if, beforehand, he hath thrown it into the fiery Furnace, there is no more Help for it, he cannot make it better: So alſo we, as long as we are in the World, may repent from the whole Heart of the Evils, we have done in the Fleſh, that we may be ſaved of the Lord, whilſt we have Time of Repentance; but, after we have left this World, we can no longer confeſs or repent.* Nothing, we think, can reconcile this Divinity to the *Romiſh* Purgatory; and to ſhew that this was the Doctrine of the Church, till after the third Century, we ſhall produce a Paſſage out of the *Author of the Queſtions and Anſwers to the Orthodox*, who, in his Anſwer to the 75th Queſtion, having ſaid, that in this Life there is no Difference between the Righteous and the Wicked, as to worldly Concerns, immediately adds, *but, after Death, the Righteous* preſently *are ſeparated from the Unrighteous; for they are carried by Angels into their meet Places. The Souls of the Righteous are conveyed into Paradiſe, where they enjoy the Converſation and Sight of Angels, and Archangels, and of our Saviour Chriſt alſo, by Way of Viſion: According to what is ſaid,* when we are abſent from the Body, we are preſent with the Lord: *But the Souls of the Unrighteous are carried into the infernal Regions,* &c. *and they,* (i. e. both Sorts of Souls) *are kept in their meet Places, till the Day of the Reſurrection and Recompence.* From whence it is manifeſt, that the Primitive Fathers were Strangers to the *Limbus Patrum*, the *Limbus Infantum*, and *Purgatory*; for they were acquainted with no more than two Places or Receptacles for departed Souls. If then we enquire into the Riſe and Growth of the Doctrine of *Purgatory* in the Chriſtian Church, we ſhall plainly find it to be this. About the Middle of the *third* Century, *Origen*, among other *Platonic* Conceits of his, vented this, *that all the Faithful* (the Apoſtles themſelves not excepted) *ſhall, at the Day of Judgment, paſs through a Purgatory-Fire, the Fire of the great Conflagration, which they ſhall endure, for a longer or ſhorter Time, according as their Imperfections required a greater or leſs Purgation:* And in this Conceit, directly contrary to many expreſs Texts of Scripture, he was followed, for the Greatneſs of his Name, by ſome other great Men in the Church of God. Afterwards, about the End of the *fourth*, or the Beginning of the *fifth* Century, St *Auſtin* began to doubt, whether this imagined *Purgation* was not to be made in the Interval between Death and the Reſurrection, at leaſt, as to the Souls of the more perfect Chriſtians. Towards the End of the *fifth* Century, Pope *Gregory*, a Man remarkably *ſuperſtitious*, undertook *dogmatically* to aſſert the *Problem*, and ſet himſelf with all his Might to prove it; but chiefly from idle Stories of Apparitions of Souls, coming out of Purgatory. Four hundred Years after this, Pope *John* the XVIIIth, (or, as ſome ſay, the XIXth) inſtituted an *Holy-Day*, wherein he ſeverely required all Men to pray for the Souls in Purgatory; as if the Catholick Church, before him, had been deficient in their Charity, and forgotten the miſerable Souls in that Place of Torment. At length, the Council of *Florence* (in the Year 1439) turned this Figment into an Article of Faith, which the *Roman* Clergy, for the *Gain*, more than the *Godlineſs* of it, ſtrenuouſly inculcate and maintain. *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

[u] St *Clement*, in the Beginning of his Epiſtle, calls the Receptacle of pious Souls, *the Holy Place, but not the Moſt Holy*;

Righteous and Unrighteous, till the Reſurrection; or whether, from their Departure out of their Bodies, they dwell in ſeparate Manſions, as is moſt probable; whether *Abraham's Boſom*, where *Lazarus was carried by the Angels*, and *Hell*, or rather *Hades*, where *the rich Man was tormented*, ſignify to us Places as diſtant, as the Conditions of the poor and rich Man were different, or were intended only to expreſs to us the Difference of their *States*, without determining the ſeveral Places of their Abode; are *Speculations*, we are no Ways concerned to be inquiſitive about, while we are ſatisfied of this main Truth, *viz.* that the Righteous, in the intermediate Time, between their Death and the Reſurrection, are in a State of Happineſs, and the Wicked in a State of Miſery; for, as " far as our Apprehenſions of theſe Matters go, a *material* Place cannot in the leaſt contribute either to increaſe or to diminiſh the Happineſs or Miſery of an *immaterial* Spirit. Spirits, that are diveſted of Fleſh and Blood, wherever they are, carry Heaven or Hell along with them. The good Angels are as happy here upon Earth, whilſt they are employed in the Execution of God's Will, as whilſt they are converſant in the Regions above, becauſe † *they do always behold the Face of God, in whoſe Preſence is Fulneſs of Joy: Satan* was no more happy, when [x] *he came among the Sons of God, to preſent himſelf before the Lord*, than whilſt he was *going to and fro, and walking up and down in the Earth.* The Happineſs or Miſery of pure Spirits hath no Relation, that we know of, to the Place, where they are; but the Happineſs or Miſery of embodied Spirits, or of Men, who are made up of Souls and Bodies, have a Dependence upon the Place of their Abode; and therefore we are ſure, wherever ſeparate Souls are lodged till the Reſurrection, that, after the Reſurrection, righteous and wicked Men ſhall have Places allotted them, ſuitable to their different States; the former ſhall be carried up to the *higheſt* Heavens, the latter ſhall be thrown down to the *nethermoſt* Hell; and therefore ſeeing that theſe Things ſhall be ſo, the Apoſtle's Inference is, [y] *What Manner of Perſons ought we to be, in all Holy Converſation and Godlineſs?*

The Influence of the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality and intermediate State.

IT was an Obſervation of *Plato* long ago, that [z] *no Man can be truly and ſteadily religious, unleſs he firmly believes the Immortality of the Soul, and lives in a Senſe of it*; and, even before him, *the Wiſdom of Solomon* [a] hath given us a lively Deſcription of the fatal Tendency, which our Diſbelief of this great Article has, to lead us into all Manner of Wickedneſs. " Our Life is ſhort and tedious, *ſays the Infidel*, " and in the Death of a Man there is no Remedy. For we are born at all Adven- " tures, and we ſhall be hereafter as though we had never been; for the Breath in " our Noſtrils is as Smoke, and a little Spark, in the moving of our Heart, which " being extinguiſhed, our Body ſhall turn into Aſhes, and our Spirits ſhall vaniſh " as the ſoft Air: Whereupon our Name ſhall be forgotten in Time, and no Man " ſhall have our Works in Remembrance. Come on, therefore, let us enjoy the " good Things that are preſent, and let us ſpeedily uſe the Creatures, like as in " Youth. Let us fill ourſelves with coſtly Wine and Ointments, and let no Flower " of the Spring paſs by us. Let us crown ourſelves with Roſe-buds, before they " be withered; let none of us go without his Part of Voluptuouſneſs. Let us " leave Tokens of our Joyfulneſs in every Place; for this is our Portion, and our " Lot is this." Thus the *Infidel* reaſons himſelf into Softneſs, and Luxury, and Riot; and, in Proceſs of his Error, comes in a ſhort Time to approve Crimes, the moſt abhorrent to human Nature: For thus he goes on; " Let us oppreſs the " poor righteous Man; let us not ſpare the Widow, nor reverence the ancient grey " Hairs of the Aged. Let our Strength be the Law of Juſtice; for that which is " feeble, is found to be nothing worth. Therefore let us lie in wait for the Righ- " teous, becauſe he is not for our Turn, and he is clean contrary to our Doings. " He upbraideth us with our offending the Law, and objecteth, to our Infamy, the " Tranſgreſſings

Holy; whereby he alludes to the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, which (at the Time of his writing it) was yet ſtanding, and wherein there was the *Sanctuary*, or *Holy Place*, and within it the *Holy of Holies*, both Figures of the heavenly Things. And therefore he ſeems to have thought, that the Region of the Godly deceaſed was a Part of the heavenly Regions, as the *Sanctuary* was a Part of the *Temple*, and near to the higheſt Region of the Heavens, as the Sanctuary was nearer the *Holy of Holies*. Upon which Account ſome of the Fathers, as St *Cyprian*, St *Ambroſe*, and others, ſtuck not to call the Place of the ſeparate Spirits of good Men, by the Name of *Heaven*, or *the Heavens*; meaning thereby, not the *Auditorium*, or inmoſt Apartment of Heaven, where the *Throne of the Majeſty on High* is ſeated, and where the *Light, that is unapproachable*, ſhines, but an heavenly *Manſion*, ſomewhere near it: And by Parity of Reaſon, wherever we imagine Hell to be placed, we may ſuppoſe, that the Abode of wicked Spirits, in their State of Separation, is ſomewhere in the Confines of it. *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

[w] Biſhop *Smalridge*'s Sermons. † Matth. xviii. 10. [x] Job ii. 1, 2. [y] 2 Pet. iii. 11.
[z] De Legibus. [a] Chap. ii.

" Tranſgreſſings of our Education. Let us therefore examine him with Deſpite-
" fulneſs and Torture, that we may know his Meekneſs, and prove his Patience."
And, indeed, what Conſiderations of Prudence, or Decency, or Honour, or good Report, can reſtrain him from abuſing his Wealth and Power to the greateſt Degree of Licentiouſneſs and Tyranny, when he has once fortified himſelf in Infidelity, and poſſeſſed his Heart with this Perſuaſion, that, *when he dies, his Body ſhall be turned into Aſhes, and his Spirit vaniſh as the ſoft Air.* But now, when a Man carries always this Conviction in his Breaſt, that God hath not only appointed a Day, wherein he will judge the World, and [b] *render to every Man according to his Deeds; to them who obey not the Truth, but obey Unrighteouſneſs, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguiſh, upon every Soul of Man that doth Evil*; but, even before *that terrible Time cometh*, will conſign his immortal Soul, the Moment it leaves the Body, to [c] a Place of Gloomineſs and Deſpair, where there ſhines not the leaſt Glimmering of Light or Comfort, where there is no Company but the Devil and his Angels, and thoſe loſt Souls, which have been ſeduced by them; where wretched Spirits are continually vexed at the ſad Remembrance of their former Sins and Follies, feel the Wrath of God already diſcharged upon them, and tremble at the Apprehenſion of greater Wrath to come; where they preſently taſte the *Cup* of divine Vengeance, and are Heart-ſick to think of the Time, when they muſt drink up the *full Dregs* of it: When a Man is convinced of theſe Truths, I ſay, they cannot but have a good Influence on his Life, give a new Turn to his Thoughts and Affections, and ſome Check to his wildeſt Career.

IF indeed there were any Reſpite after Death; [d] if there were but ſome Hundreds of Years Intermiſſion, in a State of Sleep and Forgetfulneſs, this were ſome little preſent Comfort to the Ungodly; but when, upon their Departure hence, their State of Miſery ſhall commence; when, not only after the final Judgment, they muſt dwell with devouring Fire and everlaſting Burnings, but, in the Interval, be Company for infernal Spirits, and, with them, be equally [e] *reſerved in Chains of Darkneſs, againſt the Judgment of the great Day:* This Conſideration is abſolutely intolerable, and cannot fail, one would think, of affrighting all obſtinate Sinners out of their ungodly Courſes, becauſe it *forewarns*, and continually ſuggeſts to their Minds [f] *whom they* ought *to fear, even him, who, after he hath killed, hath* immediately *Power to caſt into Hell.*

ON the other Hand, when we are ſure and certain, not only of a bleſſed Reſurrection at the laſt Day, but of a Reception into a very happy State and Place in the mean Time; [g] a Place, wherever it is, of Reſt, and not a ſtupid inſenſible Reſt, but a Reſt attended with a lively Perception of a far greater Joy and Delight than this whole World can afford; a Place of the beſt Society and Company, where we ſhall be gathered to the *Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*, and familiarly converſe with thoſe Saints, and excellent Perſons, whom we have heard of, and admired, and whoſe Examples we have endeavoured to imitate; a Place that is the *Rendezvous* of the holy Angels of God, and which the Son of God himſelf viſits, and illuſtrates with the Rays of his Glory; where there will be no wicked Men to corrupt or offend us; no Devil to tempt us; no ſinful Fleſh to betray us; from whence all Sorrow, becauſe all Sin, is baniſhed, and where there is nothing but Joy, and yet more Joy ſtill to be expected: The Belief and Conſideration of this, I ſay, cannot fail of being a ſtrong Conſolation to us in the Day of Adverſity, and a powerful Inducement to all Virtue and Godlineſs of Living. [h] Were we, indeed, when we had *fought the good Fight, and finiſhed our Courſe*, to wait ſome Thouſands of Years, for a Recompence to be made us; were we to paſs thro' a long State of Oblivion and Inactivity, before we could reap any Advantage by all our Diligence and Labours in God's Service, this would be a *Defect* in our Encouragement, and a Kind of *Baulk* to our Expectation; but when we are aſſured, by God's holy Word, that ſuch as *die in the Lord*, not only *reſt from their Labours*, but have the Reward of their *Works following them* immediately; that pious Souls are no ſooner free from this mortal Body, but they find themſelves with God and their Saviour in Paradiſe; this, if any Thing, will engage us to be [i] *ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, foraſmuch as we know that our Labour ſhall*, ſo ſoon, ſo ſuddenly, *not be in vain in the Lord.*

SECT.

[b] Rom. ii. 6, 8. [c] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [d] *Whiſton*'s Sermons. [e] 2 Pet. ii. 4. [f] Luke xii. 5. [g] *Bull*, ibid. [h] *Whiſton*, ibid. [i] 1 Cor. xv. *ult.*

SECT. I.

Of the RESURRECTION *of the Dead.*

The Doctrine of the Reſurrection ſtated by St Paul.

WHEN St *Paul* was brought before *Feſtus*, the *Roman* Governor, to make his Defence, for having offended the *Jews*, in aſſerting the Reſurrection of *Jeſus*, whom they had crucified as a Malefactor, he addreſſes himſelf to *Agrippa*, who was likewiſe a *Jew*, and might therefore underſtand the Nature of the Controverſy between him and his Adverſaries, better than *Feſtus*: [k] *I think myſelf happy, King* Agrippa, *becauſe I ſhall anſwer for myſelf, this Day, before thee, touching all thoſe Things, whereof I am accuſed by the* Jews. *And now I ſtand, and am judged for the Hope of the Promiſe, made of God unto our Fathers, unto which Promiſe our twelve Tribes, inſtantly ſerving God, hope to come*, i. e. "[l] I am accuſed for preach-"ing that *Jeſus* is riſen from the Dead, which is but a *particular* Inſtance of the "*general* Doctrine of the Reſurrection, entertained by the *major Part* of the *Jews*, "and which, even to the natural Notions of Mankind, is not ſo incongruous, as "ſome may think it: For, [m] *why ſhould it be thought a Thing incredible with you*, "with you, O King *Agrippa*, and the reſt, that I ſpeak to this Day, who are *Jews*, "and believe the Scriptures, and therefore cannot be averſe to this Doctrine; *why* "*ſhould it be thought an incredible Thing, that God ſhould raiſe the Dead?*" The Apoſtle, in his Manner of Speech, ſeems to imply, that ſome People in the World thought it a Thing incredible, that the Dead ſhould be raiſed again; for this is the Foundation of his Queſtion. And therefore, before we ſhall attempt to ſhew the *Certainty*, the *Propriety*, and the *Manner* of the Reſurrection, it may not be amiſs to enquire a little, how far the World was acquainted with this Doctrine, before the Coming of our Saviour *Chriſt*.

What Knowledge the Heathens *had of a Reſurrection.*

[*] THE great Argument, whereby the wiſeſt of the *Heathen* World endeavoured to make Death leſs terrible, if not deſirable to them, was their Obſervation of the *unhappy* Effects, which did reſult from the *Union* of their Soul and Body. They perceived that their Underſtandings were clouded, and their Wills, in a Manner, captivated by their fleſhly Appetites: They were ſenſible, that the Soul ſuffered by the Diſorders of the Body, and, though in its own Nature ſpiritual, was ſo nearly united to it, that it felt its Pains, and was wounded with its Strokes. They diſcovered in the Soul a Power of ſequeſtering itſelf from worldly Things, had experienced the Pleaſures of *abſtract* Thinking, and thence inferred a Poſſibility to exiſt, and exiſt happily, in a State of Diſunion. [n] Their Poets too had prettily deviſed an *Elyſium*, and the Belief of it, being a pleaſant Amuſement, had entered into their ſobereſt Contemplations; and hereupon they concluded, that a Separation from the Body would be the Soul's greateſt Happineſs, as being an Enlargement from its Priſon, and Exemption from its Sufferings: But that the Body ſhould return from the Corruption of the Grave, and be united to the Soul again, this they never could imagine, and would have dreaded it, as much as a *Slave* would his Return to a *Dungeon*, had ever ſuch a Thought taken Poſſeſſion of their Minds.

WE meet, indeed, in Heathen Writers, with frequent Mention of the *Ghoſts* of departed Men, appearing, as it were, in a viſible Form, retaining in the Shades below their former Shape, and [o] employed in ſuch Actions, as they were accuſtomed to in their Life-time; but theſe Notions are rather conſidered, as *poetical* Amuſements, than having any Foundation in Reaſon; and all that we can collect from them is,—That the Heathens did believe, that the Soul, after this Life, did immediately paſs into another State, and there inveſt itſelf with a Body, made up of light *aerial* Particles, quite different from what it had before; but that the groſs Matter, which they ſaw laid in the Grave, and turned to Corruption, or burnt to Aſhes, and blown away in the Air, ſhould ever be raiſed, or collected again, and revivified; of

[k] Acts xxvi. 2. [l] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. III. [m] Acts xxvi. 6. [*] *Lucas*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [n] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

[o] ——— Quæ gratia currûm
Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes
Paſcere equos, eadem ſequitur tellure repoſtos. VIRG. Æn. Lib. VI. ver. 53.

of this they either had no Conception at all, or [p] reckoned it among the Things, which God himſelf was not able to perform. *Athens*, in St *Paul*'s Time, was one of the greateſt *Seats* of Learning, and its Philoſophers accounted Men of as fine *Speculations*, as any in the World; and yet when he came to preach there, and to declare to them the Reſurrection of *Chriſt*, they were amazed at this new Doctrine, not knowing what he meant by it, and took him for a Setter-up of *ſtrange Gods*, [q] *becauſe he preached Jeſus, and the Reſurrection.* [r] This Buſineſs of the Reſurrection was a Thing ſo remote to their Apprehenſions, that they underſtood the Apoſtle in a quite different Senſe, as if he had declared to them two new Deities, *Jeſus* and *Anaſtaſis*; as if he had brought a *new God*, and a *new Goddeſs* among them, *Jeſus* and the Reſurrection: And therefore, at another Time, when he was diſcourſing more fully of this Matter, upon barely naming the Reſurrection of the Dead, [s] *they mocked him*, and made a Jeſt of what he ſaid. *Feſtus* was certainly a Man of good Senſe: The Oration, which he made, upon opening the Aſſembly, beſpeaks his Addreſs and Eloquence both; and we may ſuppoſe that he liſtened to St *Paul*'s Defence with ſome Patience and Attention, until he came to ſpeak of the Reſurrection; but that was a wild Notion, in his Opinion, befitting none but crazy Brains: [t] *Paul, thou art beſide thyſelf: much Learning doth make thee mad.* And in this the Governor was more excuſable, who, being a great Man, and employed in publick Affairs, might not have Leiſure to attend to ſuch abſtruſe Queſtions, when [u] Philoſophers themſelves, in all Ages, looked upon the Reſurrection as impoſſible, and thoſe, who, in the *Primitive* Times, lived among Chriſtians, called this Article of our Faith an *abſurd* and *ridiculous* Aſſertion, and made it, on all Occaſions, the ſtanding Subject of their Banter. *

[x] CHRISTIANS indeed endeavoured to explain this Article to them by fit Alluſions and Compariſons. They told them, that *Sleep* was an appoſite Image of Death, and our *Waking*, of riſing from the Dead; that the *Setting* of the Sun anſwers our *Burial*, and its *Riſing* again, has a juſt Correſpondence to our *Reſurrection*; but all this would not do. Though they perceived the Likeneſs between Death and Sleep; though they obſerved the Viciſſitudes of Day and Night, and were aware of the Analogy theſe had to Life and Death; yet they were ſo far from making this Inference, that, on the contrary, we find them complaining, that, though the Sun ſet and roſe again, though themſelves ſlept and awoke out of Sleep; yet, when the Day of Life was once ſpent, they were thenceforth to ſleep for one, long, perpetual, eternal Night. So little Light was there in the Heathen World to diſpel this Gloomineſs and Deſpair!

What the Jews.

WE cannot but allow indeed, that the *Jews* had a competent Knowledge given them of this Article; and the Deference we owe to our bleſſed Saviour's Authority, who, againſt the *Sadducees*, has eſtabliſhed the Reſurrection from the very Books of *Moſes*, muſt carry it againſt all Inſinuations to the contrary: But ſtill it muſt be owned, that, though this Truth was revealed to the *Jews*, it was *wrapped* up in ſuch dark Terms, that the very Revelation itſelf wanted the *Vail to be removed*, that was caſt over it. [y] Intimations of a future State, and of a Reſurrection from the Dead, are ſcattered up and down in ſeveral Parts of the Old Teſtament; but

[p] Thus *Pliny*, reckoning up thoſe Things, which he thought not to be in the Power of God, mentions theſe two, *mortales æternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos.* Lib. II. c. vii.

[q] Acts xvii. 3. [r] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. Acts xvii. 32. [t] Ibid. xxvi. 24.

[u] *Pythagoras* (one of the earlieſt, whom Hiſtory reports to have been dignified with the Name of a Philoſopher) aſſerted a Tranſmigration of the ſame Soul into ſeveral Bodies, at leaſt he was thought to do ſo, which is utterly inconſiſtent with a Reſurrection; the Number of Bodies, upon theſe Terms, in ſo great a Proportion exceeding the Number of Souls. *Plato* indeed ſpeaks much of the Immortality of the Soul, but by his not ſo much as mentioning the riſing of his Body again, after its Diſſolution, when he treated of ſo cognate a Subject, we may rationally preſume, that he knew nothing of it. *Ariſtotle* held an Eternity of the World, *viz.* as to the Heavens, and the Earth, and the principal Parts of it: But, as to Things mutable, he placed that Eternity in the endleſs Succeſſion of *Individuals*, which the Immortality of *Particulars* would have deſtroyed; and therefore, from his Principles, he could never find out the Reſurrection of the Body, to return no more to Corruption: And as for the *Stoics* and *Epicureans*, though accounted the ſubtleſt of all the Sects of Philoſophers, we find them (Acts xvii. 32) ſcoffing at the very Mention *of riſing from the Dead*: and thinking it a ridiculous Notion for animated Duſt, once dead, to revive. *South*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. Upon this Account we find *Minutius Fælix* bringing in one, perſonating a *Pagan*, and laughing at the Chriſtians, becauſe, *Aniles fabulas aſtruunt & annectunt, renaſci ſe ferunt poſt mortem & cineres:* Et neſcio quâ fiduciâ mendaciis ſuis invicem credunt.

* Thus *Celſus* tells the Chriſtians in his Time, that the Hope of the Reſurrection of the Fleſh is σκωλήκων ἡ ἐλπίς, *the Hope of Worms, a filthy and abominable Thing, which God neither will, nor can do.* Apud Orig. Lib. V.

[x] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [y] Ibid.

but then there are ſome other Paſſages of a *ſuſpicious* Nature, which ſeem to deſtroy what theſe Texts eſtabliſh, and require more Penetration to reconcile, than uſually falls to a common Reader's Share. Thus, when we find *Job*, with great Solemnity aſſerting, that [z] *he knows that his Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the laſt Day upon the Earth, that he ſhall ſee God in his Fleſh, though it be deſtroyed with Worms; and that his Eyes ſhall behold him, and not another, though his Reins be conſumed within him*; we cannot reaſonably doubt of his firm and ſtedfaſt Faith in a Reſurrection: But, when the ſame *Job* declares, that [a] *his Life is ſpent without Hope*; that his Eye (that very Eye, wherewith he ſaid, *he ſhould ſee the Lord*) ſhall *no more ſee Good*; and that, *as a Cloud is conſumed and vaniſhed away*; *ſo he, that goeth down to the Grave ſhall come up no more*; theſe ſeemingly *deſperate* Expreſſions might ſtagger a *Jew*'s Belief, ſo far as it was built upon *Job*'s Teſtimony concerning the Certainty of a Reſurrection.

In like Manner, when Holy *David* declares his Hope, and diſtinguiſhes himſelf from ſenſual Men, that live without the Thoughts of another World, by ſaying, [b] *As for me, I ſhall behold thy Face in Righteouſneſs, and, when I awake, ſhall be ſatisfied with thy Likeneſs*; we cannot well doubt, but that he looked upon Death as a ſhort Sleep, and that he was aſſured of awaking at the Reſurrection: But, when the ſame *David* puts theſe Queſtions to his Maker, [c] *What Profit is there in my Blood, when I go down into the Pit?* [d] *Shall the Dead ariſe, and praiſe thee? Shall thy loving Kindneſs be known in the Grave, thy Wonders in the Dark, and thy Righteouſneſs in the Land of Forgetfulneſs?* When the ſame *David* ſeems to reſolve theſe Queſtions in the *Negative*, by ſaying, [e] *that the Dead praiſe not the Lord, nor any that go down into Silence*; for Man is as [f] *Wind, which paſſeth away, and cometh not again*; a carnal and inconſiderate *Jew* might think him as much an *Unbeliever* of this great Article, as the very *Sadducees* themſelves, and pervert his Words to a State of *Annihilation*. We might inſtance in ſeveral other Paſſages of the Old Teſtament, which, to a ſuperficial Reader, might ſeem rather to weaken, than ſtrengthen the Credibility of a future Reſurrection: And though we have no Reaſon to think, that they any Way diſprove the Revelation of this Doctrine to the *Jews*, yet they certainly ſhew us, that it was not ſo plainly diſcovered to them, as it is to us; that *Life and Immortality* are brought, at leaſt, to a greater *Light*, through the Goſpel, than they ever were through the Law; and what a learned *Phariſee* could attain to, by the utmoſt Stretch of Thought, from his Revelation, that each vulgar *Chriſtian* may *read, as he runs*, in almoſt every Page of ours, without any Danger of Miſunderſtanding in Senſe, or any Intermixture or *ambiguous* Paſſages, to give a Counterpoiſe to his Atteſtation.

The Clearneſs of the Chriſtian Revelation, as to this Particular.

The Declaration which Holy *Job* makes, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, &c. and that which we meet with in the Prophet *Iſaiah*, [g] *thy dead Men ſhall live; together with my dead Body ſhall they ariſe; awake and ſing, ye that dwell in the Duſt; for thy Dew ſhall be as the Dew of Herbs, and the Earth ſhall caſt out the Dead*; theſe, and ſome other Paſſages of the like Nature, are ſufficient Authorities, we think, from whence we may infer a Revelation of a future Reſurrection in the Old Teſtament: But then it muſt be owned, that ſeveral Interpreters have taken them in a lower Senſe, and applied them to a *temporal Reſtoration* only; to [h] *Job*'s Recovery of an happy Condition after all his Afflictions; and to the *Jews* getting free from the Captivity, and ſundry Perſecutions of their Enemies; whereas, when we find it expreſſly recorded in the new Revelation of the Goſpel, that [i] *there ſhall be a Reſurrection of the Dead, both of the Juſt and Unjuſt, and* [k] *that the Hour is coming, in which all that are in their Graves, ſhall hear the Voice of the Son of Man, and ſhall come forth; they that have done Good, unto the Reſurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil, unto the Reſurrection of Damnation:* When we are not only aſſured of the Thing, but have the very Manner of it, as far as *Alluſions* and *Compariſons* will reach, explained and illuſtrated to us; that [l] *what is ſown in Corruption, ſhall be raiſed in Incorruption, what is ſown in Diſhonour, ſhall be raiſed in Glory*, &c. Nay, when we have a greater Argument ſtill, and by the Inſtance of our Lord's Reſurrection, have this Doctrine proved and exemplified to us; [m] *for now that Chriſt is riſen from the Dead, and become the Firſt-Fruits of them that ſlept,*

[z] Job xix. 25, &c. [a] Ibid. vii. 6, 7, 9. [b] Pſal. xvii. 15. [c] Ibid. xxx. 9.
[d] Ibid. lxxxviii. 10, &c. [e] Ibid. cxv. 17. [f] Ibid. lxxviii. 39. [g] Iſa. xxvi. 19.
[h] St *Jerom*, *Calvin*, Biſhop *Patrick*, &c. [i] Acts xxiv. 15. [k] John v. 28, 29. [l] 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43. [m] Ibid. *ver.* 20.

ſlept, i. e. the Beginning and Pledge of the Reſurrection of all Believers; [n] *if we believe that Jeſus died, and roſe again, even ſo them alſo, who ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him*: When this Doctrine, I ſay, in all its Parts, is ſo fully, ſo clearly delivered to us in the Goſpel, there is no Poſſibility of miſunderſtanding its Meaning, or miſinterpreting its Senſe. And therefore every Chriſtian, that believes the Goſpel of Divine Revelation, muſt, in Conſequence, believe the Reſurrection, whatever Difficulty, or ſeeming Repugnancy to the Principles of *Natural Philoſophy*, he may conceive in the Execution of it.

An Objection againſt the Reſurrection.

"BUT how clearly ſoever the Doctrine of the Reſurrection be revealed in Scripture, yet, if it implies a plain *Contradiction*, if it croſſes our Conceptions, and oppoſes the firſt Principles of our *Reaſoning*, it is impoſſible we ſhould bring our Minds to believe it. [o] Now, what can we conceive more ſtrange and unaccountable, than when a Body, by continual Fraction and Diſſipation, is crumbled into Millions of little *Atoms*, ſome Portions of it *rarified* into Air, others *ſublimated* into Fire, and the reſt changed into Earth and Water, that the Elements ſhould, after all this, ſurrender back their Spoils, and the ſeveral Parts, after ſuch a Diſperſion, travel from all the Quarters of the World, to meet together in the ſame *individual* Body again? That God ſhould ſummon a Part out of this *Fiſh*, that *Fowl*, that *Beaſt*, that *Tree*, to unite into a new Combination, for the rebuilding of a fallen *Edifice*, for reſtoring an old broken demoliſhed Carcaſe to itſelf again? That the *Jaws* of Death ſhould relent, or the Grave, of all Things, make *Reſtitution*; that Filth and Rottenneſs ſhould be Preparatives to Glory, and Duſt and Aſhes the Seed-Plots of Immortality; that the Sepulchre ſhould be a Place to *dreſs* ourſelves in for Heaven, the *Attiring-Room*, for Corruption to put on Incorruption, and to fit us for the beatifick Viſion, is all a *Paradox* to our Reaſon, and therefore incompatible with our Faith." Now, were we diſpoſed to give a ſhort Anſwer to this Objection, we might alledge, what we hinted before, that this whole Controverſy depends upon, and ought to be determined by, the Scriptures, as turning upon theſe two Points, *viz.* 1. Whether a future Reſurrection be revealed in the Scriptures? And, 2. Whether the ſaid Scriptures be the Word of God? And if the Matter ſtand thus, no Man, we are ſure, can pretend to the Name of a Chriſtian, who, in the leaſt, doubts of the *Affirmative* in either of theſe two Points; and, conſequently, all Arguments from Reaſon or Philoſophy, formed againſt an Article thus proved, come too late to ſhake its *Credibility*. We cannot, however, but obſerve, that, [p] leaſt of all, ſhould the Men, we have now to deal with, find fault with our aſſerting the Poſſibility of a Reſurrection: For why the ſame Particles of Matter, in a long Tract of Time, may not meet together again, and make up the ſame Body, as well as they did, *once upon a Time*, to compoſe it at firſt; and why ſhould it be more incredible, that a dead Body ſhould be raiſed out of the Grave, than that a living Body ſhould *originally* ſpring out of the Earth, by the mere *Fermentation* of Matter, we cannot poſſibly conceive.

Anſwered.

1. The Certainty of the Reſurrection, proved from the Power of God.

THE Chriſtian Doctrine, however, does not aſcribe the Reſurrection to *Nature*, or any created Agent of a limited Knowledge, or finite Power. It tells us, indeed, that Angels are employed in this Tranſaction; that, [q] *with a great Sound of a Trumpet, they are ſent out to gather together the Elect from the four Winds, from one End of Heaven to the other*; but it tells us, at the ſame Time, that they only act *miniſterially*, and are under the Guidance and Direction of God. [r] Now, no Man can have a true Notion of God, unleſs he acknowledges him a Being of infinite Power and Wiſdom; that he made the World, and all Things therein; that he preſerves and ſuſtains all Creatures; that they are all at his Diſpoſal, to do with them what he pleaſes; and that nothing can reſiſt his Will, or give the leaſt Hinderance to any Thing he undertakes: And, under this Conception, how can the Reſurrection of the Dead be an Impoſſibility to God? To collect the diſperſed Parts of Man's Body, to diſpoſe them into their proper Order, to reduce them into a Temper fit to ſerve *vital* Functions, and to rejoin the Soul unto the Body thus reſtored; why ſhould it be thought an *impoſſible*, why ſhould it be thought a *difficult* Matter to him, who firſt formed and tempered Man's Body out of the Duſt, and inſpired the Soul into it? Yea, to him, who, out of mere Confuſion, digeſted the *whole World* into ſuch wonderful Order and Harmony? Be the conſtituent Parts of never ſo many Bodies, either

[n] 1 Theſſ. iv. 14. [o] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. [p] *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons. [q] Matth. xxiv. 31. [r] *Lucas*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

either incloſed in the Deep, or fled into the Air, or changed into Earth, or any other Creature, yet what Trouble can this give him, [s] *who meaſures the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand, and meteth out the Heavens with a Span, and comprehendeth the Duſt of the Earth in a Meaſure; before whom the Nations are as a Drop of a Bucket, and are counted as the ſmall Duſt of the Balance?* Nay, of the two, [t] it ſeems a Matter of more *eaſy* Contemplation, for God to collect the ſcattered Parts of our Bodies, and remand them to their proper Places, than to form them, *originally*, out of the Duſt, into the regular *Syſtem* and Proportion, wherein we ſee them; as an *Artiſt* can more readily ſet together any curious Machine, when taken to Pieces, eſpecially if it be of his own Conſtructure, and the Pieces under his Cognizance, and within his Reach, than he could compoſe it at firſt. The only Difference in the Compariſon is, that God, who needs no Inſtruments or Deliberation, does all by the *Act of his Will*; whereas much Contrivance, and many Means are requiſite to Men, both towards their forming and repairing any curious Piece of Workmanſhip.

THE grateful Pſalmiſt, magnifying the great Goodneſs of God, and his watchful Providence over all his Creatures, gives us this ſignal Inſtance of it, [u] *I will praiſe thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; my Subſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in Secret, and curiouſly faſhioned in the loweſt Parts of the Earth. Thine Eyes did ſee my Subſtance, yet being imperfect, and in thy Book were all my Members written:* And if, in Condeſcenſion to our Capacity, God is ſaid to keep a *Book*, to note down the *gradual* Increaſe of the *Embryo* in the Womb; there is, at leaſt, equal Reaſon to believe, that he keeps *one*, for recording the Places, where the diſſipated Parts of our deceaſed Bodies lie: But this Book, indeed, is nothing elſe, but his *all-comprehending* Mind, whereby every minute *Atom*, that belongs to us, is under the Care and Cognizance of him, who made us. * The Generation of our Fleſh is clearly ſeen by *the Father of Spirits*; the Augmentation of it is known to him, *in whom we live, and move, and have our Being*; and the Diſſolution of it is perceived by him, [x] *who numbers the Hairs of our Heads*, and *lets not a Sparrow fall to the Ground*, without his Remembrance and Obſervation. [y] He that *counteth the Sands of the Sea*, knoweth all the ſcattered Bodies, ſeeth all the Graves and Tombs, ſearches all the Repoſitories and *Dormitories* in the Earth, knoweth what Duſt belongs to each Body, and what Body to each Soul. And as he knoweth all this, ſo, by his infinite Power, he can recal every Part to its proper Place; can rally and recollect every little *Atom*, if Need be, and, *in the twinkling of an Eye*, preſent the whole Race of Mankind, vivid and entire, by the ſame Almighty *Fiat*, he employed in the Creation of the World, *when he ſpake, and it was done, he commanded, and it ſtood faſt.*

And other Arguments, taken from familiar Things.

THUS the Conſideration of God's *Omnipotence* ſolves all the Difficulties in this great *Article* of our Faith, the Reſurrection of our Bodies, after they are diſſolved into the common Maſs of Matter. But to make this Notion more eaſy and familiar, [z] look a little into the State of the World, and you will ſoon ſee ſuch an Inequality of Diſtributions in it, as will neceſſitate a Reſurrection, for the Vindication of God's Juſtice, and [a] *that every one may receive the Things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether they be good or bad.* Turn your Eyes upon your own Compoſition, and you cannot but perceive, that a Body, which periſhes ſo ſoon, ſooner than many Fowls of the Air, or Beaſts of the Field, or Plants of the Earth, can never be a proper *Companion* for an *immortal* Soul, if it makes no other Appearance, than in this ſhort Scene of Life, and finally periſhes when it dies. [b] Obſerve with what *Unwillingneſs*, with what *Reluctancy*, the Soul parts with its Companion, and is forced to be torn away, as it were, by the violent Hands of Death, and you can hardly ſuppoſe, that they were *primarily* intended for no longer *Continuance* together, without queſtioning the Creator for *making all Men in vain.* Take but a Walk in your Gardens, (in the Seaſon of the Spring more eſpecially) and you will meet with many *Emblems* of your own Reſurrection, the Plants and Flowers peeping out of their Graves, and every Thing reviving, growing, and flouriſhing, at the nearer Approach of the Sun. Aſk the *Huſbandman*, and he will tell you, that the *Corn*, which he ſows, *is not quickened, except it die*, and that it muſt be buried in the Ground, and there putrify, before it comes forth, in all its Glory,

[s] Iſa. xl. 12, 15. [t] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [u] Pſal. cxxxix. 14, 15, &c.
* *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [x] Matth. x. 29, 30. [y] *Pearſon*, ibid. [z] Ibid. [a] 2 Cor. v. 10. [b] *Newcombe*'s Sermons.

Glory, [c] *the Blade, and the Stalk, and the full Corn in the Ear.* Aſk the *Botaniſt*, and he will inform you, [d] that the Aſhes in a Plant, ſown in a Garden, have ſometimes produced a fairer Plant in its Kind, than ever was raiſed in a *natural* Way; and aſk the *Chemiſt*, and he will teach you [e] the Reduction of Things, (though never ſo mixed and confounded with the Parts of other Bodies) to their prime State and Qualities; and, to your great Amazement, will ſhew you *Plants*, by little and little, riſing out of their *Salts*, in their ſeveral proper Forms, all freſh and gay, as they appear in the Fields and Gardens: And ſurely the Chemiſtry of Heaven is much more efficacious, to turn our dead Aſhes into living Bodies. " Till Natural Philoſophy " therefore be better improved, (as a [f] great and pious Improver of it expreſſes " himſelf) we can ſcarce imagine, what Methods a farther Diſcovery of the " *Myſteries* of Art and Nature may lead us to, in re-producing Bodies; much leſs " can our weak Knowledge determine, what *phyſical* Means the wiſe Author of the " Univerſe may make Uſe of to bring the Reſurrection to paſs; ſince we have but " imperfect Apprehenſions of the Powers of *one*, whoſe Nature is ſo incomparably " ſuperior to ours.

An Objection, from the Tranſmutation of Matter, againſt the Propriety of a Reſurrection.

" BUT how diſtant ſoever God's Nature is to ours, and how inconceivably " great ſoever his Power may be; yet this we lay down for an infallible Truth, " that *he cannot do any Thing that implies a Contradiction:* And therefore, though " we allow, that he may recover all the Particles of Men's Bodies, wherever diſper- " ſed, ſo long as they continue diſtinct and ſeparate; yet, when once they come to " be *tranſformed* into the *Subſtance* of other Men's Bodies, they ſeem then not to " fall within the Compaſs of his acting. [g] Now the Parts of a Body, we know, " are in a continual *Flux*; the Decays of Nature are repaired by the daily Subſtitu- " tion of new Matter, derived from our Nutriment; and when, at length, this " Body comes to be diſſolved by Death, it ſoon after returns to Earth. This Earth, " we know farther, is animated into Graſs; this Graſs turns into the Subſtance of " the Beaſt, which eats it; this Beaſt becomes Food for Man, and ſo by a long " *Percolation* is converted into his Fleſh and Subſtance: So that ſuch Matter, or " Subſtance, which was once an integral Part of *this* Man's Body, perhaps, twenty " Years after his Death, by this Round of perpetual Tranſmutation, comes to be an " integral Part of another Man's. Now, if there be a Reſurrection, and every Man " ſhall be reſtored with his own *numerical* Body, the Art will be to tell us, how " the Matter muſt be adjuſted, and to which Body this *controverted* Part ſhall be " reſtored at the Reſurrection? This is a Difficulty in the common Buſineſs of " *Nutrition*; but it ſeems to be much greater, in the Caſe of thoſe *Cannibals*, who " devour one another, if ſo be the Bodies of the Devourers and the Devoured are to " riſe whole and compleat at the laſt Day. The only Way therefore to ſupply this " Defect, is to ſuppoſe an Acceſſion of new Matter, ſince [h] *we are able, without any* " *Difficulty, to conceive the ſame Perſon at the Reſurrection, though in a Body, not ex-* " *actly, in Make and Parts, the ſame, which he had here, the ſame Conſciouſneſs being* " *along with the Soul that inhabits it.*" This is the great Objection, which thoſe, who deny the *Identity* of the Reſurrection-Body, have to offer, and therefore to give a proper Solution, we ſhall, 1. Conſider what the Scripture teaches us concerning this Matter; and then, 2. In what Manner we are to ſolve theſe Difficulties.

2. The Propriety of a Reſurrection proved from Scripture.

1. ALLOWING then, that the Declaration of Holy *Job* relates to the Reſurrection of the Dead, his Words ſeem to be very *emphatical:* [i] *Though after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh (in Fleſh*, which ſhews the *Reality*, and *in my Fleſh*, which ſhews the Propriety and *Identity* of his Reſurrection) *I ſhall ſee God; whom*

[c] Mark iv. 28. [d] *Boyle*, of the Poſſibility of the Reſurrection, in his *Theological* Works, Vol. III.

[e] Thus Gold, when diſſolved in *Aq. Regis*, appears to be a Liquor, and, when precipitated, looks like a Salt, or Vitriol, and, by a certain Operation, may be made Part of the Fewel of a Flame; being joined with another Body, it may be reduced to Glaſs, and, when precipitated with Mercury, it makes a glorious tranſparent Powder: When precipitated with Spirit of *Urine*, or Oil of *Tartar per Deliquium*, it forms a *fulminating Calx*, which goes off eaſily, yet is ſtronger than Gunpowder; and yet, notwithſtanding all theſe Tranſmutations, it ſtill retains its Nature, ſince, by *chemical* Operations, it may be reduced to its *Metalline* Form. In like Manner, Mercury may be put into different Shapes; ſometimes it is like a Vapour, ſometimes like ſimple Water, ſometimes like a red, or white, or yellow Powder, and ſometimes like a cryſtalline Salt, or malleable Metal; yet the Artiſt will ſoon reduce it to its native Form again. *Boyle*, ubi ſupra.

[f] *Boyle*, ubi ſupra. [g] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. IV. [h] *Locke*'s Eſſay, Vol. I. c. xxvii.

[i] Job xix. 26, 27. *Quid hâc prophetiâ manifeſtius? Nullus tam apertè, poſt Chriſtum, quam iſte ante Chriſtum, de Reſurrectione loquitur.* S. Hierom. Epiſt. lxi.

whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold, and not another. The Change and Alteration, which our glorified Bodies ſhall receive, will be inconceivably great indeed, but St *Paul* has aſſured us, that their Matter and Subſtance will be the *ſame*: For though [k] *Chriſt ſhall change our vile Bodies, that they may be faſhioned like unto his glorious Body*; yet [l] THIS *Corruption*, (ſays he, [m] pointing at, or taking hold of, his own Fleſh) *muſt put on Incorruption, and* THIS *Mortal muſt put on Immortality*; and therefore he aſſures us, in another Place, that [n] *he, who raiſed up Chriſt from the Dead, ſhall alſo quicken our mortal Bodies.* When therefore the Apoſtle, in Anſwer to the common Cavil of Infidels, *How are the Dead raiſed up, and with what Body*, (or more properly, with what Sort of Body) *do they come?* endeavours to illuſtrate the Thing, by a Compariſon taken from Seed ſown in the Ground, which, as he tells us, [o] *is not that Body, which ſhall be*, he is certainly ſpeaking, not of the *Subſtance*, but of the *Qualities* of the Reſurrection-Body, as is manifeſt from his Application of the *Simile*, (wherein the Force of all ſuch-like Reaſoning lies) [p] *ſo alſo is the Reſurrection of the Dead. It is ſown in Corruption, it is raiſed in Incorruption: It is ſown in Diſhonour, it is raiſed in Glory: It is ſown in Weakneſs, it is raiſed in Power: It is ſown a natural Body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual Body:* For theſe are the *Properties*, and not the *Matter*, or Subſtance of a Body.

SUPPOSING however, that the Apoſtle's Meaning had not been ſo clear in this Paſſage, yet when we are told, in relation to the *Place*, whence the Reſurrection ſhall begin, that [q] *they, who ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth*, they [r] *who are in the Grave*, ſhall *hear the Voice, and riſe*; that [s] *the Sea ſhall give up the Dead, which are in it, and Death and the Grave ſhall deliver up the Dead, which are in them*; whereas, [t] if the ſame Bodies did not riſe, they, which *are in the Duſt*, ſhould not revive; if God ſhould give us any other Bodies than our own, neither *the Sea*, nor *the Grave*, would give up their Dead: When we are told, in relation to the *Conſequence* of the Reſurrection, that [u] *we muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the Things done in his Body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad*; whereas it ſuits not with the Nature of a juſt *Retribution*, that he, who ſinned, or ſerved God in one Body, ſhould be puniſhed or rewarded in another: When we are told, in relation to thoſe, that ſhall never riſe, becauſe they ſhall never die, that [*] *they ſhall be caught up together* with thoſe, that are dead, *in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air, and ſo ſhall ever be with the Lord*; whereas, if thoſe, who are alive, ſhall be caught up in the *ſame* Bodies, only ſpiritualized and glorified, we cannot but imagine, (without ſuppoſing a ſtrange *Diſparity* among the Saints) that thoſe, who are dead, will appear in theirs likewiſe: And laſtly, when we are told, in relation to thoſe Examples, which God was pleaſed to give us, in order to confirm our Faith in the Reſurrection, that [x] *the Graves were opened, and many Bodies of Saints, which ſlept, aroſe, and came out of their Graves, and appeared unto many*; whereas, had they not aroſe in the ſame Bodies, which were laid in the Grave, their Appearance would have been of no Avail; their Acquaintance could not have known them; and therefore, when we are told all this, I ſay, and the Reſurrection of the ſame Body is ſet before us in ſo many different Views and Proſpects; it ſeems as if the Aim and Deſign of the Goſpel was to eſtabliſh us in this great *Article*.

From Antiquity.

NAY, if we purſue our Enquiry, we ſhall find, that this was the declared Doctrine of the Chriſtian Church, in the Books next ſucceeding the *Canonical* Scriptures; that *Clemens Romanus*, owned by St *Paul* as his *Fellow-Labourer*, admoniſheth the *Corinthians* [y], that none of them ſhould preſume to ſay, THIS *Fleſh is not to be raiſed up, nor come to Judgment*; that *Polycarp*, a Diſciple of the Apoſtles, [z] when bound to the Stake, *bleſſed God, that he was among the Number of Martyrs, in order to the Reſurrection of his Soul and Body to eternal Life*; that *Irenæus*, born about ſeven Years before St *John*'s Death, rehearſing the Articles of Faith, adds, [a] *the Coming of Chriſt, to bring all Things paſt to Account, and to raiſe up all Fleſh of Mankind*; that *Juſtin*

[k] Phil. iii. 21. [l] 1 Cor. xv. 53.
[m] *Sed & Apoſtolus cùm dicit*, Oportet enim corruptible hoc induere incorruptionem, & mortale hoc induere immortalitatem, *numquid non corpus ſuum, quodammodo contingentis, & digito palpantis eſt vox?* Τὸ φθάρτον τοῦτο, καὶ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο. Ruff. in Symb.
[n] Rom. viii. 11. [o] 1 Cor. xv. 37. [p] Ibid. *ver.* 42. [q] Dan. xii. 2.
[r] John v. 28. [s] Rev. xx. 13. [t] *Pearſon*, on the Creed. [u] 2 Cor. v. 10.
[*] 1 Theſſ. iv. 17. [x] Matth. xxvii. 53. [y] Epiſt. ii. [z] Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. IV. c. xv. [a] Lib. I. c. ii.

Juſtin Martyr, converted about the Year 130, tells *Trypho*, [b] *I, and all Chriſtians, who are entirely orthodox, do believe, that there will be a Reſurrection of the Fleſh*; and to name no more, that *Tertullian*, towards the End of the *ſecond* Century, wrote a [c] Book, *ex Profeſſo*, upon this Subject, wherein he endeavours to ſatisfy the popular Objection abovementioned. Nor can we conceive, why the coſtly Spices of the *Sabeans* and *Arabians*, as *Tertullian* [d] notes, were ſpent with greater Prodigality, on the Burials of *Chriſtians*, than the Heathens uſed in the Incenſe they burnt to their Gods; or why the Heathens, in the Perſecution under *Antoninus Verus*, were wont to ſcatter the Aſhes of martyr'd Saints in *Rivers*, to prevent (as they thought) the Reſurrection, wherewith the Chriſtians ſupported themſelves in their Sufferings, unleſs, not only a Reſurrection in general, but a Reſuſcitation of the very ſame Bodies, which were thus embalmed, or diſperſed, was the current Belief of thoſe Ages.

SINCE this then is the Doctrine of Chriſt, taught by his Apoſtles, and confirmed by their *Succeſſors*, whatever Difficulties may ariſe from the ordinary Courſe of Nature in *Nutrition*, or from the Barbarity of ſome, who are ſaid to feed on human Fleſh, they ſhould not impair our Belief of it; becauſe, in this Caſe, where the Divine *Veracity* is engaged, a ſerious and impartial Man will be apt to ſuppoſe, that, in the Courſe of Nature, *Omnipotence* may ſeveral Ways interpoſe, in order to hinder a Man's being nouriſhed by the Body of another, and ſo prevent the Confuſion here preſumed; and that this may be done more *eaſily*, conſidering, how ſmall a Quantity of what is eaten ordinarily enters into *Concretion*. For whatever paſſes into the Stomach is, in ſo great a Meaſure, thrown off again by the natural Methods of *Secretion*, that the moſt accurate Conjectures of the Learned from *Statick* Experiments * do not allow the twentieth Part to be detained, as incorporated Nouriſhment, and in human Fleſh, which is ſo very unfit for Nouriſhment, perhaps the *Proportion* may be leſs. *From* Reaſon.

BUT allowing the utmoſt, yet ſtill it may be ſuppoſed, that though the outward Make and Proportion of this *natural* Body ſhall be preſerved, yet its entire Subſtance will not be employed in the Formation of our *ſpiritual* one: For ſince, as [e] the Apoſtle intimates, it is to be raiſed in ſurpriſing *Glory*, for an immenſe Duration, and for the Enjoyment of a *ſpiritual* Life, ſo widely different from this; it were abſurd to imagine, that our preſent natural Building ſhould ſo far preſcribe a *Model* to it, as to have it incumbered with any Parts, that ſhall be then *ſuperfluous*, though at preſent the neceſſary Inſtruments of our *animal* Life. When therefore our Body ſhall be reſcued from the Bondage of Corruption, and, in Conſequence, from all Neceſſity of Repairs, neither hungering nor thirſting any more for ever; it is reaſonable to think, that it will not be loaded with that Bulk of Matter, (in Proportion near a *ſeventh* to the whole Subſtance of the Fleſh) which, in this fleeting Body, compoſes the Parts, that are neceſſary to concoct, and diſtribute the Nutriment, which ſuſtains its *Fabrick*, and ſupplies its *Decays*; and [f] whereas, in this *natural* Body, there is a *maſſive* Strength of Bones and Muſcles requiſite to anſwer the Fatigues of Labour, and all the Neceſſities of Life; when theſe Occaſions ſhall be removed, and the Body framed for the Service of the Soul, and the Exerciſe of ſpiritual Faculties only, it is reaſonable again to imagine, that a much *leſs* Quantity of Matter, than what goes to make up our preſent Bulk, will ſuffice.

SINCE Nature therefore has been ſo elegantly *frugal* in the Frame of the preſent Body, as to project ſo many uſeful Deſigns, ſuch ſurpriſing Variety, and Force of Motion, together with a graceful outward Figure, all within the Compaſs of ſo ſmall a Bulk of Matter, and yet every Way accommodated to this groſs World, and the Exigences of an *animal* Life; [g] ſince, I ſay, this *Tenement of Clay*, which is but of a very ſhort Continuance, is ſo curiouſly built: How can we imagine, but that the *Reſurrection-Body*, which is to laſt for ever, muſt be *modelled*, at leaſt with equal Art, to anſwer the Powers of that exalted Spirit the *Soul*, and to taſte the new Enjoyments of an Angelick Life? Though therefore the Scriptures, as we have ſhewed above, do plainly teſtify, that our *ſpiritual* Body ſhall be made out of the Materials of this *natural* one; yet, ſince they no where affirm, that *all* theſe *Materials* ſhall be uſed in its Compoſition, unleſs we can ſuppoſe this ſpiritual Body loaded with Parts, that are *ſuperfluous*, our firſt Poſition will ſtand firm, *viz. that the*

[b] Euſeb. Hiſt. Lib. IV. c. xi. [c] De Reſurrectione Carnis. [d] Apol. c. xlii. * *D'Oyly's* Diſſertations. [e] 1 Cor. xv. 43, [f] *D'Oyly*, ibid. [g] Ibid.

What makes the Identity of a Body.

the Substance of the natural Body will be considerably more than sufficient for composing the spiritual one: and, consequently, all the Difficulties alledged from the presumed Deficiency of *Bodies, emaciated by lingering Sickness*, from the *Redundances of the corpulent*, and whatever may be objected of the like Nature, will, all at once, sink, and vanish into nothing. In short, [h] to denominate the same Body, it is not necessary, that it should consist of every *individual* Part, which has at any Time composed it, or, immediately before the Change, was incident to it; for, considering the perpetual Transmutation of Matter, no Man could then have the same *numerical* Body one Moment. It is sufficient to our Purpose, in asserting the *Identity* of the rising Body, that it should consist of some considerable Parts, at least, of the Body which died. The Scriptures, as we said, do no where demand any more: And therefore, it being left to our Liberty so to conjecture and argue upon this Article, as to recommend, if possible, the Credibility of it to common Sense; we cannot think, that those Persons have done any great Service to Religion, who, by clogging it with gross and heavy Expositions, have betrayed it to the Contempt and Insults of the Wicked and Profane. And so we proceed to consider, in the last Place, the Manner in which this Resurrection is to be effected.

3. *The* Manner *of the Resurrection.*

OUR blessed Saviour, foretelling his Disciples the Destruction which would shortly come upon *Jerusalem*, takes Occasion, by an easy Transition, to fall into an Account of the Day of Judgment, and to acquaint them with some Circumstances, that would be preliminary to it. [i] *Then shall the Son of Man, as he comes in the Clouds of Heaven, with Power and great Glory, send his Angels with a great Sound of a Trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect, from the four Winds, from one End of Heaven to the other:* And St *Paul*, to comfort the *Thessalonians* for the Loss of such Friends, as had probably suffered for the Christian Profession, gives them this Description of the Resurrection, [k] *the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven, with a Shout, with the Voice of an Arch-Angel, and with the Trumpet of God, and the Dead in Christ shall be raise first; then we, which are alive, shall be caught up together with them, in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air.* [l] It was an ancient Custom among most Nations, to gather their Assemblies together by the Sound of a *Trumpet*; and in Allusion to this Custom, both our Saviour, and his Apostle here tells us, that God, by the same Sound, will assemble the World of Men to Judgment, *i. e.* by a real *audible* Sound, like that of a Trumpet, though proceeding from no other Instrument, than that of the *Arch-Angel*'s Mouth. For if God, when he descended on Mount *Sinai*, to pronounce the Law, was attended with [m] *the Voice of a Trumpet, exceeding loud, so that all the People, which were in the Camp, trembled*; there can be no Reason assigned, from the Nature of the Thing, why he should not, by such a Sound, proclaim his Coming to judge the World. But then, together with this mighty *Voice* or *Trump* of the Arch-Angel, there shall proceed from Christ a *Divine* Power, even [n] his *Holy Spirit*, by which he raised himself from the Dead, by whose *omnipotent* Agency all the scattered Parts of the Bodies of his Saints shall be gathered up,

[h] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. This Author has another Method of solving the Difficulty, which seems to savour a little of the Notion of some *Jews*, who pretend, that there is a certain incorruptible Part in Man's Body, from whence the whole, at the Resurrection, is to be produced; for he supposes, that there are, in all Animals certain constituent insensible Particles, which contain, in *Miniature*, the several Parts of the whole Body; and that the foreign Matter, taken in by Way of Nutriment, which fills and distends the Bodies of Men, and augments their Members, is not strictly *essential* to it, but only convenient for the Man in his present State; so that, while these Particles of foreign Matter are in a continual Flux, the *original* and fundamental Principle, which properly constitutes the Body, and from which it ought to be denominated, through all the Changes of Life and Death, remains itself fixed, and unchangeable, without Confusion of Parts, or the least Danger of incorporating with other Bodies. Hence he supposes, that, besides the Parts, which are corrupted, there is this *seminal Principle* abiding in Mens Bodies, which, by just Degrees, is dilated, after a curious and surprising Manner, at the Resurrection, and so constitutes the compleat Body. But this Conjecture, we conceive is a little too fine spun, and perhaps destitute of any real Foundation. Another Author has taken a different Method in this Question. He supposes, that whatever Deficiencies there shall be, as to any particular Bodies, they shall be supplied by Additions out of the common Mass of Matter. "The Resurrection of the same Body, *says he*, does not necessarily imply, that all the same Matter shall be "raised, and no other, and no more. For if all shall be raised in the most perfect Stature and Proportion of human "Bodies, as there is no Doubt but they shall, then Infants and Dwarfs, and such as die of Consumptions, must have "new Matter added to that, which they died withal; and therefore the Resurrection of the same Body can imply no "more than this, —— That every Body shall be raised out of the same Matter, so far as it will go; and therefore, "wherever there is a Defect in any particular Body. God, no doubt, will add no Substance to it; and yet this will no "more hinder it from being the same *numerical* Body, than the Reparation of an House, with new Stones and Timber, "hinders it from being the same *numerical* House." *Scott*'s Mediator. But this Solution seems liable to some Objections, which the Supposition of a less Quantity of Matter, requisite in our *glorified*, than in our *natural* Bodies, certainly stands clear of, and therefore we have given the Preference to it.

[i] Matth. xxiv. 30, 31. [k] 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. [l] *Scott*'s Mediator. [m] Exod. xix. 16.
[n] Rom. viii. 11.

up, re-united, and re-organized into glorious Bodies; and thoſe happy Souls, which formerly inhablited them, and which are now come down from Heaven with their Saviour, ſhall every one re-enter its own proper Body, and animate it with immortal Vigour and Activity; while thoſe, who ſhall then be alive, and never taſte of Death, ſhall be † *changed*, *transformed*, and *glorified*, in the *Twinkling of an Eye*.

THE Apoſtle, to give us a more diſtinct Perception of that wonderful Change, which ſhall paſs upon every good Chriſtian at the Reſurrection, expreſſes it in the *five* oppoſite Reſpects. [o] Our Bodies, *ſays he*, in their preſent State, are [p] *Weak*, and *Diſhonourable*, and *Animal*, and *Corruptible*, and *Mortal*; *Weak*, by Reaſon of the jarring Principles of their Compoſition; *Diſhonourable*, by Reaſon of the many noiſome and humbling Effects, which thoſe Principles produce; *Animal*, becauſe their Life depends, as that of Beaſts does, upon the Returns of an uncertain Breath; *Corruptible*, becauſe every Day they tend towards Diſſolution, which, at laſt, is finiſhed in actual Death; But, on the contrary, he tells us, that thoſe Bodies, which our Reſurrection ſhall produce, are *Vigorous*, and *Glorious*, and *Spiritual*, and *Incorruptible*, and *Immortal*; *Vigorous*, without any Weakneſs or Impediment; *Glorious*, without any Darkneſs or Deformity; *Spiritual*, without any Groſſneſs or Incumberance; *Incorruptible*, without any Pain or Paſſibility; *Immortal*, without any Alteration or Decay; and well they may be ſo, when [q] *Chriſt ſhall faſhion them like unto his glorious Body, according to the working, whereby he is able to ſubdue all Things unto himſelf.* [r] Our Lord, to fortify his Diſciples againſt thoſe Troubles, which he had told them were likely to enſue, [s] took *Peter*, and *James*, and *John*, with him into the Mount, and there gave them an *ocular* Demonſtration of this happy Change: He *transfigured* himſelf before them, and aſſumed, for a while, the Luſtre of a *glorified* Body; under which Appearance, it is ſaid, that *his Face ſhone like the Sun*, and *his Raiment* (pierced through with the Beams, that darted from his Body) *became as white as the Light*; inſomuch that his Diſciples fell into an Extaſy at the beholding of their *own* Appearance, as being too weak at preſent, to bear the very Sight of that Glory and Majeſty, which, in due Time, they themſelves were to put on. And, if each Son of the Reſurrection is to have a Body ſublimated and refined to this Degree of Splendor and Purity, it even raviſhes the Heart to think, what a glorious Aſſembly that of the Saints muſt be, when every one [t] *ſhall ſhine forth like ſo many Suns in the Kingdom of their Father.*

The Difference between our preſent and future Bodies.

WHETHER, [u] when we ariſe again, we ſhall be all of the ſame *Form* and *Stature*, and in all the Bloom, Beauty, and Vigour of Youth; whether there will be then any Difference of *Sexes* among the Saints, and to what Ends that Difference, if admitted, will ſerve; whether we ſhall retain the ſame Senſes, and after what Manner they will be affected with their reſpective Objects; whether our Souls, in their new Conjunction, ſhall perceive Things by the Help of Fancy, and corporeal Ideas, as they do now; whether our Bodies ſhall paſs from Place to Place in a *progreſſive* Motion, or *bound* all, at once wherever the Mind directs them, in a Moment; whether our Bodies will then occupy Space, as much as they do now; and whether the Surface of the Earth will be large enough to contain all Mankind upon it, at the Day of Reſurrection: Theſe, and ſome more of the like Nature, are Queſtions of Curioſity, more than Uſe, what the Scriptures have no where determined, but what he, who is minded to entertain himſelf with ſuch *Niceties*, may find plentifully diſcuſſed in the Lucubrations of the *School-Men*. [x] And therefore to proceed,

Several Queſtions concerning the Reſurrection.

* IT is very remarkable, in the Caſe of righteous *Job*, that, when he was ſtripped, and deſtitute of all that the World calls Comfort, God was pleaſed to reveal this Doctrine of the Reſurrection to him in ſo bright a Manner, that we cannot have the Article fuller expreſſed at this Day. That *Job* had ſo full a Revelation of this comfortable Truth, was a particular *Mercy* to him; but it is likewiſe an *Inſtruction* to us, that, ſince *the Man of univerſal Afflictions* had this Revelation given him, for a ſure Means of Conſolation, there can be no Affliction, to which the ſame Means may not be applied with all deſirable Succeſs. The Author to the *Hebrews*, ſpeaking of the † *Hope that is ſet before* every one of us, in the Proſpect of the Reſurrection, calleth it *a ſtrong Conſolation*, and *an Anchor of the Soul, both ſure and certain*: And, indeed,

The Uſes of this Doctrine.

† 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. [o] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [p] 1 Cor. xv. [q] Phil. iii. 21. [r] *Young*, ibid. [s] Matth. xvii. 1, &c. [t] Ibid. xiii. 43. [u] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [x] *Young*, ibid. † Chap. vi. 18, 19.

indeed, what Conſolation can be ſtronger, or what State of Life can be ſo uncomfortable, as that this may not ſuffice to compoſe and ſweeten it? How *ſtrong a Conſolation* is it for a Man, under bodily Grief and Pains, to contemplate a State, whereunto he is paſſing, where ſhall be no *more Sorrow*, no *more Pain*, and [x] *where all Tears ſhall be wiped from his Eyes*: [y] How *ſtrong a Conſolation* is it for a Man, under bodily *Blemiſhes* or Defects, to conſider, that theſe Bodies are not the *qualified* Bodies, we are to live in for ever, but that all their Infirmities will be cured in the Grave; whereas the *Corruption*, wherein they are *ſown*, deſtroys all Diſtinction, ſo the *Incorruption*, wherein they ſhall be *raiſed*, will certainly make none? [z] How *ſtrong a Conſolation* is it to a Man, under the Apprehenſion or Approach of Death, to be able to look upon it, as an Enemy, that lies diſarmed, and bleeding, and gaſping at his Feet; a ſafe *Retreat* from Sorrow, and an happy *Entrance* into a Life of Joy and Happineſs, and undiſturbed Tranquillity for evermore? How *ſtrong a Conſolation* is it for a Man, under the Circumſtances of Deſtitution and Neglect, to be perſuaded, that there is not any Perſon in the World ſo great, ſo happy, ſo honoured, ſo beloved, but that, having a little Patience, he himſelf ſhall be more ſo? And, laſtly, how *ſtrong a Conſolation* is it to any of us, upon the Deceaſe of our Friends or Relations, to remember, that though, by the Laws of eternal Deſtiny, they are forced to leave us, yet, at the laſt Day, there ſhall be a general Diſcharge from Death, when thoſe that are ſo near and dear ſhall be reſtored to us again, and enter into the Joy of our Lord with us, never to be parted more. Thus comfortable Contemplations does the Doctrine of our Reſurrection yield, in all the Calamities that can befal us; only to make this Comfort certainly our own, not only the *Faith*, but the *Practice* likewiſe of the great Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, as he declares it in his Defence before *Felix*, ſhould be always the Matter of our Imitation: [a] *I have Hopes toward God*, ſays he, *that there will be a Reſurrection both of the Juſt and Unjuſt*, and therefore, *herein do I exerciſe myſelf, to have always a Conſcience void of Offence toward God, and toward Man*; that ſo, [b] *when our earthly Houſe of this Tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved, we may have a Building of God, an Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens*.

[x] Rev. vii. 17. [y] *Newcombe*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [z] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.
[a] Acts xxiv. 15, 16. [b] 2 Cor. v. 1.

CHAP. VIII.

Of a Future Judgment, and an Everlaſting State of Happineſs or Miſery.

AFTER the Reſurrection of the Dead, and when each particular Soul has taken Poſſeſſion of its reſpective Body, the Scripture acquaints us, that we muſt [a] *all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt*; for [b] *God hath appointed a Day, wherein he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man, whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given Aſſurance unto all Men, in that he hath raiſed him from the Dead.* So that, in treating on this great Article, our Purpoſe muſt be,

I. To enquire into the Certainty of a Future Judgment.

II. To conſider the Nature and Extent of it.

III. To deſcribe the *Solemnity* and *Proceſs* of it: And,

IV. To examine a little into the *Time* and *Manner* of its coming upon us.

I. WHAT

[a] 2 Cor. v. 10. [b] Acts xvii. 31.

I. WHAT the Sacred Writings, thoſe eſpecially of the *New Teſtament*, have diſcovered of this Matter, we ſhall have Occaſion hereafter to lay together in one View; and, in the mean Time, may obſerve, that there is ſcarce any religious Truth, excepting the Being of a God, in which Mankind have more univerſally agreed, than concerning a future Judgment. [c] If we look back into the Principles of *Heathen Theology*, we may find this illuſtrated, not only in the Flights of their *Poets*, in the Harangues of their *Orators*, and in the Dictates of their *Philoſophers*, which have been particularly collected by the Holy Fathers [d] of the Church in their Writings againſt them; but, as *Tertullian* [e] well obſerves, even in their common Converſation, and when Men uſually ſpeak according to their natural Impreſſions. Thus, by calling God to witneſs, and to judge of their Actions and Intentions, as well as by commending themſelves, and their Cauſe to him, when they could find no Remedy or Relief from Men, they plainly ſhewed it to be a Principle implanted in their very Nature, * "That there is a God, who ſees and obſerves what paſſes here below, "and will, one Day or other, rectify all the preſent ſeeming irregular Diſpenſations "of his Providence, in the Government of the World." From whence the Father rightly infers, "That the Soul, though ſhe is oppreſſed with the Burthen of the "Fleſh, diſabled by vicious Habits, and debauched by a falſe Religion; yet, when "ſhe recollects herſelf, when ſhe ſhakes off her Lethargy, and recovers her Intervals "of Thinking and Sobriety, ſhe then owns the Unity of the Divine Nature, appeals "to God, as her Judge, and declares her Expectation of Retribution from him:" So that we may ſafely conclude with another Father [f], that this Doctrine of a final *Inqueſt* to paſs upon all our Actions, "was no *politick* Device, contrived to keep "the ignorant Multitude in Awe; no *chimerical* Fancy, peculiar to their *Poets*, "though they were their firſt *Divines*; no, it was maintained by their moſt eminent "Philoſophers, by Men of the ſtricteſt and moſt inquiſitive Reaſoning;" nay, we may ſay, by Men of the looſeſt, and moſt licentious Way of Thinking too, ſince we find in *Lucian*, who generally paſſes for an *Atheiſt*, theſe remarkable Words: [g] *God*, ſays he, *brought Man out of nothing to ſomething, and is in Heaven beholding the Juſt and Unjuſt, and writing down in Books every Man's Actions, in order to recompenſe them according to their Deeds, in that Day, which he himſelf hath appointed.*

A future Judgment proved from univerſal Conſent.

AND indeed ſo clear is the Evidence of this Truth, that whereſoever we turn our Eyes, whether into the Nature and Conſtitution of the little World *within*, or into the Government and Adminiſtration of the greater World *without* us, we cannot but acknowledge the Reaſonableneſs of this Belief. [h] If we conſider the Nature of our own Souls, we readily perceive, that there is a certain *Principle* implanted in every one of us, which not only directs and informs us, what we ought to do, and what to avoid, but moreover checks or encourages us, according as what we have done is either Good, or Evil. Now, upon this Sentence, which our Conſciences here paſs upon all our Actions, we find either a Pleaſure, and Confidence, and Satisfaction, if we have done well; or elſe a Fear, and Terror, and Diſtruſt, if we have done ill; and this, not with Reference to any Reward, we are like to receive, or any Puniſhment, we may be in Danger of ſuffering in the preſent World; for, be the Action never ſo ſecret, yet, according as its Quality is, the Conſcience either accuſes or condemns us for it, no leſs than if it had been done in the Face of the whole World. Nay, and what is a farther Confirmation of this Matter, the nearer we approach to our latter End, the more powerful and vigorous are theſe Impreſſions of our Conſciences upon our Souls. For it is then chiefly the Sinner begins to reflect with Horror on his Life paſt, and to hate and fear the Conſequences of his Evil-doings, when he is juſt ready to die, and by Conſequence is paſſed all Apprehenſion of any farther Inqueſt in this Life: Whereas the good and virtuous Man embraces Death with ſuch Quiet and Compoſure, and oftentimes with ſuch a ſenſible Joy and Satisfaction, as if he were to receive great Good by it. Now whence ſhould theſe different Reſentments ariſe in Mens Minds? Why ſhould the Conſciouſneſs of an unreaſonable or wicked Action make a Man uneaſy,

From the Power of Conſcience.

[c] Archbiſhop *Wake*'s Sermons. [d] This may be ſeen in the Works yet extant of *Juſtin Martyr*, *Euſebius*, *Theodoret*, &c. [e] Apolog. * *Collier*'s Sermons. [f] *Juſtin Martyr*.

[g] His Words are theſe, Ἄνθρωπον ἐκ μὴ ὄντων Θεὸς εἰς τὸ εἶναι παρήγαγε, καὶ ἔστιν ἐν οὐρανῷ βλέπων δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους, καὶ ἐν βίβλοις τὰς πράξεις ἀπογραφόμενος· Ἀναποδώσει δὲ πᾶσιν ἣν ἡμέραν αὐτὸς ὑπέλαβε. *Philopat.* [h] Archbiſhop *Wake*, ibid.

uneaſy, when none knows it but himſelf? Why the Reflections upon a Life ſpent in Flagitiouſneſs fill him with Horror and Amazement, when he is going out of the World? Why ſhould this happen, I ſay, if his Mind did not ſtrongly ſuggeſt, that *God will bring every ſecret Thing into Judgment*, and reward every Man according to his Works?

[i] THE Conſcience of the greateſt Man, when irritated by ſome heinous Guilt, is neither to be over-awed by Power, nor charmed by Pleaſure, nor diverted by Buſineſs: It breaks through the ſtrongeſt Guards; makes its Way into the cloſeſt Retirement; and ſtrikes, without Regard to Perſons, with an impartial and inexorable Juſtice. This made *Tiberius* pine away with Anguiſh in the Midſt of Empire, and confeſs, that he thought himſelf as miſerable, as the Gods could make him, being not able to ſhake off the diſmal Expectation of a future Account, which purſues the Wicked wherever they go, and fills their Minds with Images of Horror. The Conſcience, on the contrary, of the meaneſt of Men, when they can acquit themſelves, as to the main; when they can give a fair Account, and look back with Pleaſure on a well-ſpent Life, enables them to bear the harſheſt Circumſtances with ſingular Fortitude and Unconcernedneſs. They have a natural Preſcience, that Providence will appear for them afterward; that Folly and Violence will domineer only in this Life, but Reaſon and Honeſty be conſidered in another; and this Perſuaſion buoys up their Innocence, and ſupports their Spirits, hardens their Reſolutions, and makes them almoſt impregnable againſt all Accidents and Injuries. This made *Socrates* appear ſo great and graceful at his Trial: [k] The Hopes of *appearing before more equal Judges*, after his Death, where his Cauſe ſhould be *re-heard* and juſtified, made him deſpiſe the Malice of his Enemies, and drink of that *mortal* Draught with as little Concern, as if he had been at an Entertainment: And ſo may any one *adventure to die*, when the Teſtimony of his Conſcience is this, that [l] *in Simplicity, and godly Sincerity, he has had his Converſation in the World.*

From the Adminiſtration of Providence.

ALL Men, that admit of the Being of a God, are agreed, we preſume, in this, that, as he is the Author of all Perfections in all other Things, ſo he can have nothing defective or imperfect in himſelf; that, as the World was not at firſt made by *Chance*, but by a moſt wiſe, and good, and powerful Being, ſo neither is it now governed by Chance, but by the Providence of the ſame God, who firſt made it. [m] Now if God is ſo infinitely perfect in himſelf, and this World be ſubjected to the Guidance of his Providence, then we muſt of Neceſſity acknowledge a Judgment to come, becauſe it is plain, that, as human Affairs are ordered in this preſent World, they ſhew no great Sign of an exact Juſtice and Goodneſs, in the Adminiſtration of them; ſince the beſt Men are oftentimes the moſt unfortunate, and the moſt profligate, the moſt happy, in the Enjoyment of the good Things of this Life. Either therefore we muſt altogether deny that there is a God, and that the World is governed by him, or we muſt ſay, that he is not *Juſt* and *Good*, and therefore minds not what becomes of thoſe, that are ſo; or that he is *Ignorant* or *Impotent*, either not knowing how Things paſs here below, or, if he knows, not able to redreſs them; (both of which do equally deſtroy the very Notion of a God, which includes an infinite Perfection in Juſtice and Goodneſs, as well as in Power and Knowledge) or, laſtly, if there be a God, and that God does take Care of the Affairs of Men, and is Good, and Juſt, and has ſuch Knowledge and Power, as we aſcribe to him, then it muſt remain, that there ſhall be a future Judgment, in which all theſe uncertain, irregular Diſpenſations of his Providence, as they appear to us, ſhall be cleared and ſet right, and the Good and Bad receive the juſt Recompence of what their Actions in this World have deſerved.

IN this World indeed, (to enlarge a little upon the Subject) there is a great deal of Darkneſs ſitting upon the Face of God's Diſpenſations. [n] The Fate of the Righteous and Wicked is ſhuffled in common and promiſcuous Events, as if the Diſtinctions of Good and Evil were nothing but empty Names, and Terms of Philoſophy. Nay, ſometimes a Man fares the worſe for his Integrity, and thoſe, who are *Righteous, make themſelves a Prey*; their Virtue is diſcountenanced and oppreſſed; they are perſecuted in their Fortune, and in their Fame; are purſued with a Succeſſion of croſs Accidents, and oftentimes ſtruggle with all Difficulties and Misfortunes of Life. The Author to the *Hebrews* hath told us, how roughly the moſt illuſtrious

[i] *Collier*'s Sermons. [k] Plato Apol. Socratis. [l] 2 Cor. i. 12. [m] Archbiſhop *Wake*'s Sermons. [n] *Collier*, ibid.

illuſtrious Saints, *of whom the World was not worthy*, were uſed; that they were expoſed to Penury and Contempt, as well as the Violence of cruel Men; [o] *that they wandered about in Sheep-ſkins, and Goat-ſkins, in Dens and Caves of the Earth*; that *they were deſtitute, afflicted, tormented:* On the other Side, it has been both obſerved, and not a little lamented, how ſtrangely Wickedneſs and Injuſtice have proſpered; what fair Returns of Advantage have been brought in by Fraud and Circumvention; how often Rapine and Oppreſſion have made their Way to Greatneſs and Power; and (what is more ſurprizing) how they ſeem to enjoy them with as much Serenity, as they acquired them with Injuſtice. It is the Obſervation of holy *Job*, that the [p] *Wicked live, and become Old, and are mighty in Power; that their Seed is eſtabliſhed in their Sight with them, and their Offspring before their Eyes; that their Houſes are ſafe from Fear, neither is the Rod of God upon them; for they ſpend their Days in Wealth, and in a Moment*, without any remarkable Judgment, *go down to the Grave:* And now, if there were no *State* after this, the Pſalmiſt's haſty Complaint were unanſwerable, and good Men, upon many Occaſions, might apply to themſelves, without retracting it, [q] *that they had cleanſed their Hearts in vain, and waſhed their Hands in Innocency.* But tho' Providence, for very good Reaſons, ſuffers Virtue and Vice to be unſuitably treated here; though God may connive at the Wicked for a while, either for their Repentance, or more exemplary Puniſhment; though he may try the Faith and Conſtancy of his Servants for their greater Advantage; yet the Marks of the Divine Favour or Diſpleaſure will not be always thus myſtical and concealed. When [r] *the Book of Remembrance*, which the Prophet mentions, is called over, then there will be a viſible and everlaſting Diſtinction made, and the whole intelligent Creation will plainly [s] *diſcern between him that ſerved God, and him that ſerved him not.* For, can we imagine, that God will for ever diſcountenance his own *Orders*, and make his Laws a Grievance to ſuch as keep them? Will he take no Notice of thoſe, who have denied their ſtrongeſt Paſſions, and renounced their faireſt Intereſt, in Obedience to his Commands? Will the Name of Virtue and Vice be undiſtinguiſhably buried in the Grave, *and carried into the Land, where all Things are forgotten?* Upon this Suppoſition, it is impoſſible to account, not only for the Adminiſtration of Providence, but even for the Inſtitution of our moſt holy Religion. For when God commands us to *mortify* our ſenſual Appetites, to *crucify the Fleſh, with its Affections and Luſts*, to *pluck out our Right-Eyes*, to *cut off our Right-Hands*, and to live above the Pleaſures of the Body; when he forbids the *laying up for ourſelves Treaſures on Earth*, the Indulgence of Pride and Ambition, the Affectation of *ſecular* Honour and Power; and, on the contrary, enjoins Meekneſs, and Patience, and Poverty of Spirit, a *Converſation in Heaven*, and a Contempt of the Things of this Life; of what Service or Tendency theſe Precepts and Prohibitions are, we cannot ſee, unleſs to make Life more miſerable than Nature made it, if this is the only *Scene* we are to be concerned in, and if, when we die, all our Expectations of a Retribution to be made us, vaniſh with our Breath.

WHETHER therefore we look into the World, or into ourſelves, into the Adminiſtration of God's Providence, or the Diſpenſation of his holy Word, we cannot but learn this Leſſon, that as ſure as the Conſent of all Nations, and the Forebodings of our own Minds, are true, as ſure as God is juſt, and his Word infallible, ſo certainly there will be a future Judgment. And of what Nature and Extent that Judgment is to be, we come now, in the next Place, to enquire.

The Nature of the future Judgment, which is univerſal.

II. THE Scripture has aſſured us, that we ſhall *all*, of what Degree or Denomination ſoever, *appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt.* And the only Exception to be made of it is, [t] that mere Idiots, or *Naturals*, (as we commonly call them) who have no Uſe of their Reaſon, or Children and Infants, who died before they came to the Exerciſe to it, ſhall not be brought before the laſt Tribunal; becauſe the Reaſon, which the Apoſtle aſſigns, *for our appearing there*, is, that *we may all receive according to what we have done, whether it be Good or Evil.* Bating the Caſe then of thoſe, that are *incompetent*, we are given to underſtand, [u] that all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam* will be ſummoned into this great Aſſize; that none will be ſo great, as to be excuſed; none ſo mean, as to be overlooked; that no *Proxies* or *Repreſentatives* will be allowed; but every one muſt appear in his own Perſon, *High and Low, Rich and Poor, one with another.* This is a Poſition ſo

1. *As to Perſons.*

[o] Heb. xi. 37. [p] Job xxi. 7, &c. [q] Pſal. lxxiii. 13. [r] Mal. iii. 16. [s] Ibid. ver. 18.
[t] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I. [u] *Collier*'s Sermons.

clear, that it needs no Proof: And all we ſhall do to evince farther the *univerſal Extent* of the Laſt Judgment, is only to remind ſome Perſons of it, whoſe Condi-tions in this Life are very different, and, upon that Account perhaps, are but too apt to make them forget it.

The Great *and* Rich.

I. GREAT Riches, and great Power, we ſee, make Men reverenced and adored, like ſo many Deities, in this World: * All Men court and flatter them, and place a great Diſtinction between them, and thoſe of a meaner Rank and Fortune, which is apt to ſwell their Minds, and make them proud. They look down upon the reſt of Mankind, as very much below them, and think they merit not a little, whenever they look up to God: They ſee that human *Judicatures* very often have great Reſpect to Mens Perſons, and they hope that God will conſider their Quality too, and deal with them like *Princes* and *Nobles*: So that, if they believe they ſhall be judged, yet they perſuade themſelves, they ſhall not be judged like other Men; that God will wink at their Faults, have Reſpect to their Rank and Quality, and excuſe them from the ſtrict Obſervation of ſome Laws, which, they fancy, were only made for *meaner* Perſons. But what a vain Imagination is this, that God will have Regard to earthly Greatneſs in judging the World? *Great* and *Small*, alas, are but comparative Terms: And every Rank and Degree of Men appears conſidera-ble to thoſe below them; ſo thoſe above uſe them as Inferiors, and are not afraid to judge and correct them for their Faults. Is there not then a much greater Di-ſtance between God and the greateſt Emperor, than between the greateſt Emperor and the meaneſt Subject? [z] *If God ſpared not the Angels that ſinned, but caſt them down to Hell, and delivered them into Chains of Darkneſs, to be reſerved unto Judg-ment*; how can any Man think, that his Power and Greatneſs, which, be it what it will, can never be compared with the Devils, ſhould excuſe him from the Judg-ment of God?

THE mighty Men of this World, we ſee, are expoſed to all the Chances and Viciſſitudes of Fortune, as well as others: Pain and Sickneſs ſtand in no Awe of their Greatneſs, and Death is no more afraid of them, than of a Beggar. Thoſe *who are Gods on Earth, muſt die like Men*; and after a little *funeral* Pomp is over, and they are laid in their Graves, with a little more Ceremony than ordinary, their Guards, and Retinue, and Dependants forſake them, and leave them a Prey to the Worms. And is this the Creature too great to reverence and worſhip God, or too big to be judged, whom Worms ſhall feed upon, and Beggars walk over his Grave? This, in ſhort, is the weak and frail State of the greateſt Men on Earth: They go naked and unarmed into another World, ſtripped of their Power and Fortunes, of Riches and Honours, which dazzled the Eyes of Men here; and when they are gone, all Men ſpeak their Minds freely of them; judge their Lives and Actions; arraign their Memories, and revenge their Injuries upon their Graves. And when they are become little enough to be judged by Men, ſurely they are not too great to undergo the Cenſure and Caſtigation of Almighty God. The dreadful Reflec-tion is, that as the Talents committed to their Truſt were more and greater, than what were beſtowed on others, ſo their Perverſion and Abuſe of them will make their Account and Condemnation more ſevere; for *a ſharp Judgment*, ſays the Author of the Book of Wiſdom [a], *ſhall be to them, that are in high Places: Mercy will ſoon pardon the meaneſt, but mighty Men ſhall be mightily tormented. For he, who is Lord over all, ſhall fear no Man's Perſon, neither ſhall he ſtand in Awe of any Man's Greatneſs; for he hath made the ſmall and great, and careth for all alike: But a ſore Trial ſhall come upon the Mighty.*

The Poor.

UPON this Preſumption, however, let not the poor Man think, that he ſhall be exempted from a future Judgment, as if God had intruſted nothing with him. Poor Men, indeed, ſhall not be examined about their Charity, when they had nothing to give; but they ſhall be examined about their Thankfulneſs to God, and their Bene-factors. They ſhall not be obliged to give an Account in what Manner they uſed the Riches, which they had not, but they may, and muſt give Account, in what Manner they bore their Poverty; whether it taught them Humility and Modeſty; Patience in Want and Sufferings; Contentment with a little; Submiſſion to the Will of God, and a chearful Dependance on Providence for their *daily Bread*. In ſhort, we are all equally God's Creatures; the Rich and the Poor, the Honourable and the Vile, the Prince and the Subject are alike unto him: Juſtice requires, that he ſhould reſpect no Man's Perſon in Judgment; and, to convince the World of this, it

* *Sherlock*, on Judgment. [z] 2 Pet. ii. 4. [a] Wiſd. vi. 5, 6, &c.

it ſeems reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he will not only judge us *all alike*, but judge us *all together*.

All to be judged together.

THE Providence of God in this World is very liable to the Charge of *Partiality*; I mean, not only with Reference to Men's Fortune and Station in this Life, that ſome are Rich, and others Poor, ſome Princes and Nobles, others Slaves and Beggars; but in Reſpect to their Souls: *viz.* That God has not taken equal Care to inſtruct all Men in their Duty, to acquaint them with the Danger of Sin, with the Certainty of a future Judgment, and the Eternity of Rewards and Puniſhments in another Life. This indeed is a great Difficulty; but the Juſtice of the Laſt Judgment will certainly clear it up: Otherwiſe we cannot imagine, that God would ſummon all the World together before his Tribunal, if he did not intend to deal equally by all. [b] How he will bring theſe Differences to an Equality is hard for us to ſay; but to make great Abatements and Allowances for invincible Ignorance and Miſtakes, for the Faults and Miſcarriages of Education, for the Wickedneſs and Corruption of the Age, wherein Men live, and for the Want of the Means of Grace and Knowledge; to exact Improvements proportionable to our Receipts, and to thoſe greater Advantages, we enjoy, and to increaſe and leſſen Rewards and Puniſhments by theſe Meaſures, will, in all Probability, bring Men pretty near an equal Level. And this, indeed, is the Rule whereby our Judge has told us, that he will proceed: [c] *That Servant, which knew his Maſter's Will, and prepared not himſelf, neither did according to his Will, ſhall be beaten with many Stripes: But he, that knew not, and committed Things worthy of Stripes, ſhall be beaten with few Stripes. For unto whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall be much required; and to whom Men have committed much, of him they will aſk the more.*

NOR is it only for the Vindication of God's Juſtice and Impartiality, but for the greater Manifeſtation of the Righteous, and Confuſion of the Wicked, that all Mankind ſhall be ſummoned to appear, and be judged *at once*. For, ſince many good Men have been a *Scorn* and Deriſion to their Neighbours, have done many good Actions in *private*, which no Eye, but that of Heaven hath ſeen; and had their Sanctity and Godlineſs traduced, as an *Affectation* of Singularity, or an artful Diſguiſe to conceal ſome latent Knavery; it is highly requiſite, that God ſhould vindicate theſe Men, who ſuffer Infamy and Reproach for his Sake. And what a glorious Vindication is this, to have our Integrity proclaimed, or our private Charity, and good Offices mentioned, and our Prayers, and Tears, and *penitential* Mournings highly commended and rewarded, in the general Aſſembly of Men and Angels, if we can but have Patience to wait for it? And, on the other Hand, though Wickedneſs be many Times very glorious and *triumphant* in this World, concealed from the Eyes of Men, or *gilded* over with the Form and Appearance of *Godlineſs*; [d] yet when a Light ſhall be ſtruck into all the Works of Darkneſs, through all the Receſſes of Subtlety, through all the Diſguiſes of Hypocriſy; when the *Maſk* ſhall be pulled off from all diſſembled Virtues, and every Vice appear in its proper Colours; when theſe great and arrogant Men ſhall be ſtripped of their Riches, and Honours, and Power, and ſee all their Admirers and Companions trembling *for fear of what is coming upon them*, as well as themſelves deſpiſed and ſcorned by God and his Holy Angels; it is impoſſible, but that Confuſion muſt cover their Faces, and their being expoſed to the publick Scorn and Cenſure add a great deal of Bitterneſs to their Condemnation. Nay, (what will aggravate their Shame, as well as prove a farther Argument for their appearing before the Judgment-Seat *all at once*) it is not unlikely, that thoſe, who have had any Relation, Intercourſe, or Concern in this Life; thoſe, who have obliged or outraged, reformed or debauched their Neighbours, ſhall be ranged, as it were, within View, and brought to a Re-acquaintance with each other. And if ſo, *where ſhall the Sinner and Ungodly appear?* How will the unrighteous Judge be abaſhed, when he is confronted by ſuch, as he has unjuſtly condemned; and the Oppreſſor turn pale, when he ſees thoſe he has harraſſed out of their Right, and robbed of their Eaſe and Satisfaction? What unacceptable Company will they be, at this ſecond Meeting, who have here been *Brethren in Iniquity, in Chambering and Wantonneſs, in Strife and Envy*; who have combined for publick Violence, and ſacrificed whole Towns and Kingdoms to their private Revenge? [e] The *Alexanders* and *Cæſars*, and all *Nimrods* of the Earth, how will they curſe the Madneſs of their Ambition, when thoſe thouſands of Orphans and Widows, they have made, appear before the

[b] *Sherlock*, on Judgment. [c] Luke xii. 47. [d] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [e] *Collier*'s Sermons.

the Throne againſt them? How will they be aſtoniſhed, when Armies and whole Nations of murthered Men ſtand round about, and clamour for Vengeance againſt them? On the contrary, what a reviving Sight will it be, to meet with thoſe, whom we have relieved in Neceſſity, reduced from Error, recovered from Vice, reſcued from Oppreſſion, and defended from unjuſt Reproach? Such Perſons will look like *Guardian-Angels* about us, and fortify us againſt the Terrors of that dreadful Day.

THE Sum then of our Argument thus far purſued is this, —— [f] That all Perſons, that ever were upon the Face of the Earth, none excepted, of what Sex or Age, of what Rank or Quality, of what Country or Nation, in what Times or Places ſoever they were born and lived; the greateſt Princes and Potentates, the deepeſt Stateſmen and Politicians, the moſt learned Clerks and Diſputers of the World, as well as the moſt ignorant Peaſant, or the meaneſt Slave; in ſhort, *all*, without any Diſtinction or Exception, without any Privilege or Reſpect of Perſons, ſhall *at once* appear before the dreadful Tribunal, and give an Account of themſelves, and their Behaviour: For ſo the Scripture has repreſented the univerſal Appearance, which Perſons of all Ranks and Conditions muſt make before God, and their vain endeavouring to hide themſelves from it; [g] *And the Kings of the Earth, and the great Men, and the rich Men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty Men, and every Bondman, and every Freeman, hid themſelves in the Dens, and in the Rocks of the Mountains, and ſaid to the Mountains and Rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the Face of him, that ſitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb; for the great Day of his Wrath is come, and who ſhall be able to ſtand?* And who indeed ſhall be able to ſtand? conſidering,

The future Judgment univerſal, as to Things.

2. THAT the Univerſality of this Judgment extends not only to all *Perſons*, but to all *Things*. For *God*, ſays the Preacher, [h] *will bring every Work into Judgment, with every ſecret Thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil*; and [i] *our Lord*, as the Apoſtle tells us, *will bring to Light the hidden Things of Darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the Counſels of the Heart, and then ſhall every Man have Praiſe of God.*

Our Thoughts and Intentions.

Now the true Reaſon why the Thoughts and Intentions of our Hearts, as well as our moſt ſecret Actions, are to undergo the Judgment of the Laſt Day is, becauſe the *formal Difference* of moral Good and Evil depends preciſely upon the Deſign and Intention, wherewith the Thing was done; inſomuch, that the ſame *Act* in Appearance, when proceeding upon *different* Proſpects, and ſpringing from different *Principles*, as to its *moral* Conſideration, is by no Means *the ſame*. Thus one Man may give Alms out of *Charity*, and another out of *Oſtentation*; one may pray from real Devotion to God, and another may do it to be ſeen of Men; one may faſt for Mortification, and another may do it to acquire the Character of an extraordinary *abſtemious* Perſon; both give, and faſt, and pray, but, becauſe they do it not from the ſame Motive, they do not both meet with the ſame Acceptance and Succeſs. He, who does any of theſe upon a worldly Principle, *hath*, as our Lord tells us, [k] *his Reward* already: He did it to be ſeen of Men, and ſeen he is: This is *Coin*, wherein he deſired to be paid, and therefore he hath no Claim to any Wages beſides. But they who do theſe Things out of a pure Conſcience, and to approve their Love and Obedience to God, have an ample Compenſation in *Reſerve*, and ſhall not be Loſers at laſt, tho' no preſent Profit be paid down in Hand.

WHY the Nature of Virtue, and the Award of every Man's Recompence ſhould turn upon this Point, the Reaſon is obvious, becauſe the Power of doing well or ill is not always in our *Diſpoſal*, but the *Will* to do either can never be out of it; and for this we are ſtrictly anſwerable. He, that would do ill, but wants Means and Opportunity, contracts the ſame Guilt, as if the Thing had been actually committed; becauſe his Mind approves, and conſents to the Sin: And thus the Man, that [l] *looks upon a Woman to luſt after her*, is ſaid to have committed Adultery with her in his Heart. He, that has a ſincere Deſire and Diſpoſition to do Good, but cannot accompliſh it, hath all the Merit which thoſe Deſires, when fully effected, could give him: And thus the poor Widow's *two Mites* are interpreted a Liberality, far exceeding the Gifts of thoſe rich Men, [m] *who, out of their Abundance, caſt in much* to the Offerings of God.

THAT

[f] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. II. [g] Rev. vi. 15, *&c.* [h] Eccleſ. xii. 14. [i] 1 Cor. iv. 5.
[k] Matth. vi. 1, *&c.* [l] Ibid. v. 28. [m] Mark xii. 44.

THAT thus it is, and that thus our Intentions ought to be meaſured, the Rules of Equity and Juſtice among Men are a plain Demonſtration. To kill a Man is the ſame Act ſimply and abſtractly conſidered, whether it be done by *Chance*, or in one's own *Defence*, or with *malicious* Purpoſe; but yet the Law looks and animadverts upon it *differently*, with Regard to the Mind and Intent, wherewith the Thing is done. In the *firſt* Caſe, it is reputed *pitiable* and innocent; in the *ſecond*, *excuſable*, ſo far as to mitigate the Puniſhment; in the *laſt* it is *capital*, and ſuch as ought to exclude from all Mercy. Now the only Reaſon, why nothing but Words and Actions are tried and puniſhed here below, is, becauſe the Thoughts and Imaginations of Mens Hearts are what we cannot come to the Knowledge of, any farther, than their Words and Actions let us into them: But, in the Proceedings of the Laſt Day, God, no Doubt, who is [n] *a Diſcerner of our Thoughts*, and [o] *a Searcher of our Hearts*, and an [p] *Underſtander of our* firſt Motions and *Imaginations*, will not only expoſe our outward Actions to publick View and Cenſure, but will weigh and examine thoſe ſecret *Springs* likewiſe, upon which the very Nature of every good or evil Action principally turns, and accordingly determine our Doom.

Our Words.

IT is in the ancient Prophecy of *Enoch*, as St *Jude* tells us, [q] *that the Lord ſhall come, with Ten Thouſands of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all, that are Ungodly*, not only *of their ungodly Deeds, which they have ungodly committed*, but likewiſe *of their hard Speeches, which ungodly Sinners have ſpoken againſt him.* And, indeed, conſidering that Words are the firſt and moſt natural Indications of the Temper and Diſpoſitions of the Mind; that [r] *evil Communications*, of all Kind, *corrupt good Manners*, and ſome [s] *eat like a Canker*, and prey upon the very Vitals of Religion; that [t] *the Tongue, though a little Member, defiles the whole Body*, raiſes great Confuſion and Diſturbance in Neighbourhoods, *ſets*, as it were, *on Fire the Courſe of Nature, and is itſelf ſet on Fire of Hell:* Men certainly delude themſelves, if they think, that all their *lewd* and filthy Talk, all their *raſh* Oaths and Imprecations, all their *Atheiſtical* Diſcourſe, and profane Jeſts upon Religion, and the holy Scriptures; all their *Calumnies* and Slanders of good Men, all their *officious* Lyes, to ſerve a preſent Turn, or *malicious* Reflections, to do any Enemy a Diſkindneſs, ſhall paſs for nothing at the Judgment of the great Day. No; the Judge himſelf hath told us, [u] *that every idle Word* (by which, if he means not every *unprofitable*, he certainly means every *wicked* Word) *that Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an Account thereof in the Day of Judgment; for by thy Words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy Words thou ſhalt be condemned.*

Our own, and other Mens Actions.

NOR ſhall our own *perſonal* Words and Works only be brought into Judgment, but, in many Caſes, thoſe of other People, which, ſome Way or other, either by infuſing wrong Principles, or giving evil Counſels, by ſetting bad Examples, or withholding neceſſary Inſtruction, we have *occaſionally* made our own. Our bleſſed Saviour, we may obſerve, is very ſharp in his Language, and denounces repeated *Woes* againſt the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who, by their pernicious Doctrines, * *ſhut up the Kingdom of Heaven, neither going in themſelves, nor ſuffering them that would enter, to go in*; who *compaſſed Sea and Land to make Proſelytes; and, when they were made, made them twofold more the Children of Hell, than themſelves:* And St *Peter* tells us of ſome, in the earlieſt Days of Chriſtianity, who [x] *brought in damnable Doctrines, even denying the Lord that bought them*; and, deluding others *to their pernicious Ways*, occaſioned *the Way of Truth to be evil ſpoken of: But their Judgment*, ſaith he, *now of a long Time lingereth not, and their Damnation ſlumbereth not.* [y] Theſe Menaces, it is true, do chiefly concern ſuch *Seducers* as ſet up for gaining Proſelytes to *Infidelity*, yet are they applicable to the Teachers of all falſe and wicked Principles whatever: Inſomuch, that every Doctrine, which ſlackens the *Obligation* of God's Laws, either by repreſenting *good* Actions not ſo neceſſary, or *bad* ones not ſo ſinful, as they truly are; which weakens the *Motives* to Obedience, by making the Glories of Heaven not ſo great, or the Torments of Hell not ſo grievous, as the Spirit of God in the Goſpel has pronounced them; ſuch Doctrine, wherever it is received, has a fatal Efficacy towards the Corruption of Mens Manners, and therefore all, who teach it, have not only a Share, but the greateſt and moſt criminal Share in the Guilt of thoſe Things, into which they lead others by advancing ſuch Principles.

And how we become accountable for them.

[n] Heb. iv. 12. [o] Pſal. cxxxix. 1. [p] 1 Theſſ. ii. 4. [q] Jude, *ver.* 15. [r] 1 Cor. xv. 33. [s] 2 Tim. ii. 17. [t] James iii. 5, 6. [u] Matth. xii. 36, 37. * Ibid. xxiii. 13, 15. [x] 2 Pet. ii. 1, &c. [y] *Smalridge's* Sermons.

How heinous, how exorbitant, how intolerable the Guilt of drawing others into Sin by evil Counſel is in God's Sight, we may judge by the Severity of that Law, which he was pleaſed to ordain againſt thoſe, who allured their Brethren from the Service of God, to idolatrous Worſhip. [a] *If thy Brother, the Son of thy Mother, or thy Son, or thy Daughter, or the Wife of thy Boſom, or thy Friend, which is thine own Soul, entice thee ſecretly, ſaying, Let us go, and ſerve other Gods; thou ſhalt not conſent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither ſhall thine Eye pity, neither ſhalt thou ſpare, neither ſhalt thou conceal him; but thou ſhalt ſurely kill him,——becauſe he hath ſought to thruſt thee away from the Lord thy God.* It may be pretended indeed, that it is not ſo great a Crime to allure Perſons to other Sins, as it is to *Idolatry*; [a] yet, ſince Mens Souls may as effectually be deſtroyed by an habitual Practice of any heinous Sin, as by Idolatry itſelf; ſince all deadly Sin hath in it ſomething of the Nature of Idolatry, as it draws us from the Love of God to the Love of the Creature; thoſe, who, by evil Counſels, allure unwary Perſons to the Commiſſion of any *enormous* Sin, are to be looked upon as *Seducers*, and, at the great Day of Accounts, will have their own Condemnation aggravated, in Proportion as their wicked Inſtigations have been prevalent to induce others to the Violation of God's Commandments.

How much Men are apt to be ſwayed by the Example of others, is obvious to common Experience: We learn to *live* and *act*, as much as we do to *ſpeak* and *write*, by *Imitation*: And therefore if human Nature is ſo apt to *imitate*, and to catch the Infection, it is plain, that all, who ſet ill Examples, are, in a great Meaſure, anſwerable, not for their own perſonal Sins only, but alſo for thoſe Sins, which others, by their Encouragement, commit. [b] *Take Heed*, ſays the Apoſtle, *leſt, by any Means*, this Liberty of yours *become a Stumbling-block to them that are weak; for when ye ſin ſo againſt the Brethren, and wound their weak Conſcience, ye ſin againſt Chriſt*: Now, if thoſe, who do Things in themſelves indifferent, (for it is of ſuch Things that the Apoſtle ſpeaks) may be ſaid to lay a *Stumbling-block* in the Way of ſuch, as, through Weakneſs, may take Occaſion, from thence, to do Things forbidden; if they are accuſed of *deſtroying their Brethren, for whom Chriſt died*, of *ſinning againſt the Brethren*, of *wounding their Conſciences*, and of *ſinning againſt Chriſt*; how much more deſervedly may this Accuſation be brought againſt thoſe, who lay *Stumbling-blocks* in the Way of others, by doing Actions notoriouſly and confeſſedly ſinful; Actions, that will appear *evil*, not only to ſome, but to all, that obſerve them; Actions, that would in themſelves be *damnable*, though they gave no *Scandal*, and are worthy of an heavier Judgment, becauſe they betray others into Sin and Damnation.

THERE is one Inſtance more, wherein we may become *Partakers of other Mens Sins*, and, conſequently, reſponſible at the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, and that is, by with-holding ſuch *Inſtruction*, as is neceſſary to the Salvation of thoſe, that depend on us, and becomes our Duty to give them: For, *if any provide not for his own, and eſpecially for thoſe of his own Houſe, he*, in the Judgment of St *Paul*, *hath denied the Faith, and is worſe than an Infidel*: In what State and Character muſt we look on ourſelves, if we have taken no Care to relieve the ſpiritual Wants of our Children and Domeſticks? And how muſt it cut to the Heart, and pierce to the very Soul, to have them challenge us in the great Day of the Lord, and ſay to us, one by one; "Had you been as careful to teach me the good Knowledge of the Lord, "as I was capable of learning it; had you but been as forward to inſtruct me in "any Duty, as I was ready to have hearkened to it, it had not been with me, as it "is at this Day; I had been in a State of Salvation, and not ſtood trembling here "in a fearful Expectation of my impending Doom."

THUS we ſee what the Articles are, that, on the great Day of Judgment, will be exhibited againſt us: [c] That we muſt render an Account to our great Judge, for our *inward*, as well as *outward*, for our *civil*, as well as *religious* Actions; for our Behaviour towards Men, in our Dealing and Intercourſe with them; as well as for our Demeanour towards God, in the Duties of his more immediate Service and Worſhip. The Neglects and *Omiſſions* of our Duty, in any Kind, will then come under Conſideration, as well as our *Commiſſions* of Evil; and a ſtrict Account will be exacted of all the *Talents*, which were intruſted with us, of all the Abilities, Opportunities, and Advantages, we ever had of doing Service to God, and Good to Men, and whether

[a] Deut. xiii. 6, &c. [a] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [b] 1 Cor. viii. 9, &c. [c] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. III.

whether we have made anſwerable Improvements of them. Nay, we muſt be accountable for our Thoughts and Intentions, as well as our Words and Actions; and for Words and Actions of leſs Moment and Conſequence, as well as for thoſe of greater Concernment; for thoſe, which were done in *Secret*, and in the greateſt Privacy, as well as for thoſe, which were done in *Publick*, and in the open View of the World; for the Good or Evil, which have been done by ourſelves, and in our own Perſons, as well as what others have done by our Command or Inſtigation, the Influence of our Counſel, or the Prevalence of our Example. All theſe Things will be ſurveyed, and ſearched into, and weighed in an equal Balance, that we may receive a Reward or Puniſhment proportionable to them. This is the Enquiry that we muſt undergo, and this is the Lot of every one, that *appears before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt*.

An Objection.

"BUT if the Enquiry is to be ſo *minute*, and the Perſons to be examined, ſo "*many*; if all Men, that ever have yet, and, for the Time to come, ever ſhall live "in the World, muſt give an Account of their Actions, and their Circumſtances; "of all their Words, and their Aggravations; of all their Thoughts, and their Ten-"dencies; all they did, or did not, as they had an Opportunity; it is hard to con-"ceive how this can be effected, and eſpecially in the Compaſs of *one Day*, as the "Scriptures ſeem to intimate." But how this may be done, we may, in ſome Meaſure, learn from the Operations of our Minds. [a] When we ſpeak, or think, or act any Thing, how come we to a Remembrance of it, after the Thing is done and paſt? Why is it not thus? Do not we, by ſeeking, find Images of the Things, we have ſpoken, done, or thought of, many Years before? Nay, do not theſe Images frequently preſent themſelves without our ſeeking, and make us perceive them, whether we will or no? Now this is a plain Argument, that theſe Images have a *real Being*, and Subſiſtence within us, that they are independent on our Will; for we cannot eraſe them as we pleaſe, we cannot do it, would we never ſo fain. Whatever therefore we ſpeak, or do, or purpoſe, or deſign, as far as theſe Acts are of a moral Concern, and bear Relation to Virtue or Vice, we may be ſatisfied, that they leave the Notices of themſelves upon our Conſciences, *imprinted* in Characters fair and intelligible, nay, I may add, *indelible* too. For though we forget many Things, which we have been conſcious of, yet, in that Caſe, the Prints and Notices of ſuch Things are not eraſed, but only covered over. Properly ſpeaking indeed, there is no Forgetfulneſs in a Spirit; its Forgetfulneſs is only *accidental*, and occaſioned by the Impediments of the Fleſh: And therefore we may reaſonably believe, that our Souls, whether in the State of Separation from the Body, or of Re-union to the Body, when *defecated*, and made free from Obſtructions, as our Bodies at the Reſurrection ſhall be; we may reaſonably believe, I ſay, that our Souls ſhall *then* have a clear View, and perfect Remembrance of all that we have done, though *now* moſt of their *Impreſſions* lie in us, like the Inſcriptions of a Marble, covered over with Duſt and Rubbiſh.

Anſwered.

And how this may be done in one Day.

Now, if Conſcience be thus like a written *Book*, and faithful Regiſter of our Behaviour; as there is no Room to doubt but that God can read this Book, as well as we, and read it through all the Impediments, that ſhade it, which we cannot; ſo he can, when he pleaſes, make it *legible* to all others, as well as to ourſelves: For he can ſo far *elevate* the Underſtanding, and open the Eyes of all Men to ſuch a ſpiritual *Intuition*, as that all ſhall be able, at a ſhort Glance, to read each other's *Hiſtory*, imprinted in their Conſciences in intelligible Signatures, as familiarly, as if they were graven on their Foreheads, or printed in a Book. And thus we may probably conceive, that thoſe *Books*, (mentioned by the Prophet *Daniel*, and by St *John* in his *Revelation*) that are *to be opened* in order to the *univerſal Judgment*, are no other, than that *Volume* of Things, recorded in every Man's Conſcience, which, being opened and expoſed to View, will make a Kind of *Tally* or Counterpart to that *Memorial*, which God himſelf keeps of all we do. By this Means the Proceſs of the *great Day* will apparently be cut ſhort: But we need not take the Word *Day* in ſo ſtrict a Senſe as to reſtrain it to the narrow Compaſs of an *artificial* or *natural* Day, of twelve, or four and twenty Hours: It very often ſignifies [c] a longer Period of Time, as the whole Time of the *Iſraelites* Pilgrimage is called *the Day of their Temptation in the Wilderneſs*;

What is meant by a Day, *and how long the Time of Judgment may laſt.*

[a] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

[c] If we conſult Mr *Mede*, in the third Book of his Commentary on the *Revelations*, we ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied, that in the New Teſtament likewiſe, the Word *Day* ſignifies a long Time, as in *Matth.* vi. 11. compared with

Wilderneſs; and therefore we may very ſafely ſuppoſe, that the Time of *Chriſt*'s holding the grand Aſſize, and executing all *judicial* Proceedings, will be of a greater Extent and Duration than one Day.

IF we ſpeak indeed of what he can do, as God, there is no Queſtion, but as he could have made the World, ſo he can judge it in an Inſtant; but it ought to be remembered, that, as he was pleaſed to take up ſix Days in creating it, ſo he will very probably be many Days in judging the Inhabitants of it. Conſidering indeed, that the whole Proceſs of this Day is to be *ſolemn* and *auguſt*, which it cannot be, unleſs it be of ſome *Continuance*, and that, beſides the Trial of all Mankind, ſeveral other Matters are to be adjuſted; that all the *myſterious* Trains of Providence muſt be unfolded; all neceſſary Difficulties cleared; the ſtrange *Problem*, concerning the Sufferings of the Righteous, and the Proſperity of the Wicked, explained, and no Objection or Scruples left unſatisfied; that the Decrees and Purpoſes of God, which are not nicely to be ſearched into, and cannot be comprehended *now*, ſhall *then* be marvellouſly laid open; and thoſe peculiar Doctrines of the Goſpel, which at preſent are doubted of, and by ſome ridiculed, ſhall then be demonſtrated agreeable to Reaſon; that many Intrigues, and entangled Scenes of Things, which puzzled the ſobereſt and moſt conſiderate, are then to be diſcuſſed, and fairly laid open to the full Information of the moſt *inquiſitive* Minds: Conſidering, I ſay, that Almighty God is concerned to clear his Juſtice and Wiſdom, and to make his Majeſty and Power known, as well in the *cloſing up* of the World, as in the *creating* and *preſerving* it, to convince all Sinners, before he dooms them, and to ſilence all their *Objections*, before he paſſes a final *Sentence* upon them; we can hardly forbear concluding, that the Tranſaction of the general Judgment will be a Work of conſiderable Time, although, in the Stile of the Scripture, it is called no more than a *Day*. And ſo we proceed in the next Place,

The Solemnity and Proceſs of the Day of Judgment.

III. To deſcribe the *Solemnity* and *Proceſs* of it: And in this the Holy Scriptures have been very particular. They tell us, that, before the Approach of this terrible Day, on the Earth * *there ſhall be Diſtreſs of Nations, with Perplexity, the Sea and the Waves roaring, and Mens Hearts failing them for Fear, and for looking after thoſe Things, which are coming*; and that, in the Heavens, *there ſhall be Signs in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars*; [f] *the Sun ſhall be darkened, the Moon ſhall not give her Light, the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven, and* all *the Powers of Heaven ſhall be ſhaken*: That then ſhall [g] *the Son of Man* appear *in a Cloud, with Power and great Glory*, coming [h] *in his own Glory, and in his Father's, and in his Holy Angels*, whereof [i] *Thouſands of Thouſands ſhall miniſter unto him, and Ten thouſand Times ten Thouſand ſtand before him*; and coming [k] *in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on them who know not God, and obey not the Goſpel*: That, to this Purpoſe, [l] *he ſhall ſend his Angels, with a great Sound of a Trumpet*, which ſhall reach *from one End of Heaven to the other*, and *they ſhall gather together the* People of all Nations, *from the four Winds*; for [m] *the Sea ſhall give up her Dead, and Death and Hell ſhall deliver up their Dead, which was in them*: That, this being done, and he taking his Seat upon [n] *a great white Throne*, even the Cloud, whereon he came from Heaven, *all the Dead, both ſmall and great, ſhall ſtand before him*: That, as they appear, the Angels ſhall [o] *ſeparate them from one another, even as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats, the Sheep on the Right-Hand, and the Goats on the Left*, whereupon the [p] *Books ſhall be opened*, and *the Dead judged out of thoſe Things, which are written in the Books; every Man according to his Works*: That the Righteous ſhall come upon their Trial firſt, and, no ſooner ſhall they be acquitted, but their Judge ſhall ſay unto them; [q] *Come unto me, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Beginning of the World*; whereupon they ſhall immediately be [r] *caught up into the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air, and ſo ſhall be ever with the Lord*: That the Wicked, in the mean Time, ſhall ſtand trembling and quaking in Horror and Amazement at their impending Doom, their Thoughts accuſing them, and

with *Luke* xi. 3. and alſo in *John* xvi. 26. Nay, we read in 2 *Pet.* iii. and the laſt Verſe, the *Day of Eternity*, as we find it rendered in the Margin of our Bibles, according to the Original ἡμέρα αἰῶνος. But, notwithſtanding this, we can hardly be of his Opinion, when he extends the Day of Judgment to a Thouſand Years, and makes it the whole Time of the *Millennary Reign*. Lib. IV. p. 841.

* Luke xxi. 25, 26. [f] Matth. xxiv. 29. [g] Luke xxi. 17. [h] Ibid. ix. 26.
[i] Dan. vii. 10. [k] 2 Theſſ. i. 8. [l] Matth. xxiv. 31. [m] Rev. xx. 13.
[n] Ibid. xx. 11, 12. [o] Matth. xxv. 32, 33. [p] Rev. xx. 12. [q] Matth. xxv. 34.
[r] 1 Theſſ. iv. 17.

and * *their Hearts failing them for Fear, and for looking after thoſe Things, which are ready* to come upon them; and that, no ſooner ſhall they be arraigned, convicted, and condemned, but their Judge ſhall pronounce their Sentence, [s] *Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*; whereupon the whole Atmoſphere ſhall be in a Blaze about their Ears, [t] *the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great Noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat, the Earth alſo, and the Works which are therein, ſhall be burnt up; for the Heavens and the Earth, which are now*, as the Apoſtle tells us, *are kept in Store, reſerved unto Fire againſt the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of ungodly Men.*

AND now the Almighty Judge, having ſeen his dread Sentence put in Execution, will ariſe from his Throne, and thence return to the Seat of the Bleſſed, in a ſolemn and glorious Triumph, with all his *Myriads* of Angels and Saints, who, as they follow him through the Air, with loud *Hoſanna*'s, and triumphant Acclamations, will celebrate the Praiſes of their Redeemer; while thoſe other Myriads, that are about *the Throne of the Majeſty on High*, with Songs and Magnificats ſhall congratulate their Arrival; for ſo we read, [u] *and I heard, as it were, the Voice of a great Multitude, and as the Voice of many Waters, and as the Voice of mighty Thunderings, ſaying, Hallelujah; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give Honour to him; for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made herſelf ready: Bleſſed are they, which are called unto the Marriage-Supper of the Lamb!*

THIS is the Proſpect, which the Scriptures give us of the *Order* and *Solemnity* of the Laſt Judgment, very glorious and very terrible: But before we come to deſcribe the different *Reſentments* of Men at this Time, according to their different *Expectations*, it may not be amiſs to take Notice of one or two heightening Circumſtances of it.

Some particular Circumſtances of it, as, 1. *The Coming of the Judge.*

1. † WHEN our bleſſed Saviour came to ſuffer for the Sins of the World, he *took upon him the Form of a Servant*, and ſtooped to the loweſt Humiliation; being content to bear all the Hardſhips of Poverty, the Scorns of Contempt, the Inſolence and Outrage of Power, and Malice, and Cruelty: But, at the End of the World, when he appears to execute *Judgment* upon the Ungodly, and to revenge all the Injuries done to him, and his Servants, he will then aſſume his own proper *Greatneſs*, and make his Appearance ſuitable to the Dignity of his Office. *In that Day* there ſhall go before him [x] Fire, and Vapours, and Pillars of Smoke, Thunderings and Lightnings, Gloomineſs and thick Darkneſs, Prodigies and fearful Sights; the Light of the Sun ſhall be put out, the Moon turned into Blood, the Stars ſtart from their Orbs, and the Heavens be ſhrivelled up like a flaming Scrowl, while *the Earth ſhall tremble and quake, and the very Foundations alſo of the Hills ſhake, and be removed, becauſe he was wroth.* *In that Day* his ſovereign Perfections ſhall ſhine out, and his *Omnipotence* become viſible in opening the Graves, in aſſembling all Nations and Ages of Men, and compelling the moſt mighty, and the moſt unwilling, to obey the unwelcome Summons. *In that Day* he will *come in his own Glory, viz.* in a Body of a pure and immaculate Splendor, with his Hair ſhining like Threads of Light, his Eyes ſparkling with Beams of Majeſty, his Face diſplaying a moſt beautiful Luſtre, and his whole Subſtance ſhedding forth, from every Part, a dazzling Glory round about him; for ſuch is the Deſcription we have of him in Scripture: [z] *In the Midſt of the ſeven Candleſticks was one like the Son of Man, his Head and his Hair were white like Wool, as white as Snow, his Eyes were as a Flame of Fire, and his Countenance was like the Sun ſhining in its Strength. In that Day he will come in his Father's Glory:* For, though he will ſtill continue the ſame, that he was on Earth, yet his *Divine Eſſence* will be ſo viſibly prevalent and conſpicuous, that his human Nature will ſeem, as it were, abſorped in the Radiancy of the Godhead, and the Majeſty of his Preſence become ſo inſupportably great, that (as St *John*'s Viſion repreſents it) Nature will ſink under it; [a] *from his Face the Earth and the Heavens ſhall flee away, and there ſhall be no more Place found for them.* *In that Day* he will come *in the Glory of his Holy Angels:* [b] Thoſe pure and exalted Spirits, ranged in their *hierarchal* Order, ſhall be cloathed in their Robes of State, and diſplay the Luſtre and Excellencies of their Nature, to augment the Splendor of his Appearance. And now, when all theſe bright and glorious, theſe great and terrible

* Luke xxi. 26.
† *Collier*'s Sermons.
[s] Rev. i. 13, 14.
[t] Matth. xxv. 41.
[u] 2 Pet. iii. 10, 17.
[x] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I.
[z] Ibid. xx. 11.
[a] Rev. xix. 6, &c.
[b] *Collier*, ibid.
[y] Pſal. xviii. 7.

terrible Things ſhall meet at once, *who may abide the Day of his Coming, or ſtand at his Appearing?* If one of theſe celeſtial *Meſſengers* is ſo ſurprizing to us now, what a terrible Spectacle muſt it be, when the Curtain between both Worlds is drawn, as it were, and all the Inhabitants of Heaven, and poſſibly of Hell too, preſent themſelves before us? If *Daniel*, one ſo remarkable for his Courage, for his Innocence and Virtue, could not ſuſtain the Preſence of *one ſingle* Angel, but was perfectly *ſtupified* and overwhelmed with the illuſtrious *Viſion*, how ſhall we bear the united Glories of them all? How ſhall we ſupport the Converſe of the Deity itſelf? Of Neceſſity, God muſt work a Change in his Creatures to enable them to ſtand before him? their Senſes muſt be fortified and refined; their Bodies muſt be hardened into a firm and immortal Texture, otherwiſe his very Preſence will deſtroy them, and not leave them Life enough to receive their Sentence, or feel their Puniſhment. But,

The Raiſing of the Dead.

2. As ſoon as the great Judge of all the World ſhall, in this pompous Array, deſcend from Heaven, and place his Throne in the Air, at a convenient Diſtance from the Earth; the Dead, we are told, ſhall be raiſed, be ſummoned to appear, tried, and acquitted, or condemned. But, when their Reſurrection comes, [c] with what Horror and Reluctancy will bad Souls enter into their Bodies again, not to enjoy their old *Senſualities*, but to be judged for them; when the very Sight of their Bodies will call to Mind all the Villainies they acted in them; when they muſt appear before their Judge with thoſe very Bodies, [d] *whoſe Members they made Servants to Uncleanneſs, and to Iniquity unto Iniquity*; with Eyes full of Adultery; with Hands ſtained with Blood, with Bribes, with Rapine; with a blaſpheming, a lying, a reviling, a perjured Tongue? To unite a Soul to ſuch a Body again, is like tying a Man to his murthered Friend, which will both ſcare his Conſcience, and poiſon him with a noiſome Stench. On the contrary, holy Souls will give a better Welcome to their Bodies; Bodies, which were preſerved pure and clean from all ſenſual Luſts; which were the ready Inſtruments of Righteouſneſs and Virtue; which were offered up *living, holy, and acceptable Sacrifices to God*; which ſuffered Loſs, and Want, and Torment, and Death, for the Sake of Chriſt. In ſuch Bodies as theſe, good Men would deſire to be judged, ſeeing they are viſible Teſtimonies of their Faith, and Patience, and Self-denial; Members of Chriſt, and the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt.

When the Wicked, all in one Body, come to make their Appearance, what a tragical Spectacle will it be! [e] An innumerable Company of ſelf-condemned Wretches, aſſembled together before the Tribunal of an almighty and implacable Judge, quaking and trembling under the dire Expectations of a fearful and irrevocable Doom, with weeping Eyes, pale Looks, and ghaſtly Countenance, abiding the miſerable Fate that attends them, and [f] *crying out to the Rocks and Mountains, to fall upon them, and to hide them from the Face of him that ſits upon the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb.* But, on the other Hand, what a lovely Sight! when the glorious Company of the *Apoſtles*, the goodly Fellowſhip of the *Prophets*, the noble Army of *Martyrs*, the Holy Church throughout all the World ſhall meet, and preſent themſelves before their bleſſed Redeemer; who, looking down from his exalted Throne, ſhall, at one View, ſee all the Congregation of his Saints before him, and, with infinite Complacency, ſurvey the Fruit of the Travel of his Soul, and the mighty Purchaſe of his moſt *precious Blood.*

When they ſhall be brought upon their Trial, what inexpreſſible Horror and Confuſion muſt ſeize on thoſe wretched Souls, which ſtand convicted by their own Conſciences; when they ſhall find all their ſecret Machinations, dark Cheats, lewd Imaginations, and hypocritical Pretences, detected and expoſed; when they ſhall ſee themſelves publickly unmaſked, and forced to ſtand forth, like ſo many loathſome Spectacles, before God and his Angels, without any Excuſe or Retreat for their Shame, without any Vail to hide their Infamy and Bluſhes! But, on the contrary, how muſt the Righteous lift up their Heads with Joy, when not only their Innocence ſhall be vindicated, and that Infamy and Scandal, wherewith their Enemies beſpattered them, publickly wiped off; but all thoſe brave and unaffected Acts of ſecret Piety and Charity, to which none but God and themſelves were conſcious, ſhall be brought into open Light, and, to their everlaſting Renown, proclaimed through all the vaſt Aſſembly of Spirits!

Lastly,

[c] *Sherlock*, on Judgment. [d] Rom. vi. 19. [e] *Scott's* Mediator. [f] Rev. vi. 16.

LASTLY, when Sentence ſhall be paſſed upon them, [g] what horrible Outcries and Lamentations will be heard among thoſe that are condemned! For, if a *Take him, Jaylor*, from any earthly Judge, be able to extort ſo many Sighs and Tears from a *Criminal* here, what will a *Go ye Curſed* do, from the Mouth of the righteous Judge of all the World? As, on the contrary, no ſooner ſhall the Sentence of the Righteous be pronounced, but immediately will reſound joyful Acclamations through Heaven and Earth, [h] *Hallelujah, Salvation, and Glory, and Power be to the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his Judgments.* [i] *Salvation to our Lord, that ſitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb;* [k] *for wonderful are thy Works, O Lord God Almighty; juſt and true are thy Ways, O thou King of Saints!*

3. As ſoon as theſe Sentences are paſſed, there is this one Circumſtance more, to heighten the Terror of that Day, and that is, the diſmal Change and *Conflagration*, which will happen to the World. That the World ſhall at laſt be deſtroyed by Fire, has been a Tradition of very ancient Date, and what, probably, came from *Noah* [l] at firſt, and ſo deſcended to his Poſterity; becauſe we meet with no Nation, [m] whether *Civil* or *Barbarous*, but what univerſally believed it. And therefore we need leſs wonder, that we find the Holy Scriptures ſo clear and expreſs in ſuch Aſſertions as theſe; [n] *That Chriſt will deſcend from Heaven, in a flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on thoſe, that know not God*; that [o] *his Throne ſhall be like the fiery Flame, his Wheels as burning Fire, and a fiery Stream ſhall iſſue and come forth before him*; and that then [p] *the Heavens, being on Fire, ſhall be diſſolved, the Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat, and the Earth alſo, and the Works that are therein, ſhall be diſſolved.* But then by what natural Cauſes this great Cataſtrophe is to be wrought, whether by a nearer Approach of the Sun to the Earth, or by an Eruption of the *central* Fire, or by a certain Preparation of the combuſtible Stores, which the Earth and the Air contain; as well as [q] how far this Conflagration will extend, whether to the Ætherial Heavens, and all *the Hoſt of them*, or to the Aerial only, is not ſo material to be conteſted here; ſince it is agreed, on all Hands, that the Conflagration will not be effected, without the particular Order and Appointment of God. *The Conflagration of the World.*

OF what Uſe the Burnings and Vulcanos, which are upon *the Face of the Earth*, the Minerals, and mineral Juices and Concretions, capable of Inflammation, *within the Bowels of it*, as well as the Meteors and Exhalations, which are ingendered and formed *in the Air*, will be to ſet the World on Fire, [r] a learned and ingenious Enquirer has abundantly evinced, concluding his Enquiry with this Obſervation, "That "in general, there is a great Analogy between two *Deluges*, that which has been of "*Water*,

[g] *Scott*'s Mediator. [h] Rev. xix. 1. [i] Ibid. vii. 10. [k] Ibid. xv. 3.

[l] In the firſt Ages of the World, after the Flood, when *Noah* and his Children peopled the Earth again, as he gave Precepts of Morality and Piety for the Conduct of their Manners, which are uſually called, *Præcepta Noachidarum*, frequently mentioned by the *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, ſo alſo he delivered to them certain Maxims and Concluſions about Providence, the State of Nature, and the Fate of the World; and theſe, in Proportion, may be called, *Dogmata Noachidarum*, the *Doctrines of* Noah, *and his Children*, which made a Syſtem of Philoſophy, or ſecret Knowledge among them, delivered by Tradition from Father to Son, but eſpecially preſerved among their Prieſts, or ſacred Perſons, or ſuch others as were addicted to Contemplation. *Burnet*'s Theory, Vol. II.

[m] That the *Romans*, who had their Learning from the *Grecians*, were of this Opinion, is plain from thoſe well-known Verſes of *Ovid*:

Eſſe quoque in fatis reminiſcitur, affore tempus,
Quo mare, quo Tellus, correptaque regia cœli
Ardeat, & mundi moles operoſa laboret. *Metam.*

Among the *Egyptians*, (as *Plato* in his *Timæus* tells) it was the Doctrine of their Prieſts, that the fatal Cataſtrophes of the World were by Fire and Water. The *Perſians* made their beloved God, *Fire*, at length, to conſume all Things that are capable of being conſumed: And the *Chaldeans* (as we have it from *Beroſus*, in *Seneca*'s *Nat. Quæſt.*) not only taught the Conflagration, but alſo fixed it to a certain Period of Time, when there ſhould happen a great Conjunction of the Planets in *Cancer*, &c. *Burnet*, ibid. All Sects of Philoſophers, indeed, but the *Ariſtotelians*, who held the Heavens to be *incorruptible*, embraced the Notion of the World's Conflagration; but then their Opinion of it differed very much from that of Chriſtians. The *Stoicks* and *Epicureans* held it to be, not a *Conſumption*, but a *Purgation* and *Reſtoration* of the World: The *Platoniſts* held, that there ſhould be a ſucceſſive *Renovation* of all Things, after certain Intervals and Revolutions; this was called, by them, περιοδικὴ παλιγγενεσία, *a Periodical Regeneration*; for they held, that, after a certain Return of Years, all Things ſhould periſh by Fire, and then there ſhould ſucceed a Reſtitution or Reſtoration of them, and that innumerable ſuch Renovations and Succeſſions ſhould happen to the Univerſe. So that theſe *Gentiles* were not of the ſame Opinion with *Chriſtians*, who acknowledge only one ſingle Conflagration; and yet we may obſerve, that both our Saviour and his Apoſtle St *Peter* have made Uſe of the very ſame Terms, which the Philoſophers did, whereby to expreſs this univerſal Burning. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

[n] 2 Theſſ. i. 8. [o] Dan. vii. 9, 10. [p] 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12. [q] *Ray*'s Phyſico-Theological Diſcourſes.

[r] *Burnet*, ibid. c. vii. The Things above-named may, indeed, contribute ſomewhat towards a general Conflagration, but the firſt and principal Cauſe, if I miſtake not, is, that the heavenly Bodies ſhall be put into unſpeakable Diſorder; for, as our Saviour himſelf tells us, *the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of Heaven ſhall be ſhaken*; upon which preternatural Concuſſion, there will be a ſtrange Confuſion among the *ſtarry* Bodies, which, like Fire out of its Place, will do infinite Miſchief; firſt ſet the upper Regions on Fire, and afterwards thoſe below. *Edwards*, ibid.

" *Water*, and that which will be of *Fire*; that, as at the former, the Windows of " Heaven were opened above, and the Abyſs was opened below, and the Waters of " theſe two joined together to overflow the World; ſo, at the Conflagration, God " will rain down Fire from Heaven, as he did once upon *Sodom*, and, at the ſame " Time, the ſubterraneous Store-Houſes of Fire will be broken open, which an- " ſwers to the Diſruption of the Abyſs; and theſe two, meeting and mingling to- " gether, will involve the Earth, and the elemental Heavens in Flames."

A Deſcription of it.

IMAGINE all Nature then ſtanding in Expectation to receive its Doom, the deſtroying Angels having their Inſtructions, and every Thing ready for the fatal Hour; upon our Lord's giving the *Signal*, all the *ſublunary* World breaking into Flames, the Treaſures of Fire opening in Heaven, and the Stores of Vengeance, which are lodged in the Heart of the Earth, (thoſe Springs of Fire, which have fed *Ætna* and *Veſuvius* for ſo many Ages) exhauſting their Strength at once, and rending whole Countries into Pieces at their Eruption; every Element, and every Region, as far as the Bounds of the Fire extend, in a Tumult and a Fury; the whole habitable World diſſolving into its firſt *Chaos*, and rolling in tempeſtuous Confuſion; and whereunto can we liken the Dreadfulneſs of this Scene, or with what *Compariſon can we compare it?* The moſt aſtoniſhing Thing in this World ſeems to be the *battering* and *ſtorming* of a Town, where there is nothing to be heard but the Roaring of Cannons, and the Shrieks of the Vanquiſhed; where the Streets are cracking in Flames, and ſtrewed with Carcaſſes of the Slain; where all Places are filled with Smoke and Blood, with Deſpair and Deſolation. But, alas! this is but a *faint* Image, a very imperfect Reſemblance of that Devaſtation, Miſery, and Terror, which will accompany the final Period, when the laſt and fatal Aſſault ſhall be made upon the *Globe* at once; when the whole Frame of Things ſhall be torn and diſjointed with Tempeſts, and Thunder, and Earthquakes; when Iſlands and Continents ſhall be daſhed againſt each other, and Sea and Land thrown out of all Diſtinction, and ſhuffled into a wild Maſs of Diſorder.

How vain (may we ſay upon this Occaſion) and tranſient is the Glory of all this habitable World, when, by the Force of one Element breaking looſe upon the reſt, all, that we admired and adored before, as great and magnificent, is obliterated and vaniſhed! [s] " Where are now the great Empires of the World, and their great " Imperial Cities? Their Pillars, Trophies, and Monuments of Glory? Shew me " where they ſtood: Read the Inſcription: Tell me the Victor's Name. What " Remains, what Impreſſions, what Difference and Diſtinction do you ſee in this " Maſs of Fire? But it is not Cities only, and the Works of Mens Hands, but the " *everlaſting Hills*, the Mountains and Rocks of the Earth are melted, as Wax be- " fore the Sun, and *their Place is no where found.* Here ſtood the *Alps*, a prodi- " gious Range of Stone, the Load of the Earth, that covered many Countries, and " reached their Arms from the Ocean to the Black Sea; this huge Maſs of Stone " is ſoftened and diſſolved, as a tender Cloud into Rain. Here ſtood the *African* " Mountains, and *Atlas* with its Top above the Clouds: There was the frozen " *Caucaſus*, and *Taurus*, and *Imaus*, and the Mountains of *Aſia*; and yonder, to- " wards the *North*, ſtood the *Riphæan* Hills, cloathed in Ice and Snow. All theſe " are vaniſhed and dropped away, as the Snow upon their Heads, and ſwallowed " up in a Red-Sea of Fire. [t] *Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Al-* " *mighty, juſt and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints.*"

Mens different Sentiments upon the Coming of the Day of Judgment.

AND if the Day of Judgment, and the Things to be done thereon, are ſo terrible in Contemplation, think, O think, what a Tumult of Diſorder and Confuſion muſt fill our Minds, when we ſee them actually executed. What Terrors and Diſtraction will then ſeize thoſe guilty Breaſts, whom *this Day overtakes*, as we are told it ſhall do many, *unawares:* Not *unawares*, for Want of ſufficient Warning, much might be then alledged in their Excuſe; but *unawares*, for Want of neceſſary Preparation, and attending to that Warning, which leaves no room for Apologies? [u] What Thoughts will then ſtart up, and force themſelves upon thoſe obſtinate, thoſe diſſolute Sons of Pleaſure and Vanity, who, in Defiance of their *baptiſmal* Vows, and better Education, make ſuch a Jeſt of a crucified God, and laugh at the Threatenings of his judging the World, as a Fable deviſed to keep ſilly Souls in Awe, the Artifice of *Politicians*, and the Talk of *Churchmen?* What a diſmal Change will then enſue, when

[s] Vid. *Burnet*'s Theory, Vol. II. and *Collier*'s Sermons. [t] Rev. xv. 3. [u] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I.

when the inſolent Mockeries of God and his wiſe Diſpenſations, the profane Burleſques of Scripture, and that filthy nauſeous Froth, which is now thought to give ſuch a *Reliſh* to Converſation, ſhall ſink into fruitleſs Confeſſions of Truth found too late; when every blaſphemous Tongue ſhall be ſtruck dumb with Guilt and Deſpair, and, in the Place of loud Laughter at the moſt ſacred Things, ſhall ſucceed Weeping and Wailing, trembling Knees, wringing Hands, and gnaſhing Teeth, thenceforth, and for ever?

WHAT *Hills* will the prophane Swearers call to *fall upon them*, what *Mountains* to *cover them*, when he, whoſe Blood and Wounds have been ſo wantonly toſſed upon their Tongues, ſhall come *in flaming Fire*, to revenge theſe rude Affronts of his moſt holy Name and Sufferings? Nay, where ſhall even thoſe, in Compariſon, modeſt Sinners ſtand, who *in Words* are content to own the Lord, whom *in Works* they too palpably deny, and diſcredit, at leaſt a Religion, which they do not profeſſedly diſclaim? The intemperate and laſcivious, the greedy Worldlings, and glittering great ones, that ſpend their Time and Wealth in Vice and Vanity, muſt then render a ſtrict Account, not only how they got, but how they employed, their Poſſeſſions; and be pierced through and through with this ſtabbing Reflection, —— That the Riches, which they ſquandered away in ſtately Buildings, coſtly Apparel, numerous Equipage, and worldly Grandeur, are now become Inſtruments of their Ruin; which, if expended in cloathing the naked, and feeding the hungry Members of *Chriſt*, might have opened them a Paſſage into everlaſting Habitations of Bliſs and Glory. * Here indeed the Paſſions of the Soul do in a great Meaſure ſleep, and are heavy and languid, for Want of Objects ſtrong enough to call them up; but Heaven and Hell, when they are once in View, and are preſented to our Senſes, are ſuch mighty moving Things, as will be ſure to awaken the Powers of the moſt *lethargic* Mind, and raiſe all the Force and Paſſions of Nature to the utmoſt Degree. When Men can ſhelter themſelves no longer in Infidelity, but are forced to believe *they are loſt for ever*; when they are powerfully convinced that Fire, and Fiends, and Eternity are the diſmal Ingredients of their Puniſhment; when Damnation ſtands before them, and the intolerable Sentence is ready to be executed; what inexpreſſible Agonies will they then fall into, what Amazement and Exceſs of Horror muſt then ſeize upon them? Nothing certainly, but the Puniſhment itſelf, can be more aſtoniſhing, than the Dread of it, at ſo near a Diſtance.

BUT praiſed be the Divine Mercy for it, there is a bright Side of this Judgment too. [x] For though it cannot be ſuppoſed, that the very beſt of Mortals can look ſtedfaſtly on this *Tribunal*, and all its terrible *Pomp*, without any Manner of Miſgiving or Concern; yet, if they look up to *Jeſus, that Lamb ſlain to take away the Sins of the World*, the Apprehenſions of a Judgment will be tempered with Hope, and holy Truſt in his Sacrifice; and the Plagues and Fears, which wound the Wicked mortally, fly over the good Man's Head, and not *one of them touches him*. The good Man can behold the Glories and Triumphs of infinite Mercy in the Son of God, now bright and *all divine*, once condeſcending ſo low, as to die for his Sake: He can depend upon all fair Allowances for Infirmities and Temptations from one, who hath felt the Weakneſs of human Nature in his own Perſon; inſomuch that, were he allowed the Liberty to chuſe his own Judge, Prudence and Intereſt would direct him to ſuch an one, as is infinitely good in his own Nature, and has been inexpreſſibly kind to him. He looks upon Judgment therefore, as the Pardon of his Tranſgreſſions, the Recompence of his Sufferings, his ſpeedy and intire Deliverance from Danger and Temptations, from Corruption and Mortality, and (what is more than all) from Frailty and Imperfections, and the very Poſſibility of ſinning any more. He looks upon it as the Renewal and Glorification of his Nature, when *his Body* ſhall be transformed into Beauty, and Vigour, and Immortality; *his Soul* be likened to the Divine Excellencies; every Power and Faculty enlarged; and himſelf, from thenceforth, ſeeing, admiring, praiſing, loving, living, and reigning with his Lord for ever. And for theſe Reaſons, he looks upon *thoſe Things, which are coming upon the Earth*, with Unconcern; and can behold a flaming World, and all the Things that are conſumed therein, without Uneaſineſs or Regret; becauſe he knows he has a more *abiding City*, [y] *whoſe Builder and Maker is God*, and [z] *an Inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for him.*

* *Collier*'s Sermons.
[x] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I.
[y] Heb. xi, 10.
[z] 1 Pet. i. 4.

Concerning the Time of the future Judgment, and whether known to Chriſt and Angels.

IV. AFTER our Saviour had been diſcourſing to his Diſciples concerning the future Judgment, and foretelling the ſeveral Signs which ſhould precede it, we find him concluding with this Declaration, [a] *but of that Day and Hour knoweth no Man, no not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only*; whence ſome concluded it to be *one of thoſe Times and Seaſons, which the Father hath put in his Power*, and, conſequently, that it is a Kind of Impiety to make any Search into the particular Period of it: Whilſt others have been ſo little apprehenſive of any Danger herein, that they have purſued their Enquiries far enough to imagine, that they have attained to an exact Computation of it: It ſeems not a little ſtrange however, (whatever we may think of thoſe celeſtial Miniſters, who continually *behold the Face of God*, and are to make up the Train of the Judge, when he cometh) it ſeems not a little ſtrange, I ſay, that the Son of God, who came from *the Boſom of his Father*, and was therefore intimately acquainted with his Counſels; that he, whom God hath *ordained to be the Judge of the World*, and who knew his Office, and the Time of its commencing ſo well, that he certainly predicted ſeveral *Forerunners* of it: Nay, that he, in whom *all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge*, and all the *Divinity* does *ſubſtantially reſide*, ſhould not be acquainted with the Time of this Judgment; and therefore, to ſolve this Difficulty, ſeveral Interpretations of this Text have been deviſed. [b] Some diſtinguiſh between Chriſt's *human* and *divine* Nature, and thereupon argue, that *though he knew of the Day of Judgment as God, yet he was not acquainted with it as Man*; for they readily ſuppoſe, that the Divine Wiſdom, which dwelt in our Saviour, did not communicate itſelf to his human Soul ſo fully, but that his human Nature might, at certain Times, be ignorant of ſome particular Things. Others, conſidering *Chriſt* in the Capacity of a *Prophet*, ſent into the World to reveal his Father's Will, and thereupon delivering, not all that his Godhead knew, but only what the Spirit of God thought fit to reveal, have thence inferred, that as *he ſpake nothing of himſelf, but only as the Father, which ſent him, gave him Commandment, what he ſhould ſpeak*; and ſo, the Knowledge *of the Day and Hour* of the final Judgment, being no Part of his *prophetic* Office, as the Son of Man, and as barely the Meſſenger and Miniſter of God, he knew nothing of it. The Words οὐδεὶς οἶδεν, which we render *knoweth no Man*, ſome have imagined, might properly enough ſignify, *no Perſon revealeth, or maketh known*; and thence they ſuppoſe, that though the Angels might, and our bleſſed Saviour certainly did know the Time of the Coming of the Day of Judgment; yet God, in his great Mercy to Mankind, and for Reaſons hereafter mentioned, laid a Reſtriction upon them, that they might not *make it known*.

[c] IN which ſoever of theſe Senſes we underſtand our bleſſed Saviour's Words, we cannot from them deduce any *Inferiority* in his Godhead, or any Ignorance in him, with Regard to the Time, when the Laſt Judgment is to commence. And though, when our Saviour ſpake theſe Words, the Angels might not be able to ſee through all Events to the End of the World, and, conſequently, be ignorant of the preciſe Time of the Judgment-Day; yet it does not therefore follow, that they do not know it now, when, in the Courſe of almoſt *ſeventeen hundred Years*, many Things are come to paſs, that may be Marks and Directions to them, to make Judgment of what remains, and of the laſt Period of Things.

What Enquiry ſeveral People have made into the Day of Judgment.

SOME of the ancient *Aſtronomers* pretended to calculate the End of the World from the fixed Stars, and the Firmament. [d] They ſuppoſed, that theſe Bodies beſides the Hurry of their *diurnal* Motion, from *Eaſt* to *Weſt*, quite round the Earth, in four and twenty Hours, had another *retrograde* Motion from *Weſt to Eaſt*, which moves ſlow and leiſurely; and that, when they have finiſhed this Circle of *Retrogradation*, and come up again to the ſame Place, from whence they ſet out at the Beginning

[a] Mark xiii. [b] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. III.

[c] Excellent to this Purpoſe are the Words of Dr *Lightfoot*. "It is one Thing, *ſays he*, to underſtand the Son of "God, barely and abſtractedly, for the ſecond Perſon in the Holy Trinity; another, to underſtand him for the "Meſſias, or the ſecond Perſon *incarnate*. To ſay that there is any Thing, which the ſecond Perſon of the Trinity "knows not, is blaſphemous; to ſay ſo of the Meſſias, is not ſo; who nevertheleſs was the ſame with the ſecond "Perſon in the Trinity. For although the ſecond Perſon, abſtractly conſidered, according to his mere Deity, was "co-equal with the Father, co-omnipotent, co-omniſcient, co-eternal with him, &c. yet the Meſſias, who was God-"Man, conſidered as Meſſias, was a Servant and a Meſſenger of the Father, and received Commands and Authority "from him. So that thoſe Expreſſions, *The Son can do nothing of himſelf*, &c. will not in the leaſt ſerve the *Arian* "Turn, if you take them in this Senſe, which you muſt neceſſarily do, *i. e. the Meſſias can do nothing of himſelf, be-"cauſe he is a Servant and a Deputy*." In Locum.

[d] *Burnet*'s Theory, Vol. II.

Beginning of the World, then this Courſe of Nature will be at an End: But, as this Fiction of a *ſolid Firmament*, upon which this *Hypotheſis* relies, has been long ſince exploded, and the Stars being found not to be fixed in one Surface, or at an equal Diſtance from the Earth, but placed in ſeveral *Orbs*, higher and higher, to fill and beautify the immenſe Spaces of the Univerſe: So have they no Motion common to them all, nor any Motion ſingly, unleſs upon their own *Centres*: And therefore as they never leave their Stations, ſo they can never return to that common Station, which, as theſe Men imagined, they had at the Beginning of the World; and, conſequently, this grand *Period*, whereby they pretend to meaſure the World's Duration, is purely *chimerical*, and deſtitute of any Foundation, in the true Nature and Motion of celeſtial Bodies.

THE *Jews* have a remarkable Prophecy among them, [e] of a very ancient Date, and wherewith [f] ſeveral Fathers of the Chriſtian Church ſeem to be ſatisfied, *viz.* that the World ſhall ſtand for Six Thouſand Years, which they diſtribute into this Order, *Two Thouſand, before the Law*; *Two Thouſand, under the Law*; *and Two Thouſand, under the Meſſiah*. But [g] the great Difference of Computation, between the *Hebrew* Copies and the *Septuagint*, which amounts to more than 1300 Years, how long a Time it is, ſince the World firſt began, makes it impoſſible to draw any certain Concluſion, even ſuppoſing the Prophecy to be true, how long it will be before it ends. The *Samaritan* Copy of the *Pentateuch* ſeems to *moderate* between theſe two; but, even taking them all together, we are ſtill at the ſame Loſs, and left only to multiply our Conjectures; which made [h] a very great Enquirer into this Period propoſe it as a Conſideration to the Pious, Sober, and Judicious; "Whether, "with all due Reverence to the Divine Writ, there may not be ſome ſecret Diſpoſi- "tion of Divine Providence in this Variety of Computation, to prevent our Curio- "ſity, in counting the exact Time of the Day of Judgment, and *ſecond* Appearing "of *Chriſt*; and that as the ambitious Tower of *Babel* was hindered by the Con- "fuſion of Languages, ſo whether our Curioſity, in this Particular, be not, by a "like Providence, prevented by ſuch a Diverſity of Computations."

The Prophecies which God has given us of it.

SEVERAL of the ancient Prophets have, in ſeveral Places, foretold the Converſion and Reſtoration of the *Jews*, as previous to the Conſummation of all Things. But, alas! what Appearance is there of this in the preſent Situation of Affairs? And what Judgment can we make of a *Sign*, that is not yet come to paſs? Our Bleſſed Saviour has likewiſe foretold us of ſeveral Diſorders, in the *natural* World, as Forerunners of his coming to Judgment: But theſe being the very *Pangs* of Death, and Strugglings of Nature, as it were before her Diſſolution, it will be too late to be aware of our Ruin, when it is thus knocking at our Door. The laſt Revelation, we are to expect, is the *Apocalypſe* of St *John*, wherein are ſeveral Prophecies, which reach to the Concluſion of the World. The ſeven Seals, the ſeven Trumpets, the ſeven Vials, do all terminate upon that great Period; but then theſe are *hiſtorical*, not *chronological* Prophecies: They tell us, in their Language, the Events, but do not expreſs the Time, wherein they come to paſs; and though others there are, that may be called *chronological*, ſuch as [i] *the treading under Foot the holy City, forty*

[e] This Prophecy is called, *Traditio Domûs Eliæ*: But then there were two of this Name, *Elias* the *Tiſhbite*, and *Elias* the Rabbin or *Cabbaliſt*, and it is ſuppoſed to belong immediately to the latter of theſe: Yet this does not hinder, but that it might come originally from the former *Elias*. It might be preſerved in the School of this *Elias* the Rabbin, and firſt made publick by him; or perhaps he might add that Diviſion of the Time into three Parts, and ſo get a Title to the Whole. For I cannot eaſily imagine, that a Doctor, who lived two hundred Years, or thereabouts, before Chriſt, when all Prophecy had ceaſed, for many Ages among the *Jews*, ſhould take upon him to dictate a Prophecy, about the Duration of the World, unleſs he had been ſupported by ſome antecedent *Tradition*, which being kept more ſecret before he took the Liberty to make it publick, came, by that Means, to be fathered on him. Nor can it be ſuppoſed, but that the old Prophet *Elias* was a very proper Perſon to be inſpired with the Knowledge, and to tell the firſt News of that fatal Period, ſince we are told, (*Mal.* iv. 5, 6.) that he is to come again, and bring the firſt Alarm of it. *Burnet*'s Theory, Vol. II.

[f] Of this Opinion was St *Barnabas*, (Epiſt. Cath. c. xv.) where he argues, that the Creation will be ended in Six Thouſand Years, as it was finiſhed in ſix Days, every Day, according to the *ſacred* and *myſtical* Account, anſwering to a Thouſand Years. Of the ſame Judgment were *Irenæus*, Lib. V. c. xviii. *Hyppolytus*, his Diſciple, as we may ſee in *Photius*, c. ccii. *Lactantius*, in his *Divine Inſtitutions*, Lib. VII. c. xiv. *Cyprian*, in his Exhortation to Martyrdom, c. xi. And the Author of the Queſtions and Anſwers, *Ad Orthodoxos*, in *Juſtin Martyr*, who tells us, *That, from ſeveral Places in Scripture, we may conjecture, that thoſe are in the right, who ſay Six Thouſand Years is the Time prefixed for the Duration of this preſent Frame of Things*. Burnet, *ibid.*

[g] *Mede*'s Works, Lib. V. Where he ſuppoſes, that the ſeventy Interpreters, tranſlating, as they did, in *Egypt*, might voluntarily, and, on Set purpoſe, increaſe the Years of the firſt Generations, which he makes to be thoſe, not *before*, but *after* the Flood, in order to make them reach the Antiquity of ſome Stories of the *Egyptians*, and thereby exceeded the *Hebrew* Computation above 1300 Years.

[h] *Mede*, ibid. [i] Rev. xi. 2.

forty and two Months; [k] the *Witneſſes oppoſing Antichriſt, One Thouſand Two Hundred and Sixty Days*; [l] the Flight of *the Woman into the Wilderneſs, for a Time, Times, and half a Time*; and [m] the War of the Beaſt againſt the Saints, *Forty-two Months*; yet, even admitting that ſome of theſe extend (as all do not) to the End of the World, ſince we do not certainly know, where to fix their Beginning, even though we were agreed as to the Things themſelves, we muſt ſtill be at a Loſs, when, or in what Year, they will expire. The beſt Conjectures, indeed, that can be made concerning this Matter, muſt be taken from a judicious Examination of theſe Points; and, according as we gather up the Prophecies of this Revelation, in a ſucceſſive Completion, we may ſee how, by Degrees, we draw nearer and nearer to the Concluſion of all: But till ſome of theſe Prophecies are accompliſhed, we are like a Man, that awakes in the Night, and knows not how far it is ſpent, until the Light appears, and the firſt Glimpſe of that *reſolves* his Doubts.

That the Apoſtles, in their Days, did not think it near at Hand.

THUS we have examined the *Obſervations* which Men have made, and the *Prophecies*, which God hath given us concerning the Laſt Day, and muſt ſtill remain ignorant of the Time of its coming. "And well may we be ſuppoſed to be ignorant, "when the Apoſtles themſelves, *as ſome imagine*, were ſo groſſly miſtaken in their "Computation, that they verily believed themſelves ſhould have lived to be Spectators "of the World's *Cataſtrophe*, and that the ſecond Coming of Chriſt was not to be de-"ferred much beyond the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, as their Words and Exhortations "ſeem to import." [n] It cannot be denied, indeed, but that, at the Beginning and firſt ſetting out of the Goſpel, ſome of theſe holy Men were guilty of Miſtakes, and ſufficiently diſcovered their erroneous Surmiſes; but after the Holy Ghoſt was ſent in an extraordinary Manner to enlighten them, and its Office was *to teach them all Things*, even ſuch Things as they were not able to bear before; it is impoſſible that they ſhould conceive any Error, much more commit it to Writing, or that they ſhould teach any falſe Doctrine, or delude their Fellow-Chriſtians with falſe Hopes and Encouragements, as they muſt have done, had this been their real Perſuaſion. [o] For if, when St *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*; [p] *Brethren, the Time is ſhort, and the Faſhion of this World paſſeth away*, he ſpeaks not of the Time of human Life, and the Relation Men have to the World, and the World to them, but of Chriſt's coming to Judgment, and the Deſtruction of all Things here on Earth; if, when he tells the *Hebrews*, [q] *yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry*, he means this, not of Chriſt's coming to the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and of the *Jewiſh* State and Nation, but of his coming to the final Judgment, he certainly teaches falſe Doctrine, and endeavours to ſupport them with falſe Hopes, which cannot but impair his Credit in other Matters. If therefore the Apoſtle may be allowed to explain his own Meaning, he has, in another Place, given us a full Interpretation of it, which we find him introducing in this ſolemn Manner: [r] *Now we beſeech you, Brethren,* τῆς παρουσίας, not *by*, but *concerning the Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not ſoon ſhaken in Mind, or troubled, neither by Spirit*, i. e. any pretended Revelation, *nor by Word, nor by Letter, as from us, as that the Day of Chriſt is at Hand. Let no Man deceive you by any Means, for that Day ſhall not come, except there come a falling away firſt, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the Son of Perdition:* Which plainly enough ſhews, that the Apoſtle diſowned any ſuch Doctrine himſelf, and accounted thoſe *Deceivers*, who did inſinuate it. When therefore he tells the *Corinthians*, [s] *We ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall all be changed in a Moment*; and in like Manner, when he tells the *Theſſalonians*, [t] *We that are alive, and remain unto the Coming of the Lord, ſhall not prevent them which are aſleep*; it is perverting his Senſe, to apply theſe Paſſages to himſelf, and the Chriſtians then in Being, which have ſo plain a Reference to Chriſtians in all Ages; or to infer from them the ſurviving of that Generation to the Coming of our Lord, when his Meaning is apparently no more than this,——That they (whoſoever they be) who ſhall be alive at the general Reſurrection, ſhall undergo a *Change* inſtead of *Death*.

The Reaſons for their expreſſing themſelves as they did.

WE can hardly ſuppoſe, that the Apoſtles were ſo little verſed in the Writings of *Ezekiel, Daniel*, and the reſt of the Prophets, eſpecially when our Saviour had expounded the Scriptures to them, and taught them [u] *the Things pertaining to the Kingdom of God*, after his Reſurrection, as to think that the Goſpel-State would not continue one Century. St *Paul*, in particular, tells us, that he expected a *general Apoſtacy*

[k] Rev. xi. 3. [l] Ibid. xii. 14. [m] Ibid. xiii. 5. [n] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.
[o] *Whitby* on 2 Cor. v. 9. [p] 1 Cor. vii. 29, 31. [q] Heb. x. 37. [r] 2 Theſſ. ii. 2, &c.
[s] 1 Cor. xv. 51. [t] 1 Theſſ. iv. 15. [u] Acts i. 3.

Apoſtacy, and the *Revelation* of *Antichriſt*, before the great Day; and St *Peter*, to engage their Patience and Perſeverance, deſires that the Chriſtians, in his Days, might * *not be ignorant of this one Thing, that one Day is with the Lord, as a Thouſand Years, and a thouſand Years as one Day.* Their Perſecutions, it is likely, which were very heavy upon them, cauſed them to wiſh for ſome ſudden *Deliverance*, and inclined them to believe, that Chriſt would ſpeedily come to take Vengeance on their Adverſaries; and therefore, * ſince the Time of Judgment was *uncertain* and unknown, it was but fit, that the wiſer Courſe ſhould be taken, and that Men ſhould rather be *alarmed* into ſudden and immediate Expectations, than tempted to *delay* and put off this Day. This is all, that we find the Apoſtles doing, and indeed all they could do. They could only ſpeak in general Terms, of the Nearneſs of this Day; they could not fix, or limit it to any particular Time; and, if they were moved by the Spirit to ſpeak of it, in ſuch a Manner, as might induce others to make ſuch particular Applications, as might be beneficial to all in every Age, I can ſee no Fallacy in this; eſpecially conſidering, that, as Death and Judgment are the ſame Things, in Reference to our Eternity, the Apoſtles might both wiſely and properly ſpeak of the Day of Judgment in ſuch *Language*, as might move every Man daily to expect it.

THIS however muſt not be diſſembled, that theſe, and the like Paſſages in Scripture, gave Occaſion [y] to ſucceeding Chriſtians to think, that the Day of Judgment was *near at Hand*; and have ſince made ſome Perſons, otherwiſe ſober and judicious, too bold and daring in this Particular; their ardent Deſires of Chriſt's coming, and the great Preſſures and Afflictions, which they laboured under, and wiſhed to be delivered from, puſhing them on to aſſign the preciſe and punctual Time. The Unſucceſsfulneſs of their Conjectures however may be of Uſe to convince us of this Truth, that he, who *hath appointed this Day*, hath alſo, for good and wiſe Reaſons, determined to hide it from the Knowledge of all Men, that they may not be puffed up with Pride and Conceit from their Foreſight of *Futurities*; that frail Minds may not intermeddle with Divine Secrets; that the Deſigns and Myſteries of Providence may not be interrupted, but ſhewn them all at once; that Security and Preſumption, if the Day were diſtant, Horror and Diſtraction, if it were near, may not invade Mens Minds; and that, looking upon every Day, as what may bring their great Judge from Heaven, they may live in continual Watchfulneſs and Preparation for his Coming: And this the rather, becauſe (how little ſoever they know of the Time *when*) they are certainly no Strangers to this, *that the Day of the Lord ſhall come as a Thief in the Night*, when all Things are wrapped up in Silence, in Sleep, and Security; and that the laſt Age ſhall be as much ſurprized at the *burning*, as that of *Noah* was at the *drowning* of the World. They will be eating and drinking, buying and building, projecting glorious Deſigns, and engaged as eagerly in the Buſineſs and Entertainments of Life, as ever; and when they cry *Peace and Safety*, promiſe themſelves vaſt Returns from their Undertakings, and think their Proſperity impregnable; then ſhall the fatal Day ruſh in *unawares*, and overwhelm them with ſwift and irreſiſtible Deſtruction. When the Voluptuous are revelling in the Exceſs of Riot; when the Ambitious are graſping at Power, making themſelves great by Slaughter and Deſolation, and raiſing their *Trophies* upon the Miſery of their Neighbours; then ſhall all their Enjoyments, and all their Hopes be unexpectedly raviſhed from them, and their Conqueſts ſwallowed up in the univerſal Ruin. [z] *Wherefore beloved, ſeeing that ye look for ſuch Things, be diligent, that ye may be found in him in Peace, without Spot and blameleſs.*

Why Men are left ignorant of this Day.

Whenever it comes, it comes ſuddenly,

I KNOW not what Strength may be thought in the Apoſtle's Reaſoning now, * but let the *hardieſt* Sinner ſuppoſe the Day of Judgment come, and fancy himſelf ſurrounded with the thouſand Terrors of it: Let him conceive Nature diſſolving in Agonies;

and therefore it is Wiſdom to provide for it.

* 2 Pet. iii. 8. [x] *Lucas*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

[y] Thus *Lactantius* (Inſtit. Lib. VII. c. xxv.) aſſerted, that there was not above two hundred Years Space, between the Time when he wrote, and the End of the World: And before him *Tertullian* and *Origen* concluded, from the Words of St *Paul*, *Brethren, the Time is ſhort, it remains, that thoſe that have Wives, be as though they had none*, 1 Cor. vii. 29. that Doomſday could not be far off. St *Chryſoſtom*, in one of his Sermons, *(de Virginitate)* tells his Hearers, that this preſent Time runs to an End, and the final Reſurrection is, as it were, at the Door: And among later Writers, *Martin Luther* (in his *Colloq. Menſal.* c. xxxiv, xxxviii) has theſe warm Sayings; "I verily believe, that the Angels are already "up in Arms, that they are putting on their Harneſs, and girding their Swords about them: For the Day of Judgment "draweth near, and two hundred Years hence the Voice will come, and ſound, *Behold the Bridegroom cometh.*"

[z] 2 Pet. iii. 14. * *Lucas*, ibid.

Agonies; the World flaming, the Trumpet of the Arch-Angel ſounding; the Glory of God diſplaying itſelf in the Perſon of *Chriſt*, and Armies of Angels; the Roaring of the Sea, the Convulſion of the Earth, the Falling of Rocks and Mountains; dreadful Flaſhes of Lightning, and Volleys of Thunder; the Shrieks and Howlings of Devils, and diſtreſſed Sinners attacking him from every Quarter, and a guilty Conſcience, at the ſame Time, ſtabbing and terrifying him from within: Let, I ſay, the hardieſt of Sinners make this Suppoſition, and then he will not fail to be convinced of the Reaſonableneſs, and great Importance of the Apoſtle's Admonition, * *ſeeing then that* all theſe Things ſhall be diſſolved, what Manner of Perſons ought we to be in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs? That when *Chriſt* ſhall be revealed from Heaven to take *Vengeance on his Enemies*, as well as to *glorify his Saints*, we may be *found of him without Spot or Blemiſh*, and, *having our Fruits unto Holineſs*, may, in the End, be made Partakers of *everlaſting Life*.

SECT. I.

Of HEAVEN.

The Happineſs of Heaven, why ſo inexplicable.

BELOVED, [a] *now are we the Sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we ſhall be*, ſays St *John*, deſcribing the Privileges of the *Goſpel-State*: And if ſo great an Apoſtle, as St *John*, to whom ſo many Revelations were vouchſafed; to whom [b] *a Door in Heaven was opened*, and the [c] *Throne of God*, and the [d] *New Jeruſalem*, and [e] *the River of Life*, and [f] *the Tree of Life*, and [g] *the Light of the holy City* were exhibited, was unable to give us a *Deſcription* of the heavenly State, how ſhall any, but thoſe bright Miniſters of God, who continually ſtand in his Preſence, and are employed about the great *Arcana* of his Kingdom, be ſufficient to diſplay the tranſcendent Felicities, that are there? [h] Our Perception of any *Object*, we know, depends ſo much upon its juſt Proportion and Agreement with the *Faculty*, by which we muſt perceive it, that where the Object is either very remote, or very diſproportionate, the Perception muſt needs be *dark* and *confuſed*. Now this is the Caſe of the Happineſs we are going to treat of. It ſtands at a mighty Diſtance, and cannot be attained in the Life, that we now lead: It requires many *Alterations* to be made in our Perſons, in order to qualify us, both for the Perception and Enjoyment of it: It does not manifeſt itſelf to us by any Light of its own, nor is it to be diſcovered by ſuch Collections or Inferences, as Reaſon and our natural Powers are wont to make, concerning Matters near at Hand, and commenſurate to them: It is the free Gift of God; the Product of his Will and Bounty to his Creatures; and therefore the *Ingredients*, whereof it conſiſts, as well as the *Conditions*, whereupon it is beſtowed, can only be learnt by ſuch *Declarations*, as he has been pleaſed to make, for our Support and Encouragement in this Life. Some Preſages and Expectances indeed of a future Happineſs, after Death, have been entertained by the beſt and wiſeſt Men of all Ages; but, for a firm Perſuaſion and certain Account of this Matter, we are beholden to *Jeſus Chriſt*, who therefore is truly ſaid to have *brought Life and Immortality to Light through the Goſpel*: And yet it may not be amiſs to obſerve, even as to the Goſpel itſelf, that the Declarations, which are made therein, are not, in all Points, ſuited to the Nature of the Thing, but expreſſed in Terms full of Condeſcenſion. They are accommodated to the *Capacities* of Men, dwelling in Bodies of Fleſh, converſing with groſs and *material* Objects, and moved by ſenſible Impreſſions; and the Language, wherein they are delivered, is ſuch, as we underſtand, rather than what deſcribes them.

THIS is the Ground of all thoſe *Metaphors* and *Parables*, which figure out to us the Joys of the Bleſſed, *by eating and drinking at Chriſt's Table*; by *ſumptuous Banquets*; by *Marriage-Feaſts*; by *fertile Paſtures*, *beautiful Dwellings*, *magnificent Cities*, whoſe *Sun never ſets*; and by *Thrones*, and all the Enſigns of Honour, peculiar to Princes upon Earth: And yet we are ſufficiently forewarned againſt taking theſe Paſſages in their *literal* Senſe, when we are told, that the *Children of the Reſurrection*

* 2 Pet. iii. 11. [a] 1 John iii. 2. [b] Rev. iv. 1. [c] Ibid. ver. 2, 3. [d] Ibid. ch. xxi. 2. [e] Ibid. ch. xxii. 1. [f] Ibid. ver. 2. [g] Ibid. ver. 5. [h] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. ii.

ſurrection [i] *neither hunger nor thirſt, neither marry, nor are given in Marriage*; and conſequently, that there will be an End of all ſuch *Gratifications* of Senſe, when both the *Neceſſities*, that require, and the *Appetites*, that purſue and recommend them to us, ſhall be no more. This however we are given to underſtand by ſuch *Metaphors* and *Alluſions*, that all the Satisfaction, which can poſſibly reſult from the greateſt Plenty, the higheſt Honour, the moſt exquiſite Beauty, and every rational and truly manly Pleaſure; as much, and more, than the moſt *Senſual* can enjoy, or imagine, or wiſh for, will be, not only *equalled*, but vaſtly *exceeded* in the Happineſs of the next World: For the very great Variety of Figures, made choice of to this Purpoſe, intimates, that there is no Sort of Joy, whereof we are capable in that State, but what will be conferred upon us in its utmoſt Perfection. And, with theſe Obſervations, we ſhall proceed now to take a View of the *Plan*, which the Scriptures have given us of the Celeſtial State; and obſerve, as we go along, I. Wherein its chief Glories and Felicities will conſiſt: And, II. Upon what Account there will be ſuch Degrees and Varieties of them.

I. THAT there is a certain Place, appointed by God to be the Receptacle of the Bleſſed, in the upper Regions of the World, and above the ſtarry Orbs, and therefore called [k] *the third Heaven*; that this Place is remote from the *Fogs* of this lower World, and out of the utmoſt *Projection* of the dark Shade, made by any Bodies here below, and therefore called [l] *the Regions of Light*; that this is a very pleaſant and delightful Place, and therefore, in Alluſion to the Garden of *Eden*, called [m] *a Paradiſe*; nay, a Place of unutterable, inconceivable Pleaſure and Delight, and therefore called the [n] *Paradiſe of God*; that this Place *God the Father* honours with his more immediate Preſence, and therefore very often is called *the Father of Heaven*; that here *God the Son* has his Reſidence, and therefore is ſtiled [o] *the Lord of Heaven*; that here *God the Holy Ghoſt*, the third Perſon in the ever bleſſed Trinity, inhabits, and therefore is ſaid to be [p] *ſent down from Heaven*; and that this Place, finally, is the Court of the *great King*, where all his glorious Miniſters ſtand ready to obey his Commands, and therefore they are called [q] *the Angels of Heaven:* Theſe are Truths, ſo plainly revealed in Scripture, that whoever is ſatisfied of its divine *Authority*, cannot call in Queſtion the Reality of this *beatifick* Place. Whatever therefore ſome *Enthuſiaſts* may tell us of an *Heaven within*, the only one, which God has provided for departed Souls, and that the Notion of a *local Heaven* is too *mercenary*, and carnal, and what ſavours of *Mahometiſm:* The ſober Chriſtian, who reads theſe Words of our Lord, [r] *In my Father's Houſe are many Manſions; if it were not ſo, I would have told you: I go to prepare a Place for you; and if I go, and prepare a Place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myſelf, that where I am, ye may be alſo*; cannot but believe, that thoſe who, at the final Judgment, ſhall receive the happy Sentence, ſhall be admitted into the ſame *Empyrean* Heaven, where their Saviour *Chriſt, God bleſſed for evermore*, ſitteth at the Right-Hand of his Father.

The Locality *of Heaven.*

AND indeed the Doctrine of a determinate Place, where good Men ſhall be recompenſed after this Life, and enjoy an uninterrupted State of Happineſs, is what not only *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, but even *Infidels* and *Pagans* have profeſſed. The Elyſian Fields, Places, which the Imagination of [s] their Poets have deſcribed with all the Advantages, that can give the moſt agreeable Entertainment to the Mind, and excite in the Heart the moſt eager Deſires, are marked out for the Abode of the Juſt. [t] Nay, the Heathen *Theology* went ſo far, as to transform thoſe great Souls into *Divinities*, who being raiſed above the common Rank of good Men by their extraordinary Virtues, had acquired the glorious Name of *Heroes*; and *Flattery*, founded upon the Opinion of a Glory and Happineſs more than human, in Favour of theſe great Men, has by little and little been ſo bold, as to flatter, with an *Apotheoſis*, the Ambition of Kings and Emperors. Had theſe been the Flights and Flatteries of their *Poets* only, a good deal of Fiction might have been ſuſpected in them; but when it appears, that the wiſeſt and graveſt of their *Philoſophers* were of this Opinion; when we find the *Divine Plato* affirming, that the Good and Virtuous ſhall, after this Life, go [u] *to the Iſlands of the Bleſſed, enjoy all Happineſs, and be free from all Evil*, which Iſlands he places *in the ætherial Regions*; when we find the great *Cicero* affirming, * *that*,

[i] Rev. vii. 16. Luke xx. 35. [k] 2 Cor. xii. 2. [l] Iſa. xxx. 26. [m] 2 Cor. xii. 4. [n] Rev. ii. 7. [o] 1 Cor. xv. 47. [p] 1 Pet. i. 12. [q] Matth. xxiv. 36. [r] John xiv. 2, 3. [s] Vid. Hom. Odyſ. Lib. IV. & Virg. Æn. Lib. VI. [t] *Martin*, of Natural Religion. [u] Εἰς μακάρων νήσους οἰκεῖν, ἐν πάσῃ εὐδαιμονίᾳ, κακῶν ἐκτὸς, *In Phædone.* * Tuſc. Quæſt. L. I.

that, in the Empyrean Orb, the Soul fixes herſelf in her Aſcent after Death, where ſhe wants nothing, but is ſuſtained with the Food, that the Stars are nouriſhed with, and from thence ſurveys the whole World, and all that is contained in it, at one View; we cannot but conclude, that a certain *Abode* for the Souls of the Righteous after Death, in full Poſſeſſion of all Joy and Felicity, was the general Perſuaſion of all, who had any Notion of their *Immortality*.

Its outward Beauty and Magnificence.

THE [x] Poets indeed have employed the utmoſt Streſs of their Fancy, and called up all the agreeable Ideas imaginable, to compleat the Deſcription of thoſe Abodes; but all they have ſaid is nothing comparable to what St *John*, in the Revelation, hath told us of the new *Jeruſalem*, [y] *the Building* of whoſe *Walls was of Jaſper, and the City was pure Gold, like unto Glaſs, and the Foundation of the Wall of the City was garniſhed with all Manner of precious Stones. The firſt Foundation was Jaſper, the ſecond Sapphire, the third a Calcedony, the fourth an Emerald, the fifth Sardonyx, the ſixth Sardius, the ſeventh Chryſolite, the eighth Beryl, the ninth a Topaz, the tenth a Chryſophraſus, the eleventh a Jacinth, the twelfth an Amethyſt, and the twelve Gates were twelve Pearls; every ſeveral Gate was one Pearl, and the Streets of the City were pure Gold, as it were tranſparent Glaſs; and the City had no Need of the Sun, nor of the Moon to ſhine in it; for the Glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof.* Theſe Expreſſions we grant are *figurative*, but ſtill they convey a Notion of a Place, full of Beauty and Magnificence, as we muſt needs imagine the ſupreme Heaven to be, whenever, in a clear Winter's Night, we caſt our Eyes up to thoſe ten thouſand Times ten thouſand Stars, that deck and adorn the Regions, which are but the Outworks, and Pavements, as it were, of the grand *Empyreum*.

Its rational Pleaſures and Enjoyments.

BUT the Happineſs of a Man, conſidered as a *rational* Creature, conſiſts not ſo much in the *Nature* of the Place, as in the free and vigorous Exerciſe of his *intellectual Faculties*, upon proper and deſerving Objects: And therefore, [z] ſuppoſe we, that theſe bleſſed Abodes are inhabited with *intelligent* Beings, full of Contemplation, and thirſty after the Knowledge of the Truth; what can be imagined more grateful to them, than to be admitted to the very *Fountain* of all Truth and Reality, there to quench their Thirſt, and ſatisfy their Deſires, with the free and eaſy, but ſtill freſh Diſcoveries of his infinite Glories and Perfections, in the Wonders of Nature, of Providence, of Grace! But then, ſuppoſing that their Minds are ſo raiſed, and their Apprehenſions ſo quick and ſagacious, that they can all know whatever they have a Mind to know, without the Difficulty of *Study*, and diſcern the Dependence and Connection of Things, without any laborious *Deduction*; with what unſpeakable Satisfaction muſt they needs peruſe this infinite Volume of Divine Being and Perfections!

[a] IT is a known Rule, given by Divines for the better underſtanding of Scripture, "That the Words, which ſignify *Senſe* and *Knowledge*, are very often to be underſtood ſo, as comprehending in them thoſe *Effects* and *Affections*, which Senſe and Knowledge are apt to produce in us;" and therefore, when we are told, that, upon our Admiſſion into Heaven, [b] *we ſhall ſee God as he is, not* [c] *through a Glaſs darkly, but Face to Face, and ſhall then know him, even as alſo we are known*; we are given to underſtand, that we ſhall not only attain to a Knowledge of the Divine Excellencies, the moſt perfect, that we can poſſibly receive, but ſhall likewiſe experience a Pleaſure in ſuch Knowledge, far above what we are now able to imagine. For if, in many Inſtances, Men of Contemplation feel even now, from an imperfect Diſcovery of ſome beloved Truth, a Satisfaction not to be equalled by all the Pleaſures of the moſt indulgent *Epicure*; what can we think muſt be the Joy, the Gaiety, the Triumphs of thoſe Souls, who ſee in God the Truth and Excellencies of all Things, as in their common Source and Centre; who in him are continually ſeeing all that is lovely, and loving all they ſee, and poſſeſſing all they love? [e] Suppoſe we then a Society of *intelligent* Beings, placed in ſuch a State, wherein they have an *Object* of infinite Perfections always before them, and no Evil from within or without to check or divert them, exerting all their Faculties upon him, in the moſt

[x] Devenere locos lætos, & amœna vireta.
Fortunatorum nemorum, ſedeſque beatas.
Largior hic campos Æther, & lumine veſtit
Purpureo; ſolemque ſuum ſua ſidera norunt, &c. VIRG. Æn. Lib. VI.

[y] Rev. xxi. 18, &c. [z] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, P. I. [a] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. III. [b] 1 John iii. 2.
[c] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. [d] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III. [e] *Scott*, ibid.

moſt rational Actions: Suppoſe them as full of Love and Duty to him, as ever their Hearts can hold, *copying* his Perfections, *adoring* his Excellencies, and *breathing* forth themſelves in chearful Praiſes and Hallelujahs; in a Word, exerciſing themſelves about him, to their utmoſt Strength and Power, in all thoſe bleſſed Offices, which his Nature, and their Relation to him, require: Suppoſe all this, I ſay, and we have before us the very *Top* and *Quinteſſence* of the Heaven of a rational Creature, who, in this bleſſed State, is, as it were, in his own proper *Element*, and moves and acts according to its moſt natural *Tendency*.

BUT this is not all: The Author to the *Hebrews*, as ſomething additional to the ſupreme Felicity, which the Viſion of God lets us into, gives us a Catalogue of the bleſſed Company, which inhabit *the City of God, the heavenly Jeruſalem*; and tells us, that, when we come to *Mount Sion*, we ſhall be adjoined to [f] *an innumerable Company of Angels, to the general Aſſembly and Church of the Firſt-born, to the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, and to Jeſus, the Mediator of the New Covenant*; and certainly every Soul, [g] that has any Spark of cordial Love for *Jeſus*, the beſt Friend of Souls that ever was, any grateful Remembrance of what he did and ſuffered for our Sakes, cannot but eſteem it a mighty Felicity, to be admitted into his Preſence, and to behold the happy Change of his paſt woeful Condition; to ſee him, that was once ſo cruelly treated upon Earth, raiſed now to be *Head* and *Prince* of all the *Hierarchy* of Heaven. But, oh! when that bleſſed Perſon ſhall not only permit us to ſee his Glory, but introduce us into it, and make us Partakers of it; when we ſhall not only behold his beloved Face, but be admitted into his dear Converſation, and dwell in his Arms and Embraces for ever; when we ſhall hear him record the wonderous Adventures of his Love; through how many woeful Stages he paſſed, to reſcue us from Miſery, and make us happy; and, in the mean Time, ſhall have a moſt raviſhing Feeling of that Happineſs; how will our Hearts ſpring with Joy, and burn with Love, and our Mouths overflow with Praiſe and Thankſgiving to him! But this is not all ſtill: In the heavenly State, we ſhall not only live in a Participation of our bleſſed Saviour's Preſence, but in the happy Society of Saints and Angels, thoſe pure and immaculate Spirits, who, being endowed with large and *comprehenſive* Underſtandings, as well as perfect Good-Nature and moſt generous Charity, cannot fail of making moſt *excellent* Company. When therefore this wicked and unſociable World being at an End, [h] *and all Things which offend, and them which do Iniquity, caſt into a Furnace of Fire*, we, as ſoon as we arrive at the Courts of the Great King, ſhall, [i] with infinite Congratulations for our ſafe Eſcape, be conducted into the Company of *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, *Apoſtles* and *Martyrs*, and introduced into an intimate Acquaintance with them, and with all thoſe brave and *generous* Souls, who, by their great Examples, have recommended themſelves to the World; when we ſhall be familiar Friends with Angels and Arch-Angels, and all the Courtiers of Heaven ſhall call us *Brethren*, and bid us welcome to their Maſter's Joy; when we ſhall be received into this glorious Society, I ſay, with all the Endearments of ſuch heavenly Lovers, invited to enter into the *Choir*, and have our Harps ſtrung by their celeſtial Singers, to join with them in aſcribing [k] *Power and Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory and Bleſſing, unto him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever*: Such a mighty Acceſſion will all this be to our Happineſs, that we may omit to mention the great Alteration which will then paſs upon our Bodies, when [l] there ſhall be no Wants or Infirmities, no Importunity of Appetite, no Unevenneſs of Paſſion, no Hunger or Thirſt, no Wearineſs or Sleep, no Pain or Sorrow, no Feebleneſs or Decay, no Sickneſs or Old-Age, no Dying any more, but *Beauty for Aſhes*, and *Joy for Mourning*, [m] *a Joy, which no Man taketh from us*, and a Beauty, which outwears Time itſelf, and [n] *ſwallows up Mortality in Life*.

THUS we have given a ſhort View, as far as we have Light from Scripture, of the Glories and Beatitudes of the World to come: And, from the whole, we may obſerve, that *Holineſs* is neceſſary to our future *Happineſs*; or, in other Terms, that it is impoſſible to enjoy Heaven, without an heavenly Diſpoſition. [o] For, ſuppoſing it ſhould pleaſe Almighty God to take us all up immediately into the higheſt Heavens, and there place us around our Bleſſed Saviour; all ſuch as are real Saints among us, as love God above all Things, and have prepared their Minds for ſpiritual Enjoyments,

Holineſs *neceſſary to the Enjoyment of Heaven.*

[f] Heb. xii. 22, &c. [g] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Part I. [h] Matth. xiii. 41, 42. [i] *Scott*, ibid. [k] Rev. v. 12, 13. [l] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III. [m] John xvi. 22. [n] 2 Cor. v. 4. [o] *Beveridge*, on the Happineſs of the Saints in Heaven.

ments, how glad would they be to ſee their Redeemer ſhining in all his Glory? How ſuddenly ſhould they ſtrike up with the *Choir* of Heaven, in ſinging forth the Praiſes of him that brought them thither? What infinite Pleaſure would they take in the Place, the Employment, the Company, and every Thing they ſee there? But as for *others*, who are ſtill in their Sins, and mind only earthly Things, how ſad and diſconſolate would they be? They would wonder to ſee the Saints ſo pleaſant and joyful; for, as for their Parts, they would ſee nothing there to take Delight in; in the Midſt of Light, they would be ſtill in Darkneſs, and in Sorrow, in the Midſt of Joys. They could not hear the heavenly *Muſick*, or if they did, it would ſound harſh, and be all Diſcords to them: They could not taſte thoſe ſpiritual *Dainties*, or if they did, they could not reliſh or find any Sweetneſs in them: They could not ſee the Face of God, or if they did, they would not be pleaſed, but terrified and confounded at it; and all this, for want of a *Principle* of true Grace and Holineſs, without which a blind Man may as well delight in Pictures, the deaf Man in Muſick, or a brute Beaſt in Metaphyſicks, as Men of ſuch Tempers either in Heaven, or in God himſelf. [p] The Truth is, God, in his Wiſdom, hath ſo ordered the Matter, ſo admirably contrived our Nature and our Duty, that Virtue and Happineſs, Grace and Glory are one and the ſame Thing, differing only in the Circumſtances, and ſeveral Proſpects, we conſider and view them under. The good Man begins his Heaven upon Earth, and finiſhes *there*, what was imperfect *here*: For the more he maſters his ſenſual Appetites, and gets above the World, the more he improves his Mind in the Study of Religion, and acquaints himſelf with God by frequent Prayer and heavenly Meditation, the more he is ſpiritualized, and, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, *made meet to be Partaker of the Inheritance with the Saints in Light*. [q] As ever therefore we deſire to go to Heaven, when we die, we muſt take Care, while we live, to get our Hearts purged from all corrupt Affections, our Minds enlightened, and our Souls *ſanctified throughout*, that ſo we may go out of this World rightly diſpoſed and fitted to behold the Light of God's Countenance, to ſolace ourſelves in it, as the higheſt Object of our Deſires, and to let in the Beams of Happineſs, which are eternally proceeding from it, according to our ſeveral Capacities of receiving them: For ſo we are led to affirm,

Different Degrees of Glory and Happineſs in Heaven, proved from Reaſon,

II. THAT there will be *different* Degrees of Glory and Happineſs in the other World, according to our different Improvements in this. And, indeed, if a pure ſpiritual Mind, free from all carnal Luſts and Paſſions, be abſolutely neceſſary to put us into a fit Capacity of reliſhing thoſe refined Joys that are above; it will from hence naturally follow, that the more *ſpiritualized*, raiſed, and exalted our Diſpoſitions are, the quicker, the ſtronger, the more pleaſing will be our Taſte of thoſe heavenly Pleaſures, and, conſequently, the greater, the more enlarged and comprehenſive will our Happineſs be. God, indeed, is the common Fountain of the Celeſtial Bliſs, and the Emanations of Happineſs, from him, are diffuſed every where, and, perhaps, fill all the Saints alike; but then, though every Capacity ſhall be full, yet, their Capacities being *unequal*, ſome may receive a greater Meaſure and Proportion than others; juſt as the Light of the Sun is the ſame, and yet its Rays are received in a greater or leſs Quantity, according to the Make and Texture of the Body it ſhines upon. [r] *Chriſt*, it is true, is the common Saviour of all, his Blood is alike ſufficient, and was alike ſhed for the Redemption of all; but it does not therefore follow, that the Rewards, purchaſed by that Blood, will alike be beſtowed on all, any more, than that the ſame Degrees of Holineſs and Sanctification will, through the Efficacy of that Blood, be alike communicated to all. The Man, who by a ſincere, tho' late Repentance, has pacified his offended God, for the many Errors of a miſ-ſpent Life, ſhall never have his Sins riſe up againſt him, in order to his Condemnation; and yet it is incongruous to ſay, that theſe Sins will not *leſſen* his Reward, will not *diminiſh* his Happineſs, will not *detract* from his Glory; nor can it be conſiſtent with the Righteouſneſs of the Judge of all the Earth, to place ſuch an one in the ſame State of *Eminence* with thoſe, who, by an early Piety and uninterrupted Courſe of Righteouſneſs, have excelled in the Work of the Lord; or of thoſe, who, [s] *in Labours more abundant, in Stripes above Meaſure, in Priſons more frequent, in Deaths often,* [t] *have ſuffered the Loſs of all Things, and counted them but Dung, that they might win Chriſt.*

THE

[p] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III.
[q] *Beveridge*, on the Happineſs of the Saints in Heaven.
[r] *Smalridge*'s Sermons.
[s] 2 Cor. xi. 23.
[t] Phil. iii. 8.

THE Lord in the Vineyard indeed, as he is repreſented in the Parable, paid all the Labourers alike, [u] *making thoſe, who had wrought there but one Hour, equal unto them who had bore the Heat and Burden of the Day*: But, if we look into this Parable, we ſhall ſoon find, that the *Pay*, here given, muſt neceſſarily be underſtood of *the Gift of Grace*, and cannot poſſibly be extended to the *Gift of Glory*; becauſe we find, that it is given to the *Envious* and *Unthankful*, even to thoſe, of whom it is expreſſly ſaid, that *they are not choſen*. * The Scope of the Parable, in ſhort, is deſigned to juſtify God's Proceedings, in the Diſpenſation of his *Grace* towards the Church of the *Jews*, and that of the *Gentiles*; the *latter* of which was not *called*, till a long Time after the *former*, and yet was made equal in the Bleſſings and Benefits of the Goſpel-Covenant; which has nothing at all to do with the Matter now in Queſtion. But, even admitting the *analogical* Senſe of the Parable, all that we can infer from it is this,——[x] That Men of conſtant Holineſs ſhall go to Heaven, and ſo ſhall ſincere *Penitents*; that the *Martyrs*, and all that ſuffered much in the Profeſſion of the Faith, ſhall be crowned, and ſo ſhall all Chriſtians, who lived well, and died in Peace: But whether all their Crowns ſhall be *equally bright*; whether their Degrees of Glory and Felicity ſhall be the *ſame*, this the Parable, in its moſt extenſive Application, acquaints us not with, and many other Paſſages of Scripture there are, which acquaint us with the very contrary.

FOR when our Saviour informs us, that [y] *in his Father's Houſe are many Manſions*, and ſome of the higheſt Places, in thoſe heavenly Habitations, the Prophet *Daniel* hath appropriated to thoſe, *who convert Sinners from the Error of their Ways*; for [z] *they that be wiſe*, ſaith he, *ſhall ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever*; when Chriſt addreſſes himſelf to his Apoſtles in theſe remarkable Words, [a] *Ye are they, that have continued with me in my Temptations, and I appoint unto you a Kingdom, that ye may* [b] *eat and drink at my Table, in my Kingdom, and* [c] *ſit on Thrones; judging the twelve Tribes of Iſrael*; when the Sons of *Zebedee* requeſted of their Maſter, that [d] *they might ſit, the one on his Right-Hand, and the other on his Left, in his Kingdom*; and our Saviour, though he does not promiſe this Degree of Eminence to them, does yet plainly aſſert, *that it ſhall be given to thoſe* of his Followers, *for whom it is prepared of his Father*; from theſe, and ſeveral other Paſſages in Scripture, we may certainly be allowed to infer thus much, that there are ſome particular Marks and Inſtances of Glory, wherewith the *Apoſtles*, and thoſe, that imitate them in the *Apoſtolic* Office, wherewith Perſons of uncommon Zeal, and more eminent Sanctity, ſhall be honoured above other Chriſtians. Though therefore all [e] *the Righteous ſhall ſhine in the Kingdom of their Father*; yet [f] *as there is one Glory of the Sun, and another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars, (for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory) ſo alſo is the Reſurrection of the Dead*: Thoſe, that are raiſed to everlaſting Life, ſhall indeed all be *glorious*, but ſtill the Glory of ſome ſhall be greater, than that

and from Scripture.

[u] Matth. xx. 12.

* *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II. and *Stanhope*'s Sermons, on ſeveral Occaſions.

[x] *Stanhope*, ibid.

[y] John xiv. 2. The Multitude of *Manſions* in Heaven ſeems hardly intelligible, without admitting a Difference of Degrees in the heavenly Glory. For, if all the Saints ſhall be placed in *one* and the *ſame Degree* or Station of Bliſs, they would have all *one* and the *ſame Manſion* in Heaven; but in our heavenly Father's Houſe there are μοναὶ πολλαὶ, *many Manſions*, ſome higher, ſome lower, according to the Meaſure of Proficiency in Virtue, to which Men have attained in this Life. So *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *There are with the Lord many Rewards and Manſions, according to the Proportion of Mens Lives*, Strom. iv. So *Tertullian*, *how are there many Manſions with the Father, but according to the Variety of Mens good Works?* And ſo the Fathers of the Church afterwards alledged this Text againſt *Jovinian*, who held a *Parity* of Rewards in the Life to come. Biſhop *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

[z] Dan. xii. 3.

[a] Luke xxii. 28, &c.

[b] It may ſeem a little ſtrange, that our Saviour ſhould here promiſe his Apoſtles the Privilege of *eating and drinking at his Table*, when it is certain, that, in the Kingdom of Heaven, their glorified Natures would ſtand in Need of no ſuch Repaſts. But this, we muſt know, is ſpoken in Alluſion to temporal Princes, who make it a particular Mark of Diſtinction, and a Note of the Perſon's Eminence, whoſoever they pleaſe to receive to their Table. *Whitby, in Locum.*

[c] To *ſit on Thrones, judging* (or governing, or being over) *the twelve Tribes of Iſrael*, is a metaphorical Expreſſion, taken, as *Grotius* well obſerves upon the Place, from the ancient State of the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, in which οἱ φυλαρχοι, the *Princes*, or *Heads of the Tribes*, came neareſt in Dignity to the King's Majeſty, and, in the publick Aſſemblies, ſat next the Royal Throne, in Chairs of State made of Ivory.

[d] Mark x. 37, 40. To ſit at the *Right-Hand* of a King, according to the *Eaſtern* Cuſtom, is the very next Place of Dignity to the King himſelf. Hence *Solomon*, ſitting on his Royal Throne, commanded his Mother to ſit *on his Right-Hand*, 1 Kings ii. 19. conſequently, the third Place of Dignity in the Kingdom is deſcribed by ſitting on the King's Left-Hand: For accordingly, as any Man was greater in the Kingdom, ſo, in the publick Aſſemblies, he ſat nearer to the King's Perſon. *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

[e] Matth. xiii. 43.

[f] 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42.

that of others; and upon this Principle the Apoſtle earneſtly preſſes the *Corinthians* to a liberal Contribution to their diſtreſſed Brethren; [g] *he that ſoweth ſparingly, ſhall reap alſo ſparingly, and he that ſoweth bountifully, ſhall reap alſo bountifully*, whereby, without all Manner of Doubt, he means, that the greater Charity we exerciſe in this World, the greater Happineſs and Felicity attends us in the next; and ſo, on the contrary, the *thinner* our Seeds of Charity are ſown here, the leſſer will our Harveſt of Glory be hereafter.

Upon what Account this is ſo.

IN the Parable of the *Talents*, wherein our Lord, under the Similitude of [h] *a certain Nobleman going into a far Country*, allots a different Reward to every Man, in Proportion to the different Improvement he made of the Talent committed to his Care, we have not only a Diſtinction made between two Servants, though both confeſſedly juſt and faithful to their Lord, but are directed likewiſe to that Rule and Meaſure, according to which their different Rewards were proportioned. To the good Servant, whoſe Pound had gained him *ten Pounds*, our Lord thus addreſſes himſelf; *Well done, thou good Servant, becauſe thou haſt been faithful in a very little, have thou Authority over ten Cities. And when the ſecond came, ſaying, Lord, thy Pound hath gained five Pounds, he ſaid likewiſe to him, be thou alſo over five Cities.* Both the Servants, as we are told, were diligent, and both therefore were rewarded for their Diligence: But the Diligence of the one had far exceeded that of the other, and his Reward therefore was proportionably greater. Great Caution however is to be obſerved, how we expreſs ourſelves upon this Subject; for when we ſay, with the holy Scriptures, [i] *that every Man ſhall receive his own Reward, according to his own Labour*, we do not mean, that there will be an exact *Proportion* between a Man's Labour and his Reward; for it is certain, that the higheſt Degree of *Grace* can never equal the loweſt Degree of *Glory*, nor can the beſt of Saints, by all that he can do, deſerve ſo much, as to be a *Door-Keeper* in the Houſe of his heavenly Father: But the Proportion here is between the Work and Reward of one good Man, compared with the Work and Reward of another, and in this Compariſon the Proportion is exact.

In what Senſe Men are rewarded according to their Works.

"SUPPOSE, for Inſtance, (as [k] a learned Father of the Church makes the Simi-
"litude) three Huſbandmen were employed in cultivating and dreſſing the Field
"of ſome great Prince, one for one Day only, another for three Days, and a third
"for ſix Days. Now, if the Prince, out of his Royal Bounty, ſhall give to the firſt
"a thouſand Talents, to the ſecond three thouſand Talents, and to the third ſix
"thouſand; it is evident, that the Reward is meaſured out to each of thoſe accord-
"ing to the different Meaſure of their Labour; but yet it were ridiculous to con-
"clude from hence, that the Labour of him who wrought ſix Days deſerved ſix
"thouſand, yea, or ſo much as ſix Talents, yea, or ſo much as one Talent, and ſo
"in the reſt. And in like Manner may we conceive of the divine Remuneration.
"For although we affirm, that God meaſures out to every Man a different Degree
"of Glory, according to the different Meaſure of his Labour; yet it doth not follow
"from hence, that between the Work and the Reward of one and the ſame Man,
"there is an Equality of *Proportion*, but only, that between the different Works
"and Rewards of different Men, there is an Equality of *Proportionality*: So that
"if the Work of any Man be compared with his Reward, which is eternal Life,
"we may preſently diſcern an infinite Inequality between them; but, if the Works
"of different Men and the Rewards of different Men be compared according
"to the Degrees of Eminence in the ſame eternal Life, there will appear an
"exact *Proportionality*." And in this Senſe ſhall every Man be rewarded according to his Labour.

[l] "PROPERLY ſpeaking indeed, and in ſtrict Juſtice, the moſt perfect Man upon Earth cannot be ſaid to *merit* the very loweſt Degree of Glory: The leaſt Reward in Heaven will be an Happineſs that is *eternal*; and there is no Proportion between an eternal Reward and a ſhort momentary Service, though it be that of the beſt of Saints. Our Holineſs itſelf, as well as that eternal Life, is the free Gift of God, and the good Actions we do, we thankfully aſcribe to his *aſſiſting* Grace; but though we dare not preſume to appeal to his *Juſtice*, we may, with an humble Confidence, rely upon his *Mercy*; though we cannot juſtly challenge any Reward from God, yet God, we know, *will not forget our Work and Labour of Love*; though our good Works

[g] 2 Cor. ix. 6. [h] Luke xix. 12. [i] 1 Cor. iii. 8. [k] Davenant, de Juſt. Act.
[l] *Smalridge*'s Sermons.

Works are not the *Cauſe*, for the Sake of which, yet they are the *Conditions*, upon the Performance of which, we ſhall receive our Recompence; though, after all we can do, we are ſtill but *unprofitable Servants*, yet, if we do all we can, we *ſhall in no wiſe loſe our Reward*.

Each Saint ſhall be ſatisfied with his own Degree of Happineſs.

THUS it appears, that the Saints in Heaven, compared with each other, ſhall have *different* Degrees in Happineſs, proportioned to their different Improvements here: But what is the particular Happineſs of the State, [m] this Difference ſhall occaſion no *Uneaſineſs*, but to every Saint his own Degree ſhall be a ſatisfactory Beatitude. In this lower World, indeed, the Narrow-hearted are apt to repine at each other's Gain, and the Ambitious to envy the Promotion or Splendor, which ſome poſſeſs above others; but where there is no Envy, (and ſure we are, that there can be none in thoſe peaceful Regions, which are above) the great Happineſs of another can by no Means diminiſh any one's Joy, nor can it be feared, that the exalted Bliſs of others ſhould impair or diſturb the Felicity of any the leaſt Saint, in that bleſſed Place, where every one will *reliſh* his own Happineſs the more, becauſe others *abound* in theirs. Tho' therefore there will be many Veſſels, (to make Uſe of a common Similitude) of different Sizes and Capacities, to receive thoſe *Rivers of Pleaſure*, which flow from *the Right-hand of God*, yet all of them ſhall be full. He that gathered much of the *Manna* in the Wilderneſs, had nothing over, and he *that gathered little, had no Lack*; and ſo it ſhall be here: They that are ſeated in the higheſt *Manſions* of Glory, ſhall not look down with Contempt on thoſe that are beneath them, nor ſhall *theſe* lift up an envious Eye towards the other, but without any the leaſt Pride, or Grudging, or Diſcontent, they ſhall love and take delight in one another, and, by an inexpreſſible Union of *ſublimated* Charity, make each, what the other enjoys, his own: And ſo altogether, tho' in different *Notes*, compoſe one ſweet *harmonious* Concert, in the Praiſes of God, the Fountain of their Bliſs.

Other curious Queſtions relating to that State.

BUT over and above the Celebration of the Praiſes of God, [n] what the particular Work and Employment of the Saints in Heaven will be, and in what Manner God will communicate himſelf to them; whether our glorified Bodies will have the ſame Senſes and Affections, or altogether different; be able to take in Objects, at never ſo diſtant a View, or, in ſome Meaſure, be limited in their Operations, as they are now; [o] whether our Souls will be able to comprehend the Eſſences and Ideas of Things, as they are contained in the Divine Underſtanding, and behold every Thing there as in a Glaſs; whether we ſhall perfectly ſee the *intellectual Syſtem* of the World, I mean, all the Orders of Angels together, and what Kind of Converſation we ſhall have with them, as well as how far we ſhall know, and be known by one another; and whether, in any particular Manner, we ſhall ſtand affected to thoſe, that were our Friends, and Relations, and Acquaintance in this Life: Theſe, and perhaps a thouſand Things more, which may concern the Glories of that State, are Queſtions that we can come to no certain Reſolution in. The Revelation, we have of theſe Matters, is delivered to us in *general* Terms, and whoever pretends to deduce *Particulars* from it, runs a manifeſt Hazard of being deceived in his Conjectures. Since, however, we are aſſured of this Truth, [p] that every Degree of Grace, which we advance to here, will raiſe us to a Degree higher in a future Glory, and the greater and more induſtrious our Labour in God's Service has been in this Life, the greater and more copious and abundant ſhall our Reward be in the Life to come; the Senſe of this, one would think, ſhould rouſe and awaken us out of the Remiſſneſs and Negligence in Religion, that too often ſeizeth us, and animate us to generous Attempts, even of *heroic* Virtue, which, in this degenerate Age, are derided as *romantic* Enterprizes. At leaſt, it ſhould often call us from our idle Solitude, or unprofitable Society, to our Prayers and Devotions, and make us readily embrace, nay, ſtudiouſly ſeek after frequent Opportunities of *doing Good*, [q] *that ſo an Entrance may be adminiſtered to us abundantly into the everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

[m] *Bull*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [n] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. III. [o] Burnet, de Statu Mort. & Reſur.
[p] *Bull*, ibid. [q] 2 Pet. i. 11.

SECT. II.

Of HELL.

The Nature of Hell.

THAT there is a *particular* Place, appointed by Almighty God, for the Reception and Punishment of the Wicked, both Men and Angels, and therefore called [a] *a Place of Torment*; that this Place is at a wide *Remove* from the *Supreme* Heaven, the Court of God, and Habitation of the Righteous, and therefore called [b] *the Abyss*, and *bottomless Pit*; that it is a Place of exquisite and most intolerable *Torments*, and therefore called [c] *Tophet*, in the Old Testament, and [d] *Gehenna* in the New; that those Torments are inflicted with *actual* Fire, and other horrid Ingredients, and therefore the Place is called a [e] *Furnace of Fire*, and a [f] *Lake of Fire and Brimstone*, where there is [g] *Smoke* and [h] *Darkness*, [i] *utter Darkness*, and [k] *Blackness of Darkness*, &c. and that this State of Punishment is to be *eternal*, without any Mitigation, or Hopes of End, and therefore the *Fire*, wherein the Wicked suffer, is called [l] *everlasting*, [m] *never to be quenched*, but *enduring* [n] *for ever and ever*: These are Truths as obvious, as any that occur in the Word of God, and may therefore justly occasion our Wonder, why either the *Reality* of the Place, or the *Materiality* of the Fire therein, should be called in Question. To satisfy such Questions, however, after we have, 1. Proved the *Reality* of Hell, and mentioned some Conjectures, where possibly its Place may be; we shall, 2. Attempt a short Description of the Miseries therein comprized; and then, 3. Consider the *Degrees* of its Punishments, and the Reasons of their *Eternity*.

The Reality of its Fire.

I. WHEN our Blessed Saviour put forth a Parable to the Multitude, concerning [o] *the good Seed sown by the Owner of the Ground, and the Tares sown by the Enemy*, and his Disciples requested him to explain it unto them; the Explanation which he gives them is this:——*He that soweth the good Seed, is the Son of Man; the Field is the World; the good Seed are the Children of the Kingdom; but the Tares are the Children of the wicked One; the Enemy, that sowed them, is the Devil; the Harvest is the End of the World, and the Reapers are the Angels. As therefore the Tares are gathered and burnt in the Fire, so shall it be at the End of the World: The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all Things that offend, and them which do Iniquity, and shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire, there shall be Wailing and Gnashing of Teeth.* [p] Now, when a Parable is expounded, it is natural to suppose, that it should be done in plain and proper Language, otherwise the Explication will breed a greater Confusion in the Minds of the Hearers, than the Parable itself: Consequently, the *Fire*, into which *the Workers of Iniquity* are cast, must be a *Reality*, and not a *parabolical* Allusion, because by it the *Obscurity* of the Parable is explained. In like Manner, when our Blessed Lord, describing the great and terrible Day of Judgment, tells us, that his final Sentence upon the Wicked will be, [q] *Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*; we cannot but suppose, that as these Words are the Sentence of a wise and impartial Judge, they ought to be delivered in as plain and intelligible Terms as possible. The Intent of *Allegories* and *Parables* is to hide the Meaning of the Speaker, and darken the Understanding of the Hearer, [r] *that seeing he might see, and not perceive*,

[a] Luke xvi. 28. [b] Rev. ix. 2. and xx. 3.

[c] Isa. xxx. 33. *Tophet* was a Place in the Valley of *Hinnom*, near *Jerusalem*, where the idolatrous *Israelites* made their Children *pass through the Fire to* Moloch, 2 *Kings* xxviii. 10. *Jer.* vii. 31. It has its Name (for *Tophet* is from *Tophash, pulsavit*; or from *Taph, Tympanum*) from the *Drum* and *Tabret*, which the Idolaters played upon, all the Time the Children were sacrificed to *Moloch*, that the tender Parents might not hear their Cries. And from hence we may gather, upon what Account this Place was afterwards made Use of by the *Jews*, to set forth the Torments of *Hell-Fire*, and the horrid Cries and Groans of those that suffered there.

[d] Matth. v. 22, 29, 30. Chap. x. 28, *&c.* Γέεννα is derived from *Hinnom*, i. e. the Valley of *Hinnom*, mentioned just now; which being abused to such execrable Purposes, was by King *Josiah* turned into a *Dunghil*, where dead Carcasses were disposed of, and Malefactors buried or burnt, (2 *Kings* xxiii. 10. 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 3.) for which Purpose there being always a Fire kept, it still continued to be thought, by the *Jewish* Doctors, a very fit Emblem of Hell. *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II.

[e] Matth. xiii. 42, 50. [f] Rev. xix. 20. [g] Ibid. xiv. 11. [h] Jude, *ver.* 6. [i] Matth. viii. 12. [k] Jude, *ver.* 13. [l] Matth. xxv. 41. [m] Mark ix. 43. [n] Rev. xiv. 11.

[o] Matth. xiii. 24, *&c.* [p] *Swinden*'s Enquiry into the Nature and Place of Hell. [q] Matth. xxv. 41.

[r] Mark iv. 12.

perceive, and hearing he might hear, and not underſtand: But the Laſt Judgment of *Chriſt* is for a quite different Purpoſe, *viz.* that the whole World may not only hear it with their Ears, but underſtand it too with their Hearts, and ſee it executed with their Eyes. It is evident therefore, that the general and final Sentence, by which the Wicked ſhall be judged to everlaſting Fire, muſt have in it no Figures or Allegories, but plain and proper Speech only; becauſe the Guilty muſt thereby perceive what their Doom is; the Angels, who are the Miniſters of that Judgment, muſt know what they are to execute; and the Saints, who ſhall concur with *Chriſt* in Judgment, diſcern what they are to aſſent to and approve.

VEXATION of Mind, and the Burnings of an enraged Conſcience, will certainly be no ſmall Part of the Puniſhment of the Damned; but if, by *unquenchable Fire*, we are to underſtand nothing more than this, we ſhall be under ſome Difficulty to make tolerable Senſe of theſe Words of our Lord, [s] *It is better for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God with one Eye, than, having two Eyes, to be caſt into Hell Fire, where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched.* If the *Worm* and the *Fire*, I ſay, be all one, and mean no more than the Remorſe, and Uneaſineſs of Mind, that attends on Guilt, beſides the Indecency of the *Tautology*, how forced and unnatural muſt it be to ſay, that *it is better to enter into the Kingdom of God with one Eye, than, having two, to go into the eternal Puniſhment of the Wicked, into Vexation of Mind, that ſhall never ceaſe, where their Vexation of Mind never ceaſeth?* This muſt be the Conſtruction of the Words, if we take *Fire* in a *figurative* Senſe: And therefore to abſolve our Lord from the Imputation of any ſuch *Abſurdity*, the Γέεννα τῦ πυρός muſt denote the *Place of Torment*, and the *Fire* itſelf be taken in a *literal*, not a *figurative* Senſe: For ſo the venerable *Bede*, upon the Text, acquaints us, that *by the* WORM, *Chriſt noteth the too late Repentance of Sin, which will never ceaſe to bite the Conſcience of the Damned in their Torments, as by* FIRE, *the Burning of Hell; that the Fire might be a Torment* outwardly raging, *and the Worm a Grief* inwardly accuſing.

How immaterial Beings may be tormented with Fire.

How outward Fire may burn and continue for ever, without Impair and Diminution, and affect *immaterial* Beings with Pain and Anguiſh, are Queſtions eaſily reſolved, if we do but once conſider the *Hand*, that hath prepared it, which can give it a Quality quite different from *culinary* Fire, *viz.* not to *conſume*, but *repair* what it preyeth upon, ſince [t] *the Breath of the Lord, like a Stream of Brimſtone, doth kindle it continually.* And though it be difficult to conceive, how *material* Fire can act upon *ſpiritual* Subſtances; yet, if we conſider what Pain is, we ſhall ſoon find, that pure Spirits are as capable of it, as Spirits in Conjunction with Bodies. [u] The human Soul, in its own Nature, is as much a Spirit as Angels, yet it has a painful Senſation of Fire, or any other afflicting Evil, that ſtrikes upon the Senſes. It muſt be owned, however, that it is not the Body only that feels Pain; it paſſes through the Body to the Soul; and many Times, when the Soul is employed in a ſtrong Diverſion of Thought, the Body becomes inſenſible of it. Now, if God, by a natural Conſtitution, has ordered, that the Body, touched and moved after ſuch and ſuch a Manner, ſhould excite a painful Senſe in the Soul; what ſhould hinder, but that he may have likewiſe ordained, that Devils ſhould feel the Impreſſion of *material* Fire, in the Place which he hath appointed for their Confinement?

That there is a Hell at preſent.

WHETHER, from the Beginning of Things, and at the firſt Revolt of the Apoſtate Angels, God appointed a certain Place for their Confinement, as well as for the Puniſhment of thoſe wicked Souls, which ſucceſſively depart this Life; or whether they are both permitted to roam, but under ſome proper Reſtriction and Limitation, and, till the Day of Judgment, are ſubjected to no other Pains, but what are *mental*, *i. e.* ſuch as ariſe from Grief and Deſpair, and dire Expectations, has been a Matter of ſome Debate among the Curious. The Devils, indeed, who had entered into the two *Gergaſens*, cried out to our Saviour, as he was going to diſpoſſeſs them, * *What have we to do with thee, Jeſus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the Time?* Which Words ſeem to imply, that the Time appointed for their Puniſhment was not yet come. But when it is conſidered, that theſe very Devils beſought our Saviour, [x] *that he would not command them to go out into the Deep,* εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον, whereby all Interpreters underſtand *Hell*; when it is conſidered, that they are ſaid to be [y] *reſerved in everlaſting Chains of Darkneſs, unto the*

[s] Mark ix. 47, 48.
[x] Luke viii. 31.
[t] Iſa. xxx. 33.
[y] Jude *ver.* 6.
[u] *Bates*, of Hell.
* Matth. viii. 29.

the Judgment of the great Day; and the Fire, which the Wicked are to ſuffer, is ſaid to be originally *prepared for them*; we cannot but conclude, that, even at this Time, there is a *local Hell*, the Place of their Confinement, though not of their ultimate Puniſhment; where they ſuffer much, but not all that they are to ſuffer; for that is not to be inflicted, until the Coming of the univerſal Judge; when, together with him, as the prophetick Book expreſſes it, [z] *Fire ſhall come down from God out of Heaven, and devour the* Wicked, *and the Devil, that deceived them, ſhall be caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, where the Beaſt and the falſe Prophet are, and ſhall be tormented Day and Night for ever and ever.* But, in what Part of the World this *Lake* and burning *Abyſs* is ſituate, the Conjectures of the Learned have been various.

The Place of Hell, whether in the Center of the Earth,

[a] THAT there are many great *Cavities* in the Earth, ſtored with Fire, and all Kinds of combuſtible Matter, is manifeſt from thoſe terrible Eruptions, which burning Mountains are known to make, and thoſe Rivers of *liquid* Fire, which break out of their Bowels, or are ſpewed out of their Mouths. From this *Phænomenon* moſt of the Ancients were of Opinion, that at the Center of the Earth, there was a certain inexhauſtible Treaſure of Fire, which fed all theſe *Vulcanos*, and was itſelf the Place of Hell: And for their Confirmation in this, they had not only the Conſent of moſt *Philoſophers*, both *Greek* and *Latin*, but, in ſome Meaſure, the Teſtimony of Scripture, which repreſents Hell, as a [b] *Lake of Fire*, and a [c] *low Place beneath the Earth.* But, on the contrary, others have imagined, that the Center of the Earth is filled with Water, rather than Fire, becauſe the *Pſalmiſt* declares, [d] *that God founded the Earth upon the Seas, and eſtabliſhed it upon the Floods.* [e] It is certainly true, that Fire cannot ſubſiſt without Air to ſuſtain it, as well as Fewel to feed it; and therefore allowing, that there is a ſufficient Quantity of *combuſtible* Matter in the Heart of the Earth, yet how the Air ſhould penetrate ſo far, and ſo eaſily, conſidering the vaſt Thickneſs of the ſolid Part of the Earth, as to be able to ſupport the Violence and Rapidity of theſe everlaſting Flames, is inconceivable: Nor can we imagine, that the Center of the Earth can be ſpacious enough to contain thoſe *Myriads* of fallen Angels, and innumerable Company of the Sons and Daughters of Men, who ſhall be deſtined to the infernal Priſon.

or in the Sun,

UPON theſe Preſumptions ſome have forſaken the common Opinion, and from the Nature of the Body of the Sun, its Magnitude, and Poſition, have deviſed a new *Hypotheſis*, which makes it to be the Seat of Hell. [f] That the Body of the Sun is Fire, appears from the intenſe Heat which it darteth; that it is of ſufficient Bigneſs to contain all *Apoſtate* Angels, as well as all the Sons and Daughters of Perdition, the Computation of the moſt ſkilful *Aſtronomers* of this Age, who make it more than eleven hundred thouſand Times bigger than the Earth, may convince us; and that, according to the *Copernican* Syſtem, which ſuppoſes the Sun, and not the Earth, to be placed in the Center of the World, the *Empyrean* Heaven is at the fartheſt Diſtance, and moſt direct Oppoſition to the Sun, (which makes this Opinion ſomewhat more tolerable) cannot be denied: But then conſidering, that ſo bright and radiant a Body cannot well be thought the proper Manſion of *Darkneſs* and *utter Darkneſs*, as Hell is deſcribed to be; and among the many Uſes, for which God ordained this bright *Luminary*, no Mention is made of its being deſigned for the Puniſhment of the Wicked: Nay, conſidering withal, that the Devil and his Angels are ſo far from being confined to this, or any other determinate Place, that he is repreſented, *as the Prince of the Power of the Air*, i. e. the Chief or *General*, of the whole Army of evil Spirits, that frequently range up and down in the Air; and not in the Air only,

[z] Rev. xx. 9, 10.

[a] It is very wonderful what *Alphonſus Borellus*, a learned Mathematician at *Piſa*, who, after the great Eruption in the Year 1669, went into *Sicily*, while the Fact was freſh, to view and ſurvey what *Ætna* had done, tells us of that Matter, *viz.* That the Quantity of Matter thrown out of the Mountain, at that Time, amounted to ninety three Millions, eight hundred thirty-eight Thouſand, ſeven Hundred and fifty cubical Paces; which, had it been extended in Length upon the Surface of the Earth, at the Breadth and Depth of three Feet, would reach farther than ninety-three Millions of Paces, which is more than four Times the Circuit of the whole Earth, taking a Thouſand Paces to a Mile. All this Matter, it is true, was not actually inflamed or liquid Fire, but ſixty Million Paces of it, as the ſame Author computes, were ſo, and came out of the Mouth of the Pit in that Form. This made a River of Fire, ſometimes two Miles broad, according to his Computation, but according to the Obſervation of others, who alſo viewed it, the Torrent of Fire was ſix or ſeven Miles broad, and ſometimes ten or fifteen Fathoms deep, and forced its Way into the Sea near a Mile, preſerving itſelf alive in the Midſt of the Waters. *Burnet*'s Theory, Vol. II. and State of the Dead, Vol. II. *Ray*, on the Diſſolution of the World, and *Swinden*'s Enquiry into the Nature and Place of Hell.

[b] Rev. xix. 20—xx. 10, 14, 15—xxi. 8. [c] Pſal. lxxxvi. 13. Deut. xxxii. 22. [d] Pſal. xxiv. 2. [e] *Swinden*, ibid. [f] *Swinden*, ibid.

only, but on the Earth likewiſe, where, like *roaring Lions*, they *walk up and down, ſeeking whom they may devour*; there ſeems to be more Probability in their Opinion, who ſuppoſe, that [g] though the Region of Fire in the Bowels of the Earth be the Place of Hell *ſignally* ſo called; yet, largely ſpeaking, Hell is not one ſingle Place, ſince not only dark and thick Air, but even the Sea and Waters may ſometimes be the Habitation of the Devils and damned Spirits. They are not ſo confined and ſhut up, but that they have Liberty to leave their *capital* Priſon ſometimes; nor ſhall they be abſolutely fixed to one Place, till after the Day of Judgment: But, as ſoon as that is paſſed, they ſhall then for ever be confined, not to a narrower Compaſs than before, (for Hell ſhall rather be enlarged) but to a perpetual enduring of the Flames, which they were not obliged to before: For then ſhall the whole Earth and Air be turned into one vaſt Fire, and, while the Saints are making their Way to Heaven with all Speed, the Wicked will be left below to be tormented for ever in this ſpacious Hell; to which Purpoſe a learned Author [h] of our own has thus expreſſed it: "At the Conflagration of the Earth, the great Channel of the Sea "ſhall be left dry, and all the Rivers ſhall be turned into Smoke and Vapour, ſo that "the whole Earth ſhall be enveloped in one entire Cloud of unſpeakable Thick-"neſs, which ſhall cauſe more than *Egyptian* Darkneſs, clammy, and palpable to "be felt; and this, being added to the choaking Heat and Stench which is there, "will compleat this *external* Hell: A Place of Torment, appointed not only for the "profane Atheiſt and Hypocrite, but alſo for the Devil and his Angels, where their "Pain will be proportioned, according to the Untamedneſs of their Spirits, and the "Unevenneſs of their perverſe Conſciences."

or rather on the Earth, *at its Conflagration.*

II. SUPPOSE we, then, a Place wherein dwells nothing but Sorrow and Deſpair, Pain and Horror, and whatever is capable of making it intolerable to be endured, and yet impoſſible to be evaded; a Scene that repreſents no other Proſpect, but the Wrath and Indignation of an angry God: *Where* thick Darkneſs and the moſt intenſe Heat reign, but no Mixture of Light allowed to the condemned Priſoners, but what may help them to ſee the many hideous and doleful Spectacles, that do ſurround them: *Where* wicked Men and Devils are blended together in one promiſcuous Crowd, the Wicked entirely given up to the Malice and Inſults of mercileſs *Fiends*, and, from the preſent State of inſupportable Torments, whetting their Fury againſt their Fellow-ſufferers, in order to maintain a continual Intercourſe of mutual Miſchiefs and Vexations: *Where* nothing, in ſhort, is heard, but Weeping and Wailing, loud Shrieks and diſmal Groans, ſore Lamentations and dire Upbraidings, occaſioned by the Severity of the Torments they feel, and their former Folly and Madneſs in drawing one another into that deteſted Place: Suppoſe this, I ſay, and we have, in ſome Meaſure, a faint Image and Repreſentation of the diſmal Abode and Converſation, wherein the Wicked is to live for ever.

A Deſcription of Hell, and its ſad Eſtate.

BUT, beſides this *phyſical*, there is a *moral* Hell, which the Wicked bears about in his Breaſt, I mean, the *Laſhes* of his guilty Mind, and thoſe vexatious Paſſions and Reflections, which will follow him into the other World, and there be let looſe upon him with inexpreſſible Vehemence. [i] For, when the Wicked ſhall be no longer cloathed with ſuch Bodies of Fleſh, as now mightily obſtruct and *preſs down* the Soul in her Operations, but ſhall put on ſpiritual Bodies, Bodies, in which their Souls ſhall freely and uncontroulably exert their utmoſt Powers; their Apprehenſions and Reſentments of Things muſt neceſſarily become vaſtly more quick and vigorous, and, conſequently, the Senſe of their own Folly, Guilt, and Miſery, and their Remorſe and Anguiſh thereupon, exceedingly more keen and poignant, than ever they felt them before. Nor can we forbear thinking, but that the Divine Vengeance will both add *new* Stings to the inbred ones, and, in ſome ſupernatural Manner, ſo whet and ſharpen the Points of the *old* ones, that whereas, in this State, their Conſciences did only chaſtiſe them with *Whips*, in that which is to come, they will chaſtiſe with *Scorpions*.

SUPPOSE we, then, an innumerable Company of ſelf-condemned Wretches, confined in this direful Place of Torments, with a ready Remembrance of all the abominable Deeds of their former Lives, with a clear Perception of God, the Fountain of Bliſs, and of thoſe eternal Joys in Heaven, which they have loſt, with a

[g] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II.
[i] Archbiſhop *Dawes*'s Sermons.
[h] *More*'s Grand Myſtery of Godlineſs, *Book* VI.

quick Senſe of the Torments they ſuffer, and a ſure Proſpect of their eternal Duration and uninterrupted Continuance; and then conſider, what Shame, and Sorrow, and ſad Remorſe, what Rage, and Fury, and wild Deſpair muſt alternately take Poſſeſſion of their Minds, and make them break out into loud Laments, and ſuch fruitleſs Wiſhes as theſe: [k] "O that I had not given Way to the Spirit of Luſt and Uncleanneſs, of Luxury and Wantonneſs, which betrayed me into innumerable Miſcarriages in my Life! O that I had not followed the Dictates of Malice and Revenge! O that I had never defiled my Lips with profane Swearing and Blaſphemy! O that I had never been unmerciful and uncharitable, that I had never injured or oppreſſed the Poor, but had relieved their Neceſſities, and made them Partakers of my Abundance! Had I done this, and, inſtead of purſuing criminal Pleaſures, made the Salvation of my Soul my Care and Study, I might now, inſtead of frying in theſe Flames, been in yonder bright and glorious Manſions, ſinging Praiſes and Hallelujahs among the bleſſed Saints, and with them, communicating in the Preſence and Enjoyment of God, and his Chriſt. But from thence I am eternally baniſhed: The *Gulph*, the *mighty Gulph*, the Decree, the irreverſible Decree of an angry God has made a Separation, which can never be ſurmounted: And here muſt be thy ſad Abode: Theſe Fiends muſt be thy Companions and Tormentors: This Fire, the Element wherein thou muſt live, and this Worm muſt gnaw greedily upon thee for ever. O dreadful Word, *for ever!* When ten thouſand times ten thouſand Ages are paſt and gone, thy Miſery will be the ſame, and not a Moment nearer its Expiration. All the Sufferings thou canſt endure, in an infinite Succeſſion of Ages, will not appeaſe the enraged Deity, or incline him to relent. To recover his Favour is a Thing impoſſible, and therefore, [l] *farewel Hope, and, with Hope, farewel Fear; farewel Remorſe; all Good to me is loſt: Evil, be thou my Good.*" And thus the wretched Creature goes on, loading himſelf with Curſes and Execrations, envying and raging at the Bleſſed above, reproaching and ſnarling at his Fellow-Sufferers in Hell; and, as he reflects on his loſt Condition, and the unrelenting Wrath of Heaven, raging and blaſpheming even God himſelf. O ſad Eſtate, which turns every Thing into Poiſon, and will make the Wretched curſe the very Fountain of Happineſs, thereby precluding all Hopes of Reconciliation, and perpetuating their Puniſhment for ever!

Different Degrees of Puniſhment in Hell, and upon what Accounts.

III. THESE are ſome of the ſad *Ingredients*, which will conſtitute the Hell, and forlorn Condition of the Reprobates hereafter; and from hence it will follow, that, though their Puniſhment will be ſevere, yet will it not be in all *alike*, but differ, in Proportion to the Degree and Aggravations of their Iniquities. * One great Part of the Puniſhment of Hell conſiſts, as we ſaid, in the Remorſe of Conſcience, ariſing from the Senſe of Guilt; and therefore, where the greateſt Guilt is, there muſt be the greateſt Remorſe, *i. e.* the greateſt Puniſhment from the Senſe of it. Whilſt Men are in this World, indeed, they have a great many Ways to divert theſe bitter Reproaches, there is ſtill room for Hope; and they may ſtill deceive themſelves with the fruitleſs Expectations of a future Repentance and Reformation; but when they are once paſſed into another World, theſe Torments are unallayed and unintermitted: Their Thoughts are always awake, and upon the Stretch, and perpetually employed in the mortifying Conſideration of their own Sin and Madneſs. Now, if the Torments of the Reprobate do, in a great Meaſure, conſiſt in a bitter Reflection upon their own paſt Folly and Ingratitude, the more fooliſh and ungrateful they have been, the more heavily will this Reflection ſit upon them, the more ſenſibly will it touch them, the more grievouſly will it torment them. When they conſider (and they will always be conſidering) thoſe many Opportunities they had of knowing their Duty, and thoſe mighty Aſſiſtances that were afforded them, to enable them to perform it, (a Mercy not equally vouchſafed to all Men) the Senſe of their Miſery muſt needs be increaſed, in Proportion to the Divine Favours and Advantages, which they have ſo wilfully neglected and deſpiſed.

ALL Sinners will, no Doubt, be extremely and inſupportably miſerable, upon the View of their being for ever excluded from the Preſence of God, and from the Fruition of *thoſe Pleaſures, that are at his Right-Hand for evermore:* But we have no Reaſon to think, that the Senſe of this Loſs will afflict each particular unhappy Soul equally; we have rather ſufficient Grounds to believe, that thoſe, who have been

[k] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [l] *Milton*'s Paradiſe Loſt. * *Smalridge*'s Sermons.

been *Aliens from the Commonwealth of Iſrael, and Strangers to the Covenant of Grace*, will be leſs tormented by this Conſideration, than thoſe who had the Benefit, either of the *Law*, or *Goſpel*, to guide and direct them in the Knowledge of God, and in their Way to Heaven. For how deplorable above Meaſure muſt their Condition be, how particularly ſevere muſt be their Torments, who are conſtantly employed in conſidering, what a fair Capacity they were once in, what particular Opportunities they once had of enjoying that God, and thoſe Pleaſures, which they muſt now loſe for ever? The more frequent Calls and Invitations a Man has had to Repentance here in this World, the more wilfully and preſumptuouſly he hath neglected the Means of Grace, and the more he hath reſiſted the good Motions of the Holy Spirit of God, the greater will his Remorſe be, and the more terrible his Puniſhment; the more will he be torn *by the Worm, which never dies*, and the more furiouſly will *the Fire, which ſhall never be quenched*, prey upon him.

To be ſhort, all anxious and tormenting Paſſions ſhall be let looſe upon every impenitent and condemned Sinner, and at once diſtract and torment every loſt Soul: But then conſidering, that theſe Paſſions are as much capable of Degrees in the other World, as they are in this, the more *ſcandalouſly* a Man has miſplaced, or miſemployed them, the more *ſinfully* he has indulged them, the more *irregularly* he has abuſed them in this World, the more *ſeverely* will they uſe him, the more *grievouſly* will they afflict him, the more *intolerably* will they torment him hereafter in the next. So that in the very Nature of the Thing, there muſt be an Inequality of future Torments, in Proportion to Mens Guilt, even though the Divine Juſtice did not interpoſe. But when the ſacred Records acquaint us, that [m] *the Servant, which knew his Maſter's Will, and did not according to it, ſhall be beaten with many Stripes*; and that [n] *the Scribes and Phariſees, who devoured Widows Houſes, and, for a Pretence, made long Prayers, ſhall receive the greater Condemnation:* When they tell us concerning the wicked Inhabitants of *Capernaum*, that [o] *it ſhall be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom, in the Day of Judgment, than for that City*; and concerning the *Gueſt*, (who, notwithſtanding the Favour vouchſafed him of being admitted to the *Marriage-Feaſt*, [p] *came without a Wedding-Garment*) that he was *caſt into utter Darkneſs*, i. e. not only ſhut out of the *Bride-Chamber*, as other unworthy Gueſts were, but removed to the fartheſt Diſtance from heavenly Light and Happineſs; we cannot but conclude, that God, who can perfectly diſtinguiſh between different Degrees of Wickedneſs, and is abundantly able to puniſh every Sinner according to his Deſert, whatever Inequalities may be here, is determined in the future State, to proportion the Torment to the Guilt, and to inflict ſuch diſtinct Puniſhments, as are peculiarly due to each particular Offender.

Their Eternity proved from Scripture.

But though there ſhall be different Degrees of Torment in the other World, yet this can be no Conſolation to a thinking Man, when he knows, that the Puniſhment which is denounced, and will certainly be executed upon every impenitent Sinner, (whether he be under the Dominion of the greateſt, or the ſmalleſt Sin) will undoubtedly be *eternal*. *Origen* indeed, as [q] it is reported of him, was of a different Opinion: He ſuppoſed, that the Torments of all the Damned, even of the Devils themſelves, after a determinate Number of Years, ſhould have an End. After him, others maintained, that all Mankind, under the Condemnation, ſhould in Time get rid of their Torments, and leave *the Devil and his Angels* only Heirs of eternal Vengeance; others again, that, if not all Mankind, at leaſt all Chriſtians, ſhould, after a certain Period, be releaſed from the Pains of Hell; and laſtly, others, that, if not all Chriſtians, to be ſure all ſuch of them, as were *given to Works of Charity*, however great Sinners in other Reſpects, ſhould at length find a Redemption. [r] But theſe Opinions, as they ſeverally aroſe, were ever held *heretical*, and repugnant to the plain Word of God. And indeed, when we read of [s] *everlaſting Burnings*, of [t] *everlaſting Shame and Contempt*, of [u] *everlaſting Fire*, of * *everlaſting Puniſhment*, of [x] *everlaſting Deſtruction*, of [y] *eternal Judgment*, of [z] *eternal Damnation*, of [a] *the Fire, that is never quenched*, of [b] *Blackneſs* of *Darkneſs for ever*, and of [c] *the Smoke of the Torment* of the Wicked, *which aſcendeth up for ever and ever*, we can hardly ſuppoſe, that ſuch a Variety in Expreſſions, and the ſtrongeſt of their Kind, that the Scripture-Language affords, were ever ſet to denote a *temporary* Duration only.

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[m] Luke xii. 47. [n] Matth. xxiii. 14. [o] Ibid. xi. 24. [p] Ibid. xxii. 12, 13.
[q] Aug. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XXI. [r] Archbiſhop *Dawes*'s Sermons. [s] Iſa. xxxiii. 8. [t] Dan. xii. 2.
[u] Matth. xviii. 8. [*] Ibid. xxv. 46. [x] 2 Theſſ. i. 9. [y] Heb. vi. 2. [z] Mark iii. 29.
[a] Ibid. ix. 43. [b] Jude *ver.* 13. [c] Rev. xiv. 11.

The [d] Words indeed, which we render *eternal* and *everlaſting*, *for ever*, and *for ever and ever*, are ſometimes in Scripture uſed in a *limited* Senſe, to ſignify a long Continuance only; but then they are frequently (as where Eternity is attributed to God, and he is ſaid *to live for ever and ever*, and where eternal Happineſs is promiſed to good Men, *that they may be ever with the Lord*) uſed in a *larger* Senſe, and ſo denote an endleſs and indeterminable Duration: And therefore, ſince the very ſame Words and Expreſſions are applied to the Puniſhment of the Wicked in another Life, what ſhould hinder why we may not underſtand them in the ſame Extent? Nay ſince, in one and the ſame Sentence, the Duration of the Puniſhment of the Wicked is expreſſed by the very ſame Term, that is uſed for the Duration of the Happineſs of the Righteous, (for *theſe*, ſays our Lord, ſpeaking of the Wicked, *ſhall go away*, εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον, *into eternal Puniſhment*, *but the Righteous*, εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, *into eternal Life*) [e] as there is no Ground to ſuppoſe, that the ſame Word, in the ſame Verſe, when applied to *Oppoſites*, ſhould be taken in a different Senſe; ſo there is great Reaſon to believe, [f] that our bleſſed Lord, in the Application, purpoſely intended to prevent our making any Difference in the Happineſs of the Righteous, or Miſery of the Wicked, as to their Eternity; but that, while we thought ourſelves concerned to believe the one, we might, at the ſame Time, be conſtrained to acknowledge the other.

An Objection. " [g] BUT how much ſoever God has declared in Scripture, that impenitent Sin-
" ners ſhall be everlaſtingly puniſhed, yet theſe Declarations are certainly to be ſo
" mollified and underſtood, as that we may be able to reconcile them with the
" *eſſential* Perfections of the Divine Nature. Now it can in no Senſe be ſaid to
" agree with the Juſtice of God, to puniſh *temporary* Crimes with *eternal* Puniſh-
" ments, becauſe, if Juſtice always obſerves a Proportion between Offences and Pu-
" niſhments, between *temporary Sins*, and *eternal* Puniſhments, there is no Manner
" of Proportion. And if it be ſo hard to reconcile this with the Juſtice of God, it
" will be much more ſo, to explain how it can poſſibly conſiſt with that infinite
" Mercy and Goodneſs, which we ſo much aſcribe to him." This is the great Objection againſt the Eternity of Hell-Torments: And to give it a full Solution, we ſhall produce moſt of the *Anſwers* that have been alledged, in order to prove a Conſiſtency herein with the Divine Juſtice and Goodneſs. And the

Anſwered.

1. *From the Nature of Sin.* FIRST of theſe is taken from the Nature of Sin; which, being an Offence againſt an eternal God, ought, according to the ſtrict Rules of Juſtice, (which require that the Puniſhment of Offenders bear Proportion to the Dignity of the Perſon offended) to have eternal Torments for its Puniſhment. [h] To live for a long while in an habitual Neglect and Contempt of the Sovereign Lord, Creator, and Governor of the World; to ſpend a whole Life, or great Part of it, in defying infinite *Power*, in diſparaging infinite *Wiſdom*, in deſpiſing infinite *Goodneſs*, in hating infinite *Perfection*; to have no Gratitude for the greateſt of *Benefactors*, no Duty for the moſt rightful of *Governors*, no Honour for the moſt glorious of Potentates, no Awe for the moſt tremendous of *Majeſties*; in one Word, to be continually affronting and provoking every Perſon of the bleſſed Trinity; to deſpiſe the Riches of God's Goodneſs, in ſending his Son into the World to ſeek and ſave us; to trample upon the Son, and to count the *Blood of the Covenant*, whereby *we are ſanctified*, *an unholy Thing*; to do *Deſpite unto the Spirit of Grace*, and turn the deaf Ear to all his kind Calls and Admonitions; to ſay all at once, to refuſe eternal Happineſs, to fly from every Thing that is good, and purſue every Thing that is evil; what is all this put together, but ſuch a prodigious Maſs of Sin and Folly, ſuch an intolerable Complication of every Thing that is offenſive and provoking to Almighty God, as no Puniſhment can be too great, no Torments of too long a Continuance, to avenge? Even in this Life we ſee, that, for the Support of human Governments, the ſupreme Power has a Right, not only in the Caſe of habitual Offences, but even of ſingle Acts of an heinous Nature, to inflict perpetual Baniſhment or Impriſonment, nay, even perpetual *poſitive* Torments, ſuch as labouring in the Mines, at the Gallies, or the like: And if it be thought juſt and lawful among Men, for very great and outrageous Crimes, to inflict ſuch Puniſhments upon Offenders, as ſhall affect the whole Duration of their Lives, (which is all of their Beings that we have any Power over) it cannot, ſure, be thought unjuſt in God, to inflict ſuch Puniſhments upon Sinners, as ſhall affect the whole Duration

[d] Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [e] *Ray*, on the Diſſolution. [f] Archbiſhop *Dawes*'s Sermons.
[g] Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*, ibid. [h] Archbiſhop *Dawes*, ibid.

Duration of their Beings, becauſe there is manifeſtly in this Caſe as much Difference in the Crimes, as in the Duration of the Puniſhments. * For, even in human Societies, an Offence againſt a *Magiſtrate* is of an higher Nature, and attended with more ſevere Puniſhment, than Crimes committed againſt *private* Perſons; and ſo, as the Magiſtrate is more eminent and honourable, the Injuries and Indignities offered to him, are ſtill eſteemed more heinous, and have greater Puniſhments annexed to them, in Proportion to the Eminency and Honour of the Perſon offended: And therefore, ſince our Sins are Rebellion againſt God, who is infinite in Glory, and Power, and all Perfections, the Guilt of them ſeems to be *infinite*; and, upon this Account, ſince we are incapable of undergoing Puniſhment infinite in *Degree*, the infinite *Duration* of it is no more than proportionate to our Guilt. And as from the Nature of Sin; ſo,

2. FROM the Temper and Diſpoſition of Sinners, the Juſtice and Equity of God's puniſhing them *eternally* may not improperly be inferred. Sinners indeed are but allowed a temporal Life in the State of Trial and Probation, and, conſequently, have it not in their Power to ſin *actually* to all Eternity; but, ſince they have contracted and ſettled themſelves into ſuch wicked Habits, as, without the Aſſiſtance of God's Grace (which at laſt may be juſtly denied, where it has been ſo often ſlighted and deſpiſed) do naturally infer a Neceſſity of ſinning for ever; it is highly probable, that were they allowed to live eternally, they would eternally go on in their Sins: Whereupon *it becomes the great Juſtice of our Judge*, ſays *Gregory*, [l] *that they, who in this Life, would never be without Sin, ſhould, in the next, never be without Puniſhment.* *2. From the Nature and Diſpoſition of Sinners.*

* THE Heathens indeed ſuppoſed, that the Fire of Hell had a certain cleanſing Quality in it, which, in ſome conſiderable Tract of Time, would purify *moſt* Sinners (for ſuch as were very flagitious, they thought incapable of Purification) from the Guilt and Pollution of their Offences; but this was a groſs and carnal Conceit. How fit ſoever that Element may be to purge *material* Things, it can have no ſuch Quality for Souls, *immaterial* Subſtances, whoſe Droſs and Filth (as I may ſo call it) lies all in the Will and Affections, and can be reached and ſeparated from thence, by no *other Fire*, but that *of the Holy Ghoſt*. The only Way, we know of, to remove the Guilt of paſt Tranſgreſſions, is either to repent of them, or to offer a ſufficient Atonement to the divine Juſtice for them: But neither of theſe the Wicked are capable of doing. Among themſelves they cannot find out a Satisfaction, foraſmuch as they are all condemned Perſons, and their utmoſt Suffering is no more, than the juſt Deſert of their Sins: And the *general* Satisfaction which was made for them, and for all Mankind, this they have ſo often, and ſo ſcornfully rejected, [l] *that there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sin*, when *Judgment* has ſeized them, and *a fiery Indignation is conſuming them*. Their Torments indeed may make them *repent of their Sins*, I mean, ſo far repent of them, as to wiſh they had not brought themſelves into that ſad Place, by Reaſon of them. For who can feel Pain, and not wiſh to be out of it? But what is this towards a thorough Reformation of Heart and Life; of hating Vice, and loving Virtue, for their own Sake, and upon Account of the Acceptableneſs of the one, and the Odiouſneſs of the other in the Sight of God, wherein the Nature of true Repentance does conſiſt? Or what Expectation can there be, that when Men are given up to the Tormentor, and kept *in Chains of Darkneſs*, they will have the leaſt Thoughts of growing better, under the Inſtigations and Tyranny of this great Enemy of God and Goodneſs?

3. THAT it is conſiſtent with infinite Juſtice, to ſet before Men Life and Death, Rewards and Puniſhments, and deal with them according to their own Choice, is too ſelf-evident to need any Proof. [m] If the Rewards indeed, on the one Hand, were not proportionate to the Puniſhment on the other, there might be ſome Plea againſt Providence for making us ſuffer eternal Torments for a ſhort Life of Sin, when there was not an eternal Happineſs propoſed to as ſhort a Life of Virtue; but, ſince the Rewards and Puniſhments are equal, it is not neceſſary, that there ſhould be an exact Proportion between the Offence and Puniſhment, conſidered in itſelf, and without Reſpect had to the Reward, becauſe the Eternity of the Reward anſwers to the Eternity of the oppoſite Puniſhment. If therefore God, in propoſing theſe Rewards and Puniſhments, does but deal with us *candidly* and ſincerely, we have nothing to blame but ourſelves, if we *miſs* of the one, and *incur* the other. Now the Method *3. From God's Proceedings with us.*

* *Lupton*'s Sermons.
[l] Heb. x. 26, 27.
[l] Moral. Lib. XXXIV. c. xii.
[m] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity.
* Archbiſhop *Dawes*'s Sermons.

of God's proceeding with us in this Reſpect, is exactly this,—He propoſes everlaſting Rewards, and everlaſting Puniſhments to our Choice; he exhorts us, with the greateſt Earneſtneſs, and moves and aſſiſts us, with the continual Influences of his Grace, to avoid the Puniſhments; and he as earneſtly invites, and as ſufficiently enables us, to obtain the Rewards. Himſelf moſt ſolemnly declares, *that he hath no Pleaſure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked ſhould turn from his Way, and live*; for that *he is merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in Goodneſs and Truth, keeping Mercy for Thouſands, and forgiving Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion, and Sin*; but then it is added, *that he will by no Means clear the Guilty, i. e.* the wilful and pertinacious Sinner. Thus he exhorts, he invites, he promiſes, he threatens, he promiſes eternal Happineſs, he threatens eternal Miſery, to give all the Diſcouragement to Vice, and all the Inducement to Virtue, that is poſſible; and yet, after all, he takes Men at no Advantage, but makes all reaſonable Allowances, in Conſideration of the Frailty of human Nature, and in Condeſcenſion to their Infirmities: He exacts no abſolute Perfection, or impoſſible Obedience, but only a faithful and ſincere Diligence, or, when we fail therein, Repentance and Reſolutions of more Care and Circumſpection for the future. But if Men either diſbelieve or diſregard theſe Things; if they neither care for God's Promiſes, nor fear his Threatenings; if they refuſe his Calls, and make Scorn of his Invitations, ſo that all the Methods of his Mercy and Goodneſs are loſt upon them; there remains no other Remedy, but that Juſtice ſhould have its Courſe: If, when Men are told ſo long beforehand, what Danger they are running upon, they will continue obſtinate in their Diſobedience, after ſo many Encouragements to Repentance, and ſo long a Courſe of Importunity and Forbearance, they have no Reaſon to complain of the Severity of that Sentence, which ſo often they have been threatened with, and ſo often have deſpiſed. The ſhort is this,——Since the Rewards and Puniſhments are both eternal, the Terms on both Sides are equal; and ſince it is in our Power, by the Help of divine Grace, to avoid the Puniſhments, and obtain the Rewards, the Condition is ſuch, that any wiſe Man would be thankful for it; far from complaining, that the Terrors of Puniſhments are joined to the Encouragement of Rewards; that all Motives concur to make him happy, and that God, in his great Mercy, hath uſed all Means, both *inward* by his Grace, and *outward* by his Threats and Promiſes, to bring him to Salvation. For,

4. And the neceſſary Sanctions of his Laws.

FOURTHLY, and laſtly, conſidering the Perverſeneſs of our fallen Nature, and the bewitching Qualities of Sin, God was obliged to annex an eternal Puniſhment to the Violation of his Laws, becauſe a leſſer would not have been a *ſufficient* Motive to ſecure our Obedience to them. [q] That a leſſer Puniſhment would have been ineffectual, is clear in Experience, ſince we ſee, that the Penalty of eternal ſuffering, even as it is now threatened, fails of its Purpoſe, in the greateſt Part of Sinners: And if Terrors of this Kind will not frighten Men from their wicked Courſes, how can it be expected, that any Denunciations of a leſſer Weight would work in them a ſaving Impreſſion? [r] The only true Meaſure and Proportion then between the Crime and the Puniſhment, is the *Suitableneſs* of the Puniſhment to enforce the Obedience of the Law. For if the Law be good and neceſſary, and cannot ſo well and ſo effectually be obeyed without a very ſevere Puniſhment to enforce it, the Severity of the Puniſhment is ſo far from being a *Cruelty*, that it is a juſt and wiſe *Proviſion* to ſecure Obedience to the Law, and to procure the Benefit deſigned by its Inſtitution. Even human Legiſlators, we ſee, are not ſo ſollicitous in the Sanction of their Laws, to make the Penalty *commenſurate* to the Offence, as to make it *ſufficient* to enforce Obedience to the Law; and therefore God, perfectly underſtanding the Temper and Inclination, the Stubbornneſs and Perverſeneſs of Mens Hearts, ſo prone to Vice, and ſo averſe to all that is good, foreſaw that the threatening of a *leſs* Penalty, than eternal Sufferings, would not prevail with Men to forſake their Sins, in order to attain everlaſting Life.

An Objection.

"BUT though God hath thought fit, in order to deter Men from their Sins, to "threaten at this high Rate, * yet the Power of Execution is ſtill in his own "Hands.

[q] *Ray*, of the Diſſolution. [r] Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. and *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II.

* Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*, ibid. 'Tis the Misfortune of the great Man, whoſe Words we have here quoted, that he hath fallen into the very ſame Sentiment, as to this Particular, with Mr *Hobbes*, who (in *Append. ad Leviat.*) has this Paſſage: *We cannot prove from the Juſtice of God, which hath threatened eternal Torments upon Sinners, that their Torments will really be eternal: For though he is unjuſt, who doth not perform the Good, which he owes to any one, nevertheleſs he, who doth not execute the Evil or Harm, which he hath threatened, is not unjuſt, but merciful; how much leſs ſhall God, who is infinitely merciful, be accounted unjuſt for mitigating either the Largeneſs, or Intenſeneſs of our deſerved Puniſhments?*

"Hands. He is not obliged to execute what he hath threatened, any farther than "the Reaſons and the Ends of Government do require. Nay, he may, without "doing any Wrong or Injuſtice, remit and abate as much as he pleaſeth of the "Puniſhment that he hath threatened: And this, without any Impeachment of his "Truth and Faithfulneſs, any more than it is eſteemed, among Men, a Piece of "Falſhood, not to do what they have threatened." To this we may reply, in the Words of a bad Man indeed, but what have a very great Truth in them, [s] *God is not a Man, that he ſhould lye, neither the Son of Man, that he ſhould repent. Hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? Or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good?* Some Threatenings, indeed, God is not obliged to make good, becauſe the Scripture itſelf aſſures us, that his Threatenings of *temporal* Judgments are very often *conditional*, and, conſequently, if the Condition, upon which they are ſuſpended, intervenes, he ought not to proceed to Execution. But then, on the other Hand, there are ſome Threatenings, ſuch, eſpecially, as he hath confirmed with an *Oath*, that are confeſſedly *abſolute* and immutable: And, accordingly, 'tis generally inferred, that the Wicked ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, becauſe God has ſworn, that [t] *they ſhall not enter into his Reſt*; for what he hath ſworn, is irrevocable, inaſmuch as [u] *he abideth faithful, and cannot deny himſelf.*

Anſwered, by ſhewing, that God is obliged to make good his Threats, 1. From his Oath.

BUT allowing theſe Words to relate only to that *earthly* and temporal *Reſt*, which God had provided for his People in the Land of *Canaan*; * yet, in other Reſpects, he hath done ſo much towards the *Confirmation* of his Threatenings, as is certainly equivalent to the moſt ſolemn Oath. He hath ſent his only begotten Son into the World, to be the *Revealer* of this *his Wrath, againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men*: Him, whom he hath ordained to be our Judge, he appointed to deſcribe the whole Proceſs of that great and terrible Day, and to give us an Account, beforehand, of the very Sentence, that ſhall then be pronounced upon the Wicked, and the immediate Execution of it: And could any Oath whatever give us a more ſolemn *Ratification* of his Threatenings, than all this has done? Can we think, that God ſent his Son, only to ſpeak big, but vain Words? That our Judge himſelf frightened us with a Sentence, that ſhall never be executed? Nay, and foretold the certain Execution of it, which yet ſhall never come to paſs: Our Saviour, in ſhort, who is the *Mediator of the Covenant between God and Man*, has ſealed the Truth of his Threatenings, as well as of his Promiſes, with his Blood; and who then ſhall dare to ſay, that they are not *abſolute*, or that he is concerned to perform the one, though not under the like Obligation to inflict the other?

[x] THE Threats of Men, indeed, may frequently be remitted, becauſe they are, many Times, made in Paſſion, and may exceed the Rules of Juſtice; or becauſe ſometimes the Perſon threatened repents, and begs Pardon, and returns to his Duty: But as the Damned cannot be ſuppoſed to do this, ſo neither can any culpable Exceſs be incident to an all-perfect Being. [y] Whoever therefore will give himſelf Time to conſider who God is, and how unchangeable his Nature is, cannot but perceive that, however he may ſometimes defer the Execution of *temporal* Evils, all his known Attributes are concerned to inflict eternal Puniſhment upon impenitent Sinners. He is an *holy God*, and therefore [z] *hateth all the Workers of Iniquity*; he is a *juſt* God, [a] *who will by no Means clear the Guilty, nor let the Sinner go unpuniſhed*; he is an *Almighty* God, able to execute the Vengeance threatened againſt Sinners; for, [b] *who can ſtand in his Sight, when once he is angry?* And what gives a ſad Accent to all this, he that is thus Holy, and Juſt, and Powerful, continues ever the *ſame*; will never alter or put off theſe Properties; will never ceaſe to hate Iniquity, and to be an implacable Enemy to all that perſiſt in their Sins.

2. From his Nature.

* HUMAN Juſtice, indeed, frequently does, and many times ought, to *remit* ſomething of thoſe Penalties, which it has affixed to its Laws, becauſe no human Wiſdom can foreſee all thoſe Circumſtances, which may extenuate the Guilt of an Action, and in ſome Meaſure excuſe the Perſon, in hopes that he may bethink himſelf, and reform; but the Divine Juſtice, which is ſubject to no ſuch Imperfection, cannot be thus obliged to alter his Determinations, or reverſe the Sentence, which he has pronounced. Infinite Wiſdom has already weighed and conſidered every poſſible Circumſtance of the Actions of Men: He hath known, from all Eternity, both his own

[s] Numb. xxiii. 19. [t] Heb. iii. 18. [u] 2 Tim. ii. 13. * Archbiſhop *Dawes*'s Sermons.
[x] *Whitby*'s Appendix to 2 *Theſſ.* i. [y] Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [z] Pſal. v. 5.
[a] Exod. xxxiv. 7. [b] Pſal. lxxvi. 7. * *Rogers*'s Sermons, Vol. III.

own and others Works, and therefore nothing new can poſſibly intervene, which might make it juſt or neceſſary for him to change his Reſolution, or alter the Thing that is gone out of his Lips. *Mercy*, indeed, is one of his darling *Attributes*, yet we are to conſider it, as conducted by his Wiſdom, and conſiſtent with his Holineſs, Juſtice, and Truth, and theſe will always plead more ſtrongly for the Puniſhment of Sinners, than the other can for their Releaſement. To ſpeak properly, indeed, [c] Mercy and Pity is not a *Paſſion* in God, as it is in Men, but a *Perfection*, founded on the higheſt Reaſon and Equity: And, therefore, tho' the Miſery of Sinners be never ſo intenſe, and the Number of the Miſerable never ſo great, yet, when the Equity and Reaſonableneſs of the Caſe does not require it, there is nothing to move God for their Relief, becauſe he acts by the ſtanding Rules of Reaſon and Wiſdom, not by any Fondneſs or Weakneſs of Paſſion.

THE Number of Criminals, indeed, is apt to move Compaſſion among Men: But this proceeds, partly from the *Sympathy* and *Frailty* of our Nature, and partly from the *Conſtitution* of human Affairs. To deſtroy Multitudes, to depopulate Cities and whole Countries, would be bringing an Affliction upon many innocent Perſons, who were the Friends and Relations of them that are deſtroyed. But the Matter is not ſo in the preſent Caſe. There will be no Want of Numbers in Heaven: The Righteous will be everlaſtingly happy, and perceive no Diminution of their Happineſs from the Damnation of ſuch, as were never ſo dear to them in this World. Nay, what is more, their Damnation will contribute not a little to the greater Stability of the Righteous, as well as Augmentation of God's Glory.

3. From the Benefits which will accrue upon the Puniſhment of the Damned.

ALL Angels, at their firſt Creation, ſeem to be in the Situation with thoſe, that are now ſurrounding the Throne of God. [d] They had no Tempter to ſeduce them, nor wanted they any reaſonable Motives to ſecure their ſtanding; and yet great Numbers of them made a Shift to rebel, and to forfeit their *celeſtial Places*. An Addition therefore of ſome new Motive, to make them more ſecure in the everlaſting Poſſeſſion of their Happineſs, ſeems not unrequiſite for them, and though the dreadful Fate of thoſe of their own Kind might be ſufficient for this Purpoſe, yet when, over and above this, they ſhall perceive the Wicked of the Race of Mankind, whom God loved ſo tenderly, as to ſend his Son into the World *to ſeek and to ſave them*, ſentenced to everlaſting Damnation likewiſe; who can doubt, but that this will ſtill make the Motive, *to beware of falling*, more cogent to them, and every Moment yield them a fuller Conviction, that there can be no poſſible Hope of rebelling againſt God, and eſcaping his righteous Judgment.

THE Saints in Heaven, without all Queſtion, ſhall be for ever confirmed in their Glory and Beatitude; but then they ſhall no otherwiſe be confirmed, than by the moſt powerful Motives, that can poſſibly influence rational and free Agents, (for ſuch we ſhall for ever be) to avoid every Thing that may endanger their falling. And, to this Purpoſe, what can be more prevalent, than the eternal Sight and Contemplation of thoſe Torments, which Sinners, of all Kinds, both Men and Angels, are everlaſtingly doomed to? What can give them a more ſenſible Feeling of the Happineſs they enjoy, than the Proſpect of thoſe ſad Miſeries, which they, by the Divine Aſſiſtance, have been enabled to eſcape, like the ſhipwrecked Perſons gotten ſafe to Shore, the more admiring and rejoicing in their Security, the more they look back upon the Storm they left behind? What, I ſay, can be a more prevalent Motive than this, to quicken and enlarge their Praiſes and Thankſgivings to God; to perpetuate their Reverence and Adoration of his Holineſs; to excite and promote in them an utter Horror and Deteſtation of Sin for ever and ever; and, finally, to make them rejoice and triumph, not in the Sufferings of their Fellow-Creatures, conſidered in themſelves, but as they are Manifeſtations of God's Juſtice, and Power, and Victory over his Enemies, and a Vindication of his Honour and Authority, of his Truth and Righteouſneſs, in his Hatred and Deteſtation of Sin, and in his Wrath and Indignation againſt Sinners?

The Sum of the whole Argument.

THESE are the Ends, that may well become the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, in inflicting eternal Puniſhments upon the *Reprobate:* And, therefore, to ſum up the whole of what has been ſaid on this Argument:——[e] Since we have the Holy Spirit frequently expreſſing the Eternity of Hell-Torments, in Words as plain and proper as can poſſibly be choſen for that Purpoſe; ſince we have almoſt the whole Chriſtian Church

[c] *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion, Vol. II.
[d] Archbiſhop *Dawes*'s Sermons.
[e] Ibid.

Church, in all Ages, interpreting theſe Words and Expreſſions, of a true and proper Eternity; nay, ſince we have the Holy Scripture itſelf, determining its own Senſe in this Point, by ſuch Circumſtances, as can be conſiſtent with no other, than what we are now pleading for: Since, together with Scripture, we have Reaſon on our Side, which, both from the Nature and Aggravations of Sin, and the Temper and Diſpoſition of Sinners; both from the Attributes of God, and the Manner of his Proceedings with Mankind, proves our Aſſertion to be true; which gives us ſuch good Arguments *why it may be*; diſcovers ſuch noble Uſes, *why it ſhould be*; and is ſo utterly at a Loſs (conſidering the Order in which God has put Things) to deviſe any Reaſon *why it ſhould not be*; ſince this is the State of the Evidence before us, I ſay, it muſt needs be granted, that we have more than probable Grounds to conclude, that *it will be*: And therefore [f] let not the Preſumption of a *temporary* Hell encourage any Man to go on in his Sin. If the Event ſhould fruſtrate his Hopes, and (as moſt likely it will) fall out contrary to his Expectations, what a lamentable Condition will he then be in? How will he be ſtricken, as it were with a Thunderbolt, when the Almighty Judge ſhall fulminate againſt him a *dreadful*, indeed, but formerly by him *undreaded* Sentence, adjudging him to endleſs Miſery? And how will he curſe his own Credulity, who, by the groundleſs Belief of a *temporary* Puniſhment, has thrown himſelf upon an *eternal* one, which otherwiſe he might poſſibly have avoided?

And a final Exhortation.

BUT ſuppoſe the beſt ſhould happen, that the Sinner can either hope, or conceive; that Hell, according to his Interpretation, ſhould laſt only, εἰς αἰῶνας αἰώνων, *for Ages of Ages*; yet did he ever experience what an acute Pain means, and can he think this a ſmall Matter? Were he, at this Juncture, under the Senſe and Suffering of a raging Fit of the Stone, or Gout, or Cholic, and, after ten thouſand Years Torture, to be admitted to all the Happineſs his Heart could wiſh, I make no Doubt, but that he would willingly relinquiſh all his Expectations of the one, nay and with it his *Being* to boot, rather than be bound to endure the other for ſo long a Term. But what are theſe Pains to the Torments and Agonies of Hell, or the Duration of ten thouſand Years, to that of *Ages of Ages?* If the Sinner makes light of all this, and nothing can reſtrain him, but an Eternity of Puniſhment, he is bound to thank God, for having uſed this only *effectual* Means in threatening it; and it badly becomes *him* to complain of his Rigour and Severity, who would have made ſo pernicious an Uſe of his Lenity and Goodneſs.

THE Truth is, though to come down to the Sinner's own Terms, and thereby convince him of the Folly of his Choice, we may make Suppoſitions, that the Torments of the Wicked may be *determinable*; yet, ſince we have no ſuch Warrant from Scripture, great Caution ſhould be uſed how we even do this, [g] becauſe the Belief of the Threatenings of God, in their utmoſt Extent, is of ſo great Moment to a good Life, and ſo great a Diſcouragement to a bad one, that, if Men were once ſet free from the Fear and Belief of this, the moſt powerful Reſtraint from Sin would be taken away. [h] Let none therefore deceive us with any of thoſe weak Pretences, which ſeem to widen the *Gate* of Life, and ſoften the Term of Salvation. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked: Whatſoever a Man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap*; and therefore if we ourſelves are, at any Time, inclined to think more favourably of our Condition, than a juſt Reflection on our Lives will encourage; if we are tempted to hope from the Divine Mercy, while our Works are evil, nay, while we continue in any unrepented Sin, let us reject the Suggeſtion as the Artifice of an Enemy, that would ruin our Souls, and cheat us of our Salvation. And, in order to break off our deteſted League with Sin, let us often and ſeriouſly think on theſe momentous Things, and conſider well with ourſelves, what Apprehenſions will then probably fill and poſſeſs our Minds, when we ſhall ſtand trembling before our Judge, in a fearful Expectation of that terrible Sentence, which is juſt ready to be pronounced, and as ſoon as ever it is pronounced, to be executed upon us; when we ſhall have a full and clear Sight of the unſpeakable Happineſs, and of the horrible and aſtoniſhing Miſeries of another World: When Heaven, in ſhort, with all its Glories, ſhall be

[f] *Ray* of the Diſſolution. Sermons, Vol. III.

[g] Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

[h] *Rogers*'s

open to our View, and, as the Expreſſion is in *Job*, [1] *Hell ſhall be naked before us, and Deſtruction have no Covering*; and, in a full Senſe of this, let us *work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, that, [2] *when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven, in flaming Fire*, our Portion may not be among thoſe, *who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting Deſtruction, from the Preſence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power.*

[1] Job xxvi. 6. [2] 2 Theſſ. i. 7, 9.

A COM-

A

COMPLEAT BODY

OF

Speculative and *Practical*

DIVINITY.

PART V.

Of the great Precepts of Moral and Evangelical Righteouſneſs.

CHAP. I.

Our Duty towards GOD.

The Introduction.

IN treating of the *Ten Commandments* (when we brought the Children of *Iſrael* to Mount *Sinai*, where they were at firſt delivered) we explained the ſeveral Duties relating *to God*, and our *Neighbour*, ſo far as the Purport of ſuch *negative* Precepts would permit us; and, in conſidering the various *Attributes* of God, we took Notice of the ſeveral Duties and Affections, that do properly reſult from thence, ſo far as was conſiſtent with the *Nature* of our Subject, and the *Brevity* uſually preſcribed to Inferences: So that, in a great Meaſure, we have prevented ourſelves in this Part of our Labour, and have the leſs Reaſon to be prolix in what we call *Practical Divinity*, becauſe Books of this Kind are in every one's Hands; and, in our own Language, many of them written with ſo much Learning and Judgment, as far ſurpaſs whatever other Nations have yet produced.

'TIS not ſo much therefore to add to this *Store*, as to collect it into ſome tolerable Compaſs, and ſet it before our Reader in one View; to enlarge upon what we have *curſorily* mentioned, and explain what as yet has not come in our Way; and more eſpecially, to conſider and enforce thoſe great diſtinguiſhing Precepts, which are purely *evangelical*, that we undertake this Survey of the *Whole Duty of Man*, as it comprizes what we are bound to do with Regard To GOD, OUR NEIGHBOUR, and OURSELVES. But before we enter upon this, becauſe there are ſome People, who, for the Quiet of their own Minds, would cancel all Obligations to Duty, by running down the *Differences* of Good and Evil, as though they were nothing but the

[a] *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons.

the *arbitrary* Fancies of Men, according to the different Influences of Cuſtom and Education; as though *doing well* were nothing but a *moral* Faſhion of appearing ſuitable to the Country, wherein we live, which *varies* as much, as the different Habits and Languages of Men do; becauſe there is a *Set* of Men in the World, I ſay, who ſolemnly advance ſuch *Poſitions* as theſe, it may not be amiſs to premiſe ſomething concerning the *moral* and immutable Diſtinction of Good and Evil, of Virtue and Vice, thereby to evince, that our Obligation to the Practice of the one, and Avoidance of the other, is antecedent to any *poſitive* Command, either of God or Man.

The moral Diſtinction of Good and Evil.

THAT *Reaſon*, [b] whether we conſider it as a *Rule*, to *direct*, or as a *Law*, to *oblige* the Choice of intelligent Beings, ought to be the Meaſure of every Man's Actions, is readily granted; but then the Queſtion is, wherein Reaſon *conſiſts*, and whether, in particular Caſes, all Actions, ſetting aſide *poſitive* Inſtitution, be not equally reaſonable; whether, under certain Circumſtances, for Inſtance, it be not equally agreeable to Reaſon, and conſequently, equally fitting and lawful, for a Man to commit any Act of Violence and Cruelty, or even to blaſpheme, as it is to *do Juſtice*, or *love Mercy*, or *walk humbly with God*. Now to ſet this Matter in a true Light, we will ſuppoſe Mankind in a *pure State of Nature*, a State where all Perſons are abſolutely *independent*; where neither the Authority of Parents, nor any ſuperior Force of Body, or Capacity of Mind can be pretended, to give one Man the leaſt Power or Advantage over another; in a Word, where there is *no Law*, and conſequently, in a *political Senſe*, there can be *no Tranſgreſſion*, but every Man is equally permitted to do *what is right in his own Eyes*. Let us ſuppoſe farther, that, in this State of *Equality*, it is perfectly indifferent, as to a Man's Intereſt and Convenience, whether he lye, or ſpeak Truth; whether he be kind and obliging, or churliſh and oppreſſive to his Neighbour; whether, without any Provocation, he murther an innocent Man, or relieve him when in Danger of periſhing: Yet I would aſk, whether there is not ſomething (in itſelf, and without Regard to any human *Compacts*) more agreeable in a Man's acting upon a Principle of Generoſity and good Nature, than in exerting an arbitrary Act of Violence and Cruelty? 'Tis a ſingular Inſtance of the Goodneſs, as well as Wiſdom of God then, that he hath *implanted* in us a natural Tenderneſs towards one another under Circumſtances of Diſtreſs, whereby we find ourſelves invincibly moved, if not to *relieve*, at leaſt to *compaſſionate* thoſe, that are unfortunate; and this Duty we properly enough ſtile *Humanity*, as if it were ſo *eſſential* to human Nature, that Men could not diveſt themſelves of it, without degenerating into *Brutes* and *Savages*.

The Practice of ſome particular People no juſt Exception.

[c] SOME People indeed have ſo far diveſted themſelves of it, as to entertain different Perſuaſions of Things. Among the *Cilicians*, *Robbery* was thought an indifferent Matter, as, among the *Lacedemonians*, *Theft*: Inceſtuous Marriages among the *Perſians* were held innocent, and ſome other Acts of Uncleanneſs among the *Thebans*: But theſe Inſtances do not overthrow the *moral* Diſtinction of Good and Evil, becauſe we do not deny that Men may degenerate in their Opinions as well as their Practices. There may be *Monſters* in *Morality*, as well as in *Nature*; but, as theſe are to be no Rule for the whole *Species*, ſo neither can we ſuppoſe, that their Opinions would have been ſo much taken Notice of, had they not herein contradicted the Senſe of the reſt of Mankind. For, ever ſince there have been Men in the World, an infinite Difference has been placed between Virtue and Vice. The Name of *Virtue* has been appropriated to certain approved Actions, that have been praiſed and recommended by all the World; and under the Name of *Vice* has been comprized every Thing that has been counted worthy of Blame, and whereon Diſhonour and Diſgrace has been caſt. [d] This Diſtinction is ſo ancient, ſo uniform, ſo univerſal, that it cannot proceed from bare Education, but muſt have been the Gift of Nature; becauſe Nature, which is the ſame in all, gives to all the ſame Inſtitution, and the ſame Light, and Men have nothing to do but to follow it. Her Voice is never fallacious; and therefore, the Diſtinction, which ſhe, in general, has ſet between Good and Evil, is not *arbitrary*, but founded in the *Things* themſelves; and ſo far from depending on any *poſitive* Laws, whether human or divine, that poſitive Laws themſelves do *principally*, if not *ſolely* oblige, by Virtue of our pre-ſuppoſing this Diſtinction.

GOD

[b] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [c] *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons. [d] *Martin*, of Natural Religion.

GOD, we conceive, is a Being infinitely Good, Wiſe, and Powerful; but it is abſurd to ſuppoſe, that he ſhould have infinite *Power*, and we not be bound to *fear* him; that he ſhould have infinite *Goodneſs*, and we not be bound to love him; that he ſhould have infinite *Wiſdom*, and we not be bound to *believe* in him, to *truſt* in him, to *depend* upon him, and to *ſubmit* to his holy Will and Pleaſure. 'Tis impoſſible to conceive a *Creator*, giving Life, and all the Comforts of it, to a *Creature*, and he is not obliged to be thankful to him, and to ſerve him; and if it be abſurd *not* to ſerve God, it muſt, in Conſequence, be a good Thing to perform, and an evil Thing to neglect our Duty to him. The Diſtinction therefore between Good and Evil, between Virtue and Vice, ſo far, at leaſt, as God is concerned in them, is inherent in the Things themſelves, and independent on any poſitive Law or Injunction, to make them ſo: And with theſe Obſervations we proceed now to the Conſideration of ſome of the *principal* Duties, we owe to our great Creator, beginning with thoſe that are *internal*.

The Diſtinction manifeſt in Relation to the Duties we owe to God.

SECT. I.

Of the internal Duties, we owe to GOD, *and*

I. OF LOVE.

HEAR, *O Iſrael*, ſays *Moſes* their Ruler [f], commenting upon the Precepts, which God had been giving them, *The Lord our God is one Lord, and thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might: This*, as our Saviour tells us [g], *is the firſt and great Commandment*. And, in treating of it, we ſhall ſhew, I. Wherein our Love of God conſiſts, and upon what Reaſons and Conſiderations it becomes our Duty: And then, II. What its Properties and Qualifications are, and by what Means we may be enabled to attain it.

I. NOW, to love God, is, [h] to poſſeſs our Minds with ſuch a due Senſe and Eſtimation of the Excellencies and Perfections which are in the Divine Nature, as may make us look upon God as *our chief Good*; make Choice of him as the only proper Object of our Happineſs; and prefer his Cauſe and Intereſt before any Thing elſe, that may come in Competition with it: For the Language of a true Friend and Lover of God is that of the Royal Pſalmiſt, [i] *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I deſire beſides thee*. And, indeed, whether we conſider *God abſolutely*, as he is in himſelf, or *relatively*, as he ſhews himſelf to us, there is all the Reaſon imaginable, why he ſhould be ſeated in the Throne of our Affections.

To love God, what.

1. ABSOLUTELY, and in himſelf, God is propoſed to us as the moſt lovely and amiable of all Beings, in whom there is an *harmonious* Concurrence of all Beauties and Perfections, and who has all the Excellencies that can poſſibly attract our Love, in infinite Degrees, concentered in his Nature. *Wiſdom*, both the Ornament and Perfection of a Creature, is but a Spark of *Light*, fallen from the *Father of Lights*, and is to be found *originally* in him, who [k] *is the only wiſe God*. *Power*, the Thing, which is univerſally courted among Men, is fundamentally in him, [l] *who hath made the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens, and who preſerveth them ſtill*. *Juſtice*, which [m] *makes the righteous Man more excellent than his Neighbour*, is a glorious Attribute of his Godhead, who *is righteous in all his Ways, and holy in all his Works*. *Holineſs*, a Thing ſo venerable among Men, the moſt *orient* Pearl, that they can ſhew, is but a faint *Ray* of that infinite Purity, which is in God. *Kindneſs* and *Beneficence*, which no Man ever hated, which wins upon all, is eſſential to him, who is the Fountain of all Good, and *whoſe Mercy endureth for ever*. And, to name no more, *Beauty*, that common Allurement of Love, is ſo conſpicuous in him, that the moſt glorious Inhabitants of Heaven, who *ſee his Face*, are dazzled with the

Reaſons for loving him, from his Attributes.

[f] Deut. vi. 4, 5. [g] Matth. xxii. 38. [h] *Wilkins*, of Natural Religion. [i] Pſal. lxxiii. 25.
[k] 1 Tim. i. 17. [l] Neh. ix. 6. [m] Prov. xii. 26.

Glory of it: For the Seraphims, in *Iſaiah*'s Viſion, appear [n] *covering their Faces* in the Preſence of God, either as bluſhing at their own *comparative* Deformity, or as unable to ſuſtain the *refulgent* Luſtre of the Divine Perfections. If then we deſervedly love and eſteem thoſe Perſons, who are poſſeſſed of thoſe Graces, though in an imperfect Degree; how can we but love and reverence God, who is the glorious Center, in whom all theſe Excellencies meet; in whom perfect Wiſdom and unerring Juſtice, melting Goodneſs, and alluring Mercy, are all united to captivate our Affections? Eſpecially conſidering,

His Relation to us.

2. THAT, beſides theſe eſſential Qualities in God, we have abundant Reaſon to love him, in his *relative* Capacity, for the daily Emanations of his Goodneſs to us. [o] At firſt he produced us out of nothing, and made us thereby capable of receiving all Kindneſſes from him. Our Exiſtence could be no Addition to his Happineſs, and therefore our Creation was the mere Effect of his eternal Love. The ſame *Philanthropy* ſtill ſuſtains and preſerves us, and keeps us from relapſing into the Abyſs of Non-Entity. The Divine Providence continually watches over us, ſkreens us from Dangers, and confers on us actual Favours and Mercies: And, therefore, if we think ourſelves bound to love our Friends and Benefactors, or Parents and deareſt Relations, there is much greater Reaſon to love God, whoſe Kindneſs to us far exceeds all the Care and Affection of the moſt entire Friend, of the moſt indulgent Parent. But, of all the Inſtances of his Love, that of ſending his Son, for the *Redemption* of Mankind, is of the moſt endearing Nature, and therefore obſerve with what a Variety of tender Expreſſions the Apoſtle deſcribes it. [p] *God, who is rich in Mercy*, ſays he, *for his great Love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in Sins, hath quickened us together with Chriſt, (by Grace ye are ſaved) and hath raiſed us up together, and hath made us ſit together in heavenly Places, in Chriſt Jeſus: That, in the Age to come, he might ſhew the exceeding Riches of his Grace, in his Kindneſs to us, through Chriſt Jeſus; for by Grace are ye ſaved, through Faith, and that not of yourſelves, it is the Gift of God.* Here is *Grace*, and *Gift*, and *Kindneſs*, *exceeding Riches of Grace*, and *great Love*, and *Riches of Mercy*, and theſe, if duly attended to, cannot fail, one would think, of kindling a *reciprocal* Flame of Love in our Hearts; which is therefore more peculiarly due to God; becauſe,

His being the Author of Love in us.

3. HIMSELF is the only Author and Cauſe of this Affection in us. [q] That we have a *Biaſs* in our Natures, inclining to what is Good in general, and which the Soul can no more controul, than ſhe can the Motion of the Heart or Pulſe, is obvious to any one, that obſerves his own particular Make and Conſtitution. Now, if there is ſuch an Impreſſion in our Nature, we may aſk the Queſtion, whether it is from ourſelves, or from God. If *from ourſelves*, how comes it to paſs, that we cannot command or ſtop it? Were we the Authors of this Motion, we ſhould certainly have Power over it, and be able to manage and reſtrain it, as we ſaw fit: But ſince we cannot do this, we may well conclude, that it is not a Thing of our own Production; and if not of our own Production, then certainly it came from God, for who ſhould be the Author of what is natural and neceſſary in us, but he that is the Author of our Nature itſelf? *Love* is the ſame in the *moral* and *intellectual* World, that *Motion* is in the *natural*; and, as we make God to be the Author of natural Motion, ſo there is as much Reaſon to eſteem him the Author of our Love. But, now, if God be the Author and Cauſe of our Love, he, doubtleſs, has an abſolute Right and Title to it. For, what is it that gives him a Right to the whole World, but his Production of it? Why has he a Right to any of us, but becauſe we are his Creatures? Why a Right to all our Powers and Faculties, and to all the Service of them, but becauſe he produces and ſuſtains them; becauſe *in him we live, move, and have our Being?* But, now, if God does as much produce our Love, as he does our *Being*, then has he the ſame Right to our Love, that he has to any Part of our Nature, and 'tis an Injury and Injuſtice done him, whenever we transfer it, in any great Degree, to any other Object; ſince, *to love God with all our Hearts*, &c. cannot but imply thus much, [r] that we love him in a peculiar and ſuperlative Manner, in a Manner, wherein we muſt not love any Thing beſides. Our Friends and Relations, our Neighbours and Acquaintance, may have ſome Share of our Love and Eſteem, but nothing muſt be loved above God, nothing equally with God,

[n] Iſa. vi. 2. [o] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [p] Eph. ii. 4, &c. [q] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. III. [r] *Newcombe*'s Sermons.

God, much leſs contrary to, and againſt him; nothing muſt have the Heart ſo entirely as he, and nothing, that oppoſes him, muſt have it at all; ſeeing God is to be loved *principally*, and for himſelf; other Things only [s] *ſecondarily*, and in Subordination to him.

II. How then ſhall we reſolve ourſelves in this great and important Queſtion, *whether we love God in the Manner we ought to do?* Why, we muſt attend to the genuine *Fruits* and *Properties* of human Love, and thence make the Eſtimate of the Nature of our Love towards God. Now,

The Properties and Signs of our Love to God.

1. [t] EVERY Man, we ſee, eſteems what he loves to be *lovely*, and what he ſo eſteems in another, he wiſhes to be poſſeſſed of himſelf, that ſo, becoming like unto him, he may appear as lovely in the Eyes of his beloved, as his beloved is in his. And, in like Manner, if we love God, we muſt neceſſarily eſteem him exceeding lovely and endearing, and, under this Eſteem, muſt be naturally led to reſemble him in all thoſe amiable Things, that ſo much endear him to us. Did we love him indeed for his *Eternity*, or his *Power*, or his *Immenſity*, we might wiſh to be like him, but all in vain; becauſe, in theſe Perfections, we are not capable of imitating him: But the Beauties, for which we love him, are his *Goodneſs*, and *Wiſdom*, and *Righteouſneſs*, and *Mercy*, *&c.* all which are Matter of our Imitation, and may be tranſcribed into our Natures. So that, if we love God, we cannot but deſire to reſemble him in thoſe Things, for which we love him; and, theſe being all of an *imitable* Nature, our Deſire of reſembling him will provoke our beſt Endeavours to be *pure*, as he is *pure*; *juſt*, as he is *juſt*; and *merciful*, *as he is merciful.*

2. THE greateſt Ambition of Love is, to appear amiable in the Eyes of its beloved; and that it may do ſo, it ſtudiouſly avoids whatever may be diſpleaſing or diſtaſteful to it, and induſtriouſly endeavours to adorn itſelf with ſuch obliging Graces, that are apt to endear and recommend it. And ſo, if we love God, we cannot but deſire to appear lovely to him, and that Deſire, if it be ſincere, muſt neceſſarily engage us to acquire whatever is pleaſing, and to avoid whatever is hateful in his Sight. Now Virtue and true Goodneſs are the only Beauties, that endear us to God; as, on the contrary, Sin and Wickedneſs are the only Deformities, for which he deteſts us: And therefore, as we would approve our Love to God, we muſt flee from Sin, and from *every Appearance of Evil*, leſt they turn away his Eyes from us; and, to conciliate his good Graces, [u] *give all Diligence to add to our Faith, Virtue; and to Virtue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Godlineſs; and to Godlineſs, Brotherly-Kindneſs, &c. for if theſe Things be in us, and abound*, they will make us acceptable to God, as being *Partakers of the Divine Nature.*

3. AGAIN:

[s] Our ingenious Mr *Norris* is not content with a *Supremacy* of Love given to God, and a *Subordination* to his Creatures, but with great Earneſtneſs contends, that God *only* is to be loved, and that other Creatures are not to be loved at all: And the Method of his arguing is,——That the Senſation we feel, upon the Approach of any outward Object, is not in our Bodies, but in our Souls and Spirits; that this Senſation is not cauſed by any *natural* Efficacy in the Object itſelf, but by the pure Agency of God, impreſſing it; "that God, and only God (for theſe "are his Words) acts in us, and is the true and proper Cauſe of all our Senſations, of all that Pain and Pleaſure we "feel by the Mediation of the corporeal and ſenſible World; that it is not the Sun, for Inſtance, that enlightens "us, but God by the Sun; not the Fire, that gives us Heat, but God by the Fire; neither is it the moſt delicate "Fruit, or the richeſt Perfume, that delights either our Taſte or our Smell, but it is God alone, that raiſes Pleaſure "in us by the Occaſion of theſe Bodies." This is the Poſition, which he proves at large, and from hence he argues in this Manner: "If God be the only true Cauſe that acts upon our Spirits, and produces our Pleaſure, then he "only does us good, he only perfects our Being, and makes us happy; and if he only does us good, he only is our "Good; and if he only is our Good, then he only is lovely, or the proper Object of our Love; and if he only is "lovely, then it is plain, that we ought to love none but him, and him intirely." Or to argue backwards,—— "We are to love nothing, but what is lovely; nothing is lovely, but what is good; nothing is good, but what does "us good; nothing does us good but what cauſes Pleaſure in us; nothing cauſes Pleaſure in us but God; therefore "we are to love nothing but God." I ſay, *nothing but God*, for he only is the Author of all our Pleaſure, and in him we not only *live, move, and have our Being*, but have alſo all the Joy and Comfort of our Being. Whatever Degree of good we have received, we have received it from him; whatever we enjoy, we enjoy it in him; and whatever we expect, we expect it from him; *with whom is the Well of Life*, (Pſal. xxxvi. 9.) and in *whoſe Sight* we hope to *ſee Light*; nc. therefore we are to love none but him, and him with the *whole Heart, Soul, and Mind*, with the full Weight of our Deſires, with the whole Activity of our Love. *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. III. That the Saints and Angels in Heaven, who have their Service accompanied with the Viſion of God, love God in this Manner, cannot be queſtioned; but I very much doubt, whether, in this ſublime Senſe, the Precept was either intended, or can indeed be practiſed, in our preſent State, where natural Appetites are ſo ſtrong, and the Relations, wherein we ſtand toward one another, ſo many.

[t] *Scott*'s Works, Vol. II. [u] 2 Pet. i. 5, 6.

3. AGAIN: Nothing is more uneaſy, than the Mind of a Lover, when ſeparated from the Object of his Affections. His Thoughts, his Dreams, his Wiſhes, and Deſires run continually upon it; nor can he recover his Eaſe and Tranquillity, till he is happily reſtored to his former Enjoyment. And, in like Manner, † when God, for the Trial of our Faith or Patience, *hides his Face from us* for a Seaſon, either not affording us that ready Aid in Diſtreſs, or Comfort in our Obedience, or Pleaſure in our Devotion, which we formerly experienced; if Love reſide in our Hearts, it will ſurely diſpoſe them to ſenſible Grief, and inſpire them with ſuch ardent Petitions as theſe; [x] *Hide not thy Face from thy Servant; for I am in Trouble: Turn unto me, according to the Multitude of thy Mercies, and draw nigh unto my Soul, and ſave it.* But eſpecially, when [y] *our Iniquities*, as the Prophet expreſſes it, *have ſeparated between our God and us, and our Sins have hid his Face from us*; when that thick Cloud hath *eclipſed* the Light of his Countenance, and intercepted his gracious Influences; then if any Love be alive in our Breaſts, it will prompt us, with the good Men of old, in their penitential Agonies, ſorely to bewail our wretched Condition. There will be [z] *no Soundneſs in our Fleſh*, nor *Reſt in our Bones*; [a] *our Spirit will be overwhelmed within us, and our Heart within us deſolate*, till, by an humble Deprecation, we have regained ſome Glimpſe of God's Favour, and are in Hopes of being re-inſtated in our Poſſeſſion of him.

4. ONCE more. Love we know is a bold and vigorous Paſſion: It makes weak Things ſtrong, and warms and animates the Heart with ſuch a generous Fire, as diſdains all Oppoſition, and out-braves the greateſt Dangers and Difficulties. If therefore we love God *ſincerely*, our Love will quicken our Endeavours to ſerve him, and carry us, with ſuch a Spirit and Alacrity, through all the weary Stages of our Duty, that it will be our Joy and Recreation to do his Will. The more Difficulties we meet in our Way, the more will they whet our Activity, as being proper Opportunities to manifeſt the Sincerity of our Love, and thereby to recommend our Services to our Beloved. And in this Senſe I conceive theſe Words of St *John*, [b] *herein is our Love made perfect*, *i. e.* this will try the Perfection of our Love to God, namely, *that we may have Boldneſs in the Day of Judgment*, *i. e.* [c] that, in the Time of Danger, when we are brought before Rulers and Judges, and are in Peril of loſing our Lives for the Cauſe of *Chriſt*, we then manfully confeſs him, and ſeal the Truth of our Teſtimony with the Price of our Blood.

Falſe Meaſures herein.

THESE are the *genuine* Signs and Properties of the Love of God in our Hearts: And from hence we may obſerve the great Miſtake, that ſeveral Perſons may lie under, in their Computation of this Matter; ſuch, I mean, as meaſure their Affection to God by the mere Impreſſion of *ſenſitive* Paſſion; who, becauſe, upon ſome affecting *Repreſentations* of his amiable Perfections, they feel in themſelves the ſame Emotions they were wont to do, when they fall in Love with other Things, do inſtantly conclude, that they are infinitely in Love with God: Whereas all this is, many Times, nothing elſe, but the Effect of an *amorous* Complexion, tinctured and inflamed with religious Ideas, which is the moſt diſtant Thing imaginable from the Virtue of Divine Love. [d] For, as there are ſincerely good Men, that cannot raiſe their *ſenſitive* Paſſions in their religious Offices; that are heartily ſorry for their Sins, and yet cannot weep for them; and do entirely love God, and delight in his Service, and yet cannot move their Blood and Spirits into the raviſhing Tranſports of Love and Joy; ſo are there many groſs Hypocrites, that have not the leaſt Tincture of true Piety, who yet, in their religious Exerciſes, can put themſelves into wonderful *Extaſies* of bodily Paſſion; can pour out their Confeſſions in Floods of Tears, and make their Hearts dilate into Raptures of Love and Joy: And yet, all the while, this is no more than the different Temper of Mens Bodies, which in ſome is calm and ſedate, and not eaſily to be diſturbed; in others is ſoft and tender, and ſo very ſuſceptible of Impreſſion, that any frivolous Fancy can raiſe a Commotion in them. Unleſs therefore we are minded to deceive ourſelves in this important Affair, we muſt not truſt to ſuch fallacious Evidences as theſe, but try our Love of God by his own Touchſtone, *viz.* by our Obedience to his heavenly Will; for ſo himſelf hath inſtructed us, [e] *ye are my Friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you*; for [f] *he that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is, that loveth me.*

How

† *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. I. [x] Pſal. lxix. 17, *&c.* [y] Iſa. lix. 2. [z] Pſal. xxxviii. 3. [a] Ibid. cxlii. 3, 4. [b] 1 John iv. 17. [c] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [d] *Scott*'s Works, Vol. II. [e] John xv. 14. [f] Ibid. xiv. 21.

How then ſhall we raiſe in our Minds this Affection, and by what Means ſhall we improve and cultivate the Love of God in our Hearts? The Apoſtle has directed us to the proper Method; *love not the World, neither the Things which are in the World*; for, *if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* [z] We muſt therefore call home our roving Appetites, which run gadding abroad after worldly Objects, fondly purſuing every Shadow and Phantom of Pleaſure, that they meet with: This Love of ours, I ſay, which runs out into ſo many little Streams, and is diſperſed among ſo many Objects in the viſible World, we muſt *collect* together, and caſt into one great *Channel*, and let it flow in one great Tide towards God. And indeed, [a] how can we reflect upon the Beauties of his Nature, his Goodneſs, and Juſtice, and Mercy, *&c.* without being charmed and captivated with the Love of them? How can we think of the ſtupendous Love, which he hath expreſſed towards us, in giving us our Being, and all the Bleſſings we enjoy, in preparing an Heaven of immortal Joys for us, and ſending his Son from thence, to conduct us thither, without being all inflamed with Love to him? Our Buſineſs therefore muſt be, to ſet ourſelves ſeriouſly to the Contemplation of God, of the Lovelineſs of his Nature, and of his infinite Kindneſs to us, and to all his Creation; to be conſtant and diligent in Prayer and Supplication, in praiſing him, and celebrating the Memory of his Mercies, in conſulting the Scriptures, hearing the World, and attending to all other religious Offices and Employments; for in theſe the God of Heaven communicates himſelf, and by theſe Divine Love is infuſed into the Soul.

Means to attain it.

2. *Of Delight in* GOD.

TO delight [b] in God, is to poſſeſs our Minds with ſuch a proper Senſe of his *Goodneſs*, as may produce an habitual Comfort and Pleaſure in the Contemplation of him; as may excite us to Diligence and Alacrity in his Worſhip and Service; to approach his Altars with Joy and Thankſgiving; to hear his Word with Reverence and Attention; to converſe with him *here* in Meditation and Prayer; and to long to enjoy what his *beatific* Preſence imparts *hereafter*. This is the Duty. And our Buſineſs muſt be, 1. To point out the *Reaſonableneſs* and *Expediency* of it; and then, 2. To obſerve by what *Means* we may be enabled to perform it.

To delight in God, what.

I. Now all the delectable Things in Nature, which we either know or can imagine, are but of three Kinds, *Natural*, *Moral*, and *Heavenly*. In the firſt conſiſt the Pleaſures of the World; in the ſecond the Pleaſures of the *Godly*; and in the third the Pleaſures of the *Bleſſed*: And, to evince the Reaſonableneſs of our delighting in God, we ſhall ſeparately obſerve how each of theſe remits us to God, as an Object much more deſerving of our Affections and Complacency.

The Reaſonableneſs of it.

1. WONDERFUL is the Variety of the Things in Nature, that are accommodated to our Liking, and their Power of pleaſing us is but too manifeſt from the ſtrange Aſcendant they have over our Affections: And yet all theſe Things do naturally remit us to ſomething better, and more ſatisfying, as we muſt needs acknowledge, whenever we reflect on their *tranſient* and empty Nature, and how, by Reaſon either of their *offenſive* Mixtures, or *neceſſary* Decay, they leave our Souls lean, and pining in the very Midſt of their Enjoyments. This is the Thing, which, to confirm our Experience, God himſelf has been pleaſed to ſignify to us, when he complains of his People, that [k] *they had forſaken him, the Fountain of living Water*, and *had hewed to themſelves Ciſterns, broken Ciſterns, that could hold no Water*: For, by comparing himſelf to *a Fountain of living Water*, he plainly intimates, that he is the *Source* of ſolid Refreſhment, of ſincere and laſting Delectation, ſuch as is adequate to the Deſires of our Soul; and by comparing all worldly Enjoyments to *broken Ciſterns*, that can *hold no Water*, he likewiſe intimates, how vain and imperfect, how tranſient and uncertain they are, how they delude our Hopes, and fly from our Embraces in the very Time of Fruition.

From the Conſideration of Natural,

[z] *Newcombe's* Sermons. [a] *Stillingfleet's* Sermons. [b] *Young's* Sermons, Vol. I. 3
[k] Jer. ii. 13.

NOR are they only deceitful in their Uſe, but very unſatisfying in their Nature: They ſerve us only, when we have leaſt Need of them, not in the Bitterneſs of Affliction, not in the Deſtitutions of the Soul; whereas a ſpiritual Commerce with God, which creates a ſure Confidence in him, is a ſteady Enjoyment, which no Accident can impair, *which, in the Multitude of Sorrows, will refreſh us with Comforts*, and, as holy *Job* expreſſes it, [m] *give us Songs in the Night*, i. e. give us Conſolation in the Night of Affliction, and in the Gloomineſs of human Deſpair. Complain therefore we may of the Vanity and Emptineſs of all worldly Joys; but, at the ſame Time, we ought to remember what the Prophet tells us, *viz.* that *it is from the Lord that they are ſo*, viz. that he has purpoſely deſigned, that the good Things of this Life ſhould not be *ſatisfying*, nor able to anſwer that earneſt Deſire of Happineſs, which he hath made con-natural to the Soul of Man, with an Intent to teach us, that he intended to fill up the Meaſure of our Deſires, and to be himſelf the *Delight*, we ſo much long for.

Moral, 2. MORAL Delight is that, which ſprings from the Conſcience of Well-doing, [n] of which, though the Wicked are not utterly inſenſible, (becauſe it is often felt to ariſe from any ſingle and *caſual* Act of Virtue) yet are its Refreſhments, in a peculiar Manner, the Portion of the *Regenerate*. When the Principles of Goodneſs come once to be fixed in a Man, and his Virtue is grown conſtant and uniform, it is then, that this never fails to ſupply him with a ſtable Serenity and Satisfaction of Mind, not to be equalled by all the Joys of Senſuality. Now, if Conſcience may be thus delighted in, there is abundant Reaſon why God, who is the great Rewarder of Conſcience, ſhould have a much larger Share of our Joy and Complacency; eſpecially conſidering, that the Delight, which ariſes from a Conſcience of Well-doing, is nothing elſe, but a boading Inſtinct, that there will be a future Reward.

A MESSENGER, for Inſtance, is ſent to acquaint a Subject, that for his Loyalty, and other good Services done the Government, his Prince is reſolved to promote him to Honour, to make him Governor of ſuch a Province, or Ruler of ſuch a City: The Meſſenger, in ſuch a Caſe, may be received with Expreſſions of Joy and kind Entertainment; but certainly the Subject forgets his Duty, if he transfers all his Acknowledgments upon the Meſſenger, and overlooks the Beneficence of his Prince. Juſt ſo ſtands the Caſe between God and our Conſciences. Our Conſciences are our Remembrancers of a future Reward, which, upon the Diſcharge of any Duty faithfully, pleaſantly whiſper within, *thus, and thus ſhall God reward thee for it*; and with this welcome Meſſage we may well be allowed to ſolace and delight ourſelves; but certainly we forget our Duty, if we ſuffer our Minds to be ſo wholly taken up with it, as not to look up to the Fountain from whence it comes. In a Word, he that attends to the Operations of his own Mind, may eaſily perceive, that there is ſo neceſſary a Relation between God and our Conſciences, that, whenever we conceive any Pleaſure from the Remembrance of any good Action, that pleaſurable Movement of our Conſcience is a natural Call to us to delight in God, who is the ſole Foundation, and Hope, and Rewarder of it.

and Heavenly *Delights.* 3. THE ſame Leſſon we may likewiſe learn from the laſt Kind of delectable Things, I mean, thoſe of Heaven; which though it be a State ſo pleaſant and tranſcendently happy, that the Apoſtle tells us, the very Expectation of it is ſufficient to work in us [o] *a Rejoicing with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*; yet we are to remember, that the Root and Foundation of all the eternal *Beatitudes*, that are there, is God: That it is not, in ſhort, the Place *Heaven*, but rather the *God of Heaven*, that is the Reward of his Saints, procuring them endleſs Felicity from the Light of his Countenance upon them, and the Influence and Emanations of his Bounty towards them. And hence it is, that the Royal Pſalmiſt declares to God, [p] *thou art my Hope and my Portion, in the Land of the Living*. By *the Land of the Living* he means Heaven, (for Earth is no more than the Land of the Dying) and yet he does not look upon that *Land*, but merely upon *God in that Land*, as his Hope, and his Portion: To which Purpoſe we find the Apoſtle St *Paul*, [q] in ſpeaking of the State of God's eternal Kingdom, clearing and determining the Matter in two Words, when he tells us, that, in that State, *God ſhall be all in all*, every Thing to every Saint;

[m] Job xxxv. 10. [n] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [o] 1 Pet. i. 8. [p] Pſal. cxlii. 5. [q] 1 Cor. xv. 28.

Saint; for all that they can wiſh, all that they can conceive, he will be to every one of them; will anſwer all their Deſires, provide for all their Wants, and fill up the immenſe Capacities of Enjoyment, which he hath ſeated in every one's Soul. Since God then, of all the Kinds of *delectable* Things, that we can experience, either here or hereafter, is the only proper Object of our Joy, there is no Doubt to be made, but that, in Point of Duty and Intereſt both, we ought to place the chief of our Comfort and Complacency in him; conſidering withal, that this will be a Means both to make us truly *religious* here, and eternally *happy* hereafter.

The Expediency of it.

IT is, without all Controverſy, true, that there is no Principle in human Nature, that will ſo powerfully engage us in the Service of God, and ſo effectually recommend our Performances to him, as that of *Love*, which *tunes* our Wills into an Harmony with his, and makes our Reſpect to his Commandments become *univerſal*. [1] Now, between Love and Delight there is ſo great an *Affinity*, that we can hardly diſtinguiſh them: What we love, we always delight in; and what we delight in, we always love; and if we diſtinguiſh them as nicely as we can, the Difference is only this:——Love is the Deſire of our Object, and Delight is the Complacency, that accompanies Deſire; ſo that Delight preſuppoſes, and implies in it Love. Upon which it follows, that if we delight in our Maſter, we muſt neceſſarily love him; and if we love him, we ſhall certainly keep his Commandments. The Man that addicts himſelf to his Luſts, makes them his Maſter; and tho' their Service be hard, and their Wages mean, yet nevertheleſs he ſtiles them *Pleaſures*, and ſwallows them greedily down under that *gilded* Name. He watches and labours, he waits and ſollicits, he begs, and bears, and denies himſelf, and all with Content. Now, would we but tranſer our Affections to God, and learn to love and delight in him thus ſincerely, the very ſame Thing would happen to us; his Service we ſhould account our Pleaſure, and the moſt rigid Duties of it willingly ſubmit to, as happy Occaſions, not only to ſignalize our Love here; but,

2. To ſecure our Title to the Glories and Felicities of our celeſtial Inheritance hereafter. The chief Enjoyments of Heaven, as we ſaid before, conſiſt not ſo much in the Pleaſures of the Place, as in our *partaking of the Divine Perfections*, and *ſeeing God Face to Face*. And, therefore, if we do not accuſtom ourſelves to delight in God while we abide in this World, we can never be capable of enjoying Heaven, which, in Effect, is nothing elſe but God himſelf. For, be the Place never ſo beautiful and raviſhing, yet that it can afford no ſuch Satisfaction, without the Enjoyment of God, 'tis plain from that Paſſage of *Job*, where *Satan* is ſaid to have [2] *preſented himſelf among the Sons of God*, *i. e.* to have been in Heaven, and mixed himſelf with the Bleſſed there; and yet, it is certain, he was never the happier for all this; but, being deprived of the Light of God's Countenance, and taking no Pleaſure in the *beatific Viſion*, he, even in Heaven, carried his *Hell* about him: So impoſſible it is to enjoy Heaven, without ſome Complacency in God. But, now, when, by long Cuſtom and Uſage, we have brought our Minds to this happy Temper, to be habitually well pleaſed and delighted with God, ſo as to rejoice in his Happineſs, and acquieſce in his Will, and meditate on his Beauty and Goodneſs, with unfeigned Complacency of Soul, we are then in the ſame State (*i. e.* in Kind, tho' not in Degree) with the bleſſed Saints above, and, when we are called home to their Habitations, ſhall carry along with us Minds ready fitted and diſpoſed for their Enjoyments.

Means of doing it.

IF ever, therefore, we deſire to partake of the Beatitudes of Heaven, and to live eternally in the View of that moſt lovely and moſt happy Object, which is the conſtant Feaſt and Entertainment of glorified Souls; this we muſt ſet ourſelves to do:——We muſt contemplate him with the Eyes of our Faith, approach him in our Prayers, taſte him in his Ordinances, and feel him in the Comforts of Well-doing. We muſt ſettle in our Minds a ſtrict Conformity to his Laws, a generous Diſdain of earthly Things, a noble Confidence in Divine Providence, and a ſtedfaſt and aſſured Hope of an *eternal* and *never-fading Crown of Glory*; for theſe are the proper Means to poſſeſs our Souls with a ſteady Delight and Complacency in God, our only *Principle* of living well, and of living for ever. We cannot, however, but take Notice, that ſince God, in his own Nature, is ſo amiable, in his Perfections ſo tranſcendent, in his Laws ſo equitable, in his Diſpenſations ſo gracious, and, in every Reſpect, ſo encircled with Charms, and inveſted with Endearments, there muſt be ſome intervening

[1] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

[2] Job ii. 1.

vening Hinderances, or otherwiſe, no Man, of any tolerable Senſe and Ingenuity, could forbear *delighting* in him. What, therefore, we think proper to do, on this Head, is to inſtance in ſome of the chief *Impediments* of this Kind, at well as the *Means*, that may be of Uſe to remove them.

Ingredients to it.

1. Inconſideration.

1. WHAT I reckon, then, the firſt Hinderance to this Duty, is *Inconſideration*; for in this State a Man *will not* delight in God: And, to this Purpoſe, we find him complaining, in that noted Place of the Prophet, [t] *The Ox knoweth his Owner, i. e.* loveth and takes pleaſure in its Owner, and *the Aſs his Maſter's Crib, but* Iſrael *will not know me, Iſrael* will not love and take pleaſure in me; and the Reaſon of all follows, *My People will not conſider*. This is the Cauſe, and where the Cauſe is, the *Effect* is neceſſary; for tho' *Amiableneſs* is properly the *Parent*, yet *Thought* is both the *Midwife* and *Nurſe* of Deſire; and be the *Object* never ſo amiable and good, while we do not conſider it, it affects us no more, than if it were none at all. If ever therefore we intend to bring our Minds to take pleaſure in God, we muſt be careful to rouſe ourſelves from this ſpiritual *Stupor*, and every Day appoint certain Portions of our Time, to be expended in *Contemplation*, and other religious Exerciſes: I ſay, *appoint* and allot *certain Portions of our Time*; for without doing this, by the *ſpecious* Delays, which our deceitful Hearts are able to ſuggeſt, we may poſſibly be prevailed with to neglect them altogether.

2. Sin.

2. SIN and Senſuality is another Hinderance, that puts us at a greater Diſtance from delighting in God; for in this State *we cannot* do it: And the Reaſon is, becauſe, when once the Soul comes to ſerve under a Complacency of Things forbidden, it becomes groſs and fleſhly, and loſes its ſpiritual Taſte and Reliſh; the Wiſdom of God having contrived it ſo, that none ſhould be able to enjoy him, who preſume to ſet up his Creatures in *Competition* with him. That God therefore may reign in our Affections, and be the ſupreme Object of our Delight, it is neceſſary that we moderate our Appetites in the Enjoyment of ſuch Things, as are but too apt to engroſs them, and, above all, that we abſtain from Sin, and be conſtant in our Duty. For this will keep us in Friendſhip, and reconcile our Minds to God; and when we are reconciled, his Excellencies will command our Love and Admiration, which, when placed on him, will produce in us boundleſs Joy and Satisfaction.

3. Wrong Apprehenſions of God.

3. BUT there is a worſe Obſtruction ſtill to this Duty, and that is ſad and uncomfortable Apprehenſions of the Nature of God, for, in this Caſe, *we dare not* delight in him. To form Conceptions of God, not according to the Image of his Word, but according to Mens particular Tempers, has been a cuſtomary Thing in all Ages. The *Stoicks* were a rigid Sort of People, and accordingly, their Notion of God was, not that he governed himſelf by the Reaſon of Things, but by a *ſtern* and inexorable *Fate*. Whether the Doctrine of God's *abſolute Decrees* has deſcended from the ſame *Original*, we will not here diſpute; but to believe, that he has determined a great Part of Mankind to eternal Miſery, merely to ſhew the *Arbitrarineſs* of his Dominion, what a dark and cloudy Scene does this draw over the Face of the Almighty, and, when we conſider it, how muſt it damp our rejoicing in him, and every now and then ſtrike us with Affrightment; unleſs we could be ſure of our own *Exception*, which none, without a particular Revelation, can? If therefore we would delight in God, and take Pleaſure in the Contemplation of him, we muſt be careful to repreſent him fairly to our Minds, not according to our own ſullen Temper, but as he has repreſented himſelf in Scripture, in ſome ſuch Lineaments as theſe, *viz.* That he is a *bountiful* Benefactor to his Creation, and an *univerſal* Lover of Souls, who would have all Men be ſaved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth, and heartily contributes to their eternal Welfare; that he leaves no Art of Love, or Method of Kindneſs, unattempted to do us good; calls us back, when we have gone aſtray; upon our Return, graciouſly receives us; when he hath received us, fits us for Happineſs; when he hath fitted us, abundantly rewards us; and when he hath rewarded us, everlaſtingly triumphs in our Glory and Happineſs. Theſe are Thoughts truly worthy of God, and befitting the infinite Goodneſs of his Nature: They will kindle in our Hearts a true Love and Delight in him, and make us ſerve him, at all Times, with a chearful Heart and liberal Affections.

[t] Iſa. i. 3.

3. *Of*

3. *Of fearing* GOD.

TO fear God, [u] is to have ſuch a due Senſe of his Majeſty, and Holineſs, and Juſtice, and Goodneſs, as ſhall make us not dare to offend him; for each of theſe Attributes is proper to raiſe a ſuitable Fear in every conſidering Mind. His *Majeſty*, a Fear, leſt we affront it by being *irreverent*; his *Holineſs*, a Fear, leſt we offend it by being *carnal*; his *Juſtice*, a Fear, leſt we provoke it by being *preſumptuous*; and his *Goodneſs*, a Fear, leſt we forfeit it by being *unthankful*. Upon which it follows, that the Fear of God is, in a great Meaſure, the ſame reverential Affection, which a dutiful and loving Child pays to his Parents, ſuch as will make him very careful in his whole Behaviour, and reſtrain him from the Commiſſion of Sin, even though God had threatened no Puniſhment againſt it: And accordingly we ſhall, 1. Obſerve how reaſonable and beneficial this Duty is; and then, 2. Suggeſt an Argument or two to enforce it. *To fear God, what.*

1. IF we reflect upon the many Evils and Calamities, we are expoſed to in this Life, we muſt agree, that it is no ſmall Happineſs to us, to have the Paſſion of Fear implanted in our Nature. For, as in a Town, alarmed by an Enemy, a *Centinel* is ſet to watch their Approaches, and to prevent the Danger of a Surprize; ſo Fear in the Soul is appointed to this Office, to watch when and which Way all Evils come upon us, and to give us timely Warning of their coming, that either we may decline their Attack, or be provided to receive it. But the ſame God, who hath given us Fear, for a Caution againſt Evil in *general*, has, in the mean Time, given us Notice, that his Diſpleaſure is the greateſt of all Evils; and therefore, as we account it a Point of Wiſdom to be watchful againſt other Evils, ſo it is neceſſarily the higheſt Point of Wiſdom, to be watchful againſt this. *The Reaſonableneſs of it.*

* CONSIDERING indeed the infinite Diſtance between God and us, as he is our *Maker*, and we his *Creatures*; as he is our *Benefactor*, and we his *Dependants*; as he is our Supreme Lord, and we his Subjects; and as he infinitely excels us in all the Perfections of his Nature, we cannot but eſteem him the only proper Object of our Dread and awful Apprehenſions. For what are our ſhallow, and dark, and confuſed Conceptions to that Divine Wiſdom, by which he comprehends all the Differences of Times at one View, and has all the Reaſons and Poſſibilities of Things lying open and naked before him? What is all the Force of Mankind, though collected into one, in Compariſon of that Divine Power, which gave Being to the World, when it was not, and governs and orders all Things in it, with greater Eaſe, than we can move a Finger? If we attend to theſe, I ſay, and ſeveral other Properties of the Divine Nature, [x] *ſhall not his Excellency make us afraid, and his Dread fall upon us?* Eſpecially conſidering, that the beſt of Men have Sins, and Guilt enough, to make them apprehend the utmoſt Expreſſes of his Wrath: For, [y] *if he charges his Angels with Folly, and the Heavens are not clean in his Sight, how much more abominable and filthy is Man, which drinketh Iniquity like Water, i. e.* whoſe natural Propenſity to Evil is like that of the thirſty Traveller, to drink of every Brook that he meets in his Way? [z] *I have ſinned*, therefore ſays holy *Job*, in the Anguiſh and Bitterneſs of his Soul, *I have ſinned*, and *what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou Preſerver of Men? For thou writeſt bitter Things againſt me, and makeſt me poſſeſs the Iniquities of my Youth.*

AND indeed, when once God hath ſet himſelf to *write bitter Things* againſt us, Loſſes and Croſſes, Pains and Diſeaſes, are ſome of his leaſt Inflictions: He can *ſend Terrors into the Soul*, and, by letting looſe our Thoughts upon us, make us more miſerable, than all the *Tyrants* in the World can do by the moſt exquiſite Torments. [a] *The Arrows of the Almighty are within me*, ſays *Job*, in ſuch Circumſtances, *the Poiſon whereof drinketh up my Spirit; the Terrors of the Lord do ſet themſelves in Array againſt me:* And therefore he begs Compaſſion from his Friends, [b] *Have Pity upon me, have Pity upon me, O ye my Friends; for the Hand of the Lord hath touched me.* And indeed, conſidering how exceedingly heavy this Hand is, when once it is raiſed to give the Blow, that it cannot only [c] *kill the Body, but after it hath killed*

[u] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [*] *Stillingfleet*'s Sermons. [x] Job xiii. 11. [y] Ibid. iv. 18. and xv. 15, 16. [z] Ibid. vii. 20. and xiii. 26. [a] Ibid. vi. 4. [b] Ibid. xix. 21. [c] Luke xii. 4, 5.

the Body, has Power to caſt both Body and Soul *into Hell*, there to be *tormented Day and Night for ever and ever*, we cannot but break out into the Pſalmiſt's Acknowledgment, [d] *Thou, even thou, art to be feared; and who may ſtand in thy Sight, when once thou art angry?*

Inſtances of our fearing Man more than God.

BUT how much ſoever God deſerves to be feared, we cannot but obſerve, that nothing is more cuſtomary among us, than to have our Actions more influenced by the Fear of Man, than of God. [e] Thus, when we commit any Sin in ſecret, which we are afraid to commit openly; when we ſeek *Retirement* and Solitude, in order to cover our Guilt from the Cognizance of Men, we then ſhew, that the Fear of Man lays a greater Reſtraint upon us, than the Fear of God; becauſe we dare not venture to do that in the Preſence of our Fellow-Creatures, which we preſume to do in the Sight of our great Creator. Again, when we affect to appear to the World *religious* and virtuous, but, inſtead of taking Care to be what we appear, put on the *Sheep's Cloathing* only to hide the Wolf, or the Fox, or the Goat, that lurks within, we then ſhew, that the Fear of Man has greater Efficacy upon us, than the Fear of God; ſince the one is ſtrong enough to make us *Hypocrites*, but the other has not Power to make us inwardly and ſincerely good. Again, when we are aſhamed of owning the Principles of our Religion, though we really do believe them, and, for fear of incurring the Cenſure of Preciſeneſs and Singularity, affect to appear worſe than we really are, we then likewiſe ſhew, that the Fear of Men awes us more, than the Fear of God; ſince the former cauſes us to ſmother that open Profeſſion, which the latter requires, but cannot prevail with us to make. Again, when we fall in with the unwarrantable Cuſtoms of the World, and comply with the *modiſh* Follies and Vices of the Age, or Place, wherein we live, purely for fear of being thought *unfaſhionable*, or ill-bred; this undue Compliance is another Proof of our fearing Men more than God; ſince [f] *our Conformity to the World* is the Effect of the one, whilſt the other has not Efficacy enough to make us be *transformed, by the renewing of our Mind*, to do *what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect Will of God*. Once more; [g] *when Tribulation or Perſecution ariſeth becauſe of the Word*, and, *by and by*, many are offended; when Men abjure their Religion to ſave their Fortunes, or their Lives, and, to avoid a preſent Trouble, run headlong into ſuch pernicious Practices, as will render them obnoxious to everlaſting Perdition, it is undeniable, that, in this Inſtance, they are under greater Apprehenſions from Man than God; ſince bodily Death, which is the utmoſt that Men can threaten, ſeems ſo formidable, that, to eſcape it, they run the Riſque of that eternal Death, which ſhall be the final Lot of thoſe, [h] *who, denying Chriſt before Men, ſhall be denied by him, before his Father, which is in Heaven.*

Why it is ſo.

As evident therefore as it is, that Men commit thoſe Sins in ſecret, which they dare not commit openly, and take more Care *to appear*, than really *to be* devout; that, in a looſe and licentious Age, they chuſe rather to break the Laws of God, than to be out of Faſhion, and to diſown themſelves under the Influence of Religion, than incur the Imputation of Singularity; that, in Times of Perſecution, they fall away from the Truth, and *make Shipwreck of their Faith*, when Storms ariſe; ſo evident it is, that, in the Conduct of their Lives, they are more ſwayed by the Fear of Man, than they are by the Fear of God. But now what Reaſon can be given for this unreaſonable and extravagant Conduct? The beſt that can be given, is but a bad one; but the beſt, as I take it, is this,——That we generally look upon Men, as implacable in their Reſentments, but God, as gracious, and merciful, and apt to forgive. " [i] Should we therefore offend Men by a ſtiff and unſeaſonable " Virtue, we might incur the Effects of their Diſpleaſure, and ſhould they once be " angry with us, we might not be able, with all our Care, to recover their good " Graces; or ſhould an ill Opinion be formed, or an ill Character once ſpread " abroad of us, it might, perhaps, be out of our Power to regain a good one: The " Danger therefore of offending Men being ſo great, and the Miſchief of it ſo irre- " trievable, we cannot be too careful to avoid it. But, on the other Hand, if we " ſhould, by any ſinful Compliance, offend God, beſides that the Puniſhment is " at a greater Diſtance, we have ſufficient Grounds to believe, that we can prevent " it by Repentance: For [k] *he will not deal with us after our Sins*, if we re- " nounce them, *nor reward us according to our Iniquities*, if we are reclaimed from " them;

[d] Pſal. lxxvi. 7. [e] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [f] Rom. xii. 2. [g] Matth. xiii. 21
[h] Ibid. x. 33. [i] *Smalridge*, ibid. [k] Pſal. ciii. 10.

" them; [l] *as the Heaven is high above the Earth, ſo great is his Mercy* above the " Mercy of Men: *As far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far*, upon our Repent- " ance, *will he remove our Tranſgreſſions from us:*" And therefore, ſince God is ſo ſlow to Anger, and ſo ready to forgive; ſince Men are ſo eaſy to be offended, and ſo difficult to be intreated, this exceeding Mercy of God, which [m] the Pſalmiſt thought a good Ground for his being *feared*, is often the Reaſon why Man is more dreaded than God.

The Folly and Sinfulneſs hereof.

THE Prophet, however, has, in a very lively Manner, both confuted and expoſed this wicked and unreaſonable Conduct; [n] *Who art thou, that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of Man, that ſhall die, and of the Son of Man, which ſhall be made as Graſs, and forgetteſt the Lord thy Maker, that hath ſtretched forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundations of the Earth? Who art thou?* If thou be a rational Creature, as God deſigned thee, think if there be any Manner of Equality between the two Objects, between him, that created the whole Univerſe out of nothing, and him, *whoſe Breath is in his Noſtrils*, and that Breath no longer there, than his Creator is pleaſed to lend it; and if thou art aſhamed of the Compariſon, then [o] *fear not* the ſtrongeſt *Confederacy* of Men, as the ſame Prophet excellently exhorts, *nor be afraid; but ſanctify the Lord of Hoſts himſelf, and let him be thy Fear, and let him be thy Dread.*

The Benefits *of fearing God.*

THE Obſervation, which *Solomon* has made, is a very true one, that [p] *the Fear of Man bringeth a Snare*, expoſes us to Temptations, and makes us liable to be ſeduced from our Duty; *but whoſo putteth his Truſt in the Lord, ſhall be ſafe.* For, how ſhocking muſt the Frowns and Menaces of great Men be to ſuch, as are deſtitute of this *Armour of Proof*, [q] which fortifies the Mind, and works it to a Firmneſs, like that of the three *Iſraelites* in *Babylon*, who, when the Queſtion was put, whether they would worſhip the Image, or be caſt into the Furnace, replied, with all Compoſedneſs, [r] *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to anſwer thee about this Matter*; i. e. in an Inſtant we can reſolve what we are to do in this Caſe, becauſe we were reſolved, long ago, to ſuffer any Thing, rather than God's Diſpleaſure? How galling muſt the Fears, about the Things of this Life, be to one, who carries no Eye to the Bleſſings of another? How muſt every croſs Accident grieve him, and every ſlight Affliction wound him to the Heart? But he, that fears God, has a Preſervative againſt every Thing of this Kind: Before they come, he fears them not, becauſe he is ſecure of the good Providence of God on his Side; and when they are come, he has wherewithal to break their Blow, becauſe he has Aſſurance of Recompence, at leaſt, if not of Relief. But, above all, how amazing muſt the Fear of Death be to him that fears not God? Death! that, like a dark Paſſage to a comfortleſs Priſon, puts an End to all that he would have, and a Beginning to all that he would not. What Agonies of Dread and Horror muſt every Reflection upon this inject into his guilty Soul? But he that lives under the Senſe and Fear of God, has prepared his Mind, beforehand, to meet the Prince of Terrors, and, ſeeing *it is appointed for all Men once to die*, pays this laſt Debt of Nature with Chearfulneſs, and leaves the Stage of Life, as one that is aſſured of his Paſſage to a bleſſed Eternity.

WELL therefore might holy *Job* ſay, that *the Fear of the Lord, that is Wiſdom*; ſince it not only makes us eaſy, by curing our other Fears, while we are here, but happy likewiſe, by ſecuring our chief Concern and Intereſt hereafter. " This then " is Wiſdom, not in Semblance, but in Deed; not Parcel-Wiſdom, but Wiſdom " entire; not Wiſdom for the bye, but Wiſdom for the main; not Wiſdom for a " Day, but Wiſdom for ever." All our other Attainments will avail us nothing. Our Knowledge of Arts and Sciences, of Laws and Policies, of Trade and Buſineſs, will never make us *wiſe*, till ſuch a Time as the Fear of God preſides over what we know, and directs it to the Purpoſes of an holy Life. And therefore we may well be allowed to enquire, *where is the Place of this Wiſdom?* And by what Means ſhall we poſſeſs our Souls with this beneficial Paſſion?

The Means of attaining it.

1. THE Royal Pſalmiſt has told us his own Practice, and therein given us a very wholeſome Admonition; [s] *I have ſet the Lord always before me*, had a continual Senſe of his Preſence with, and Inſpection over me, and therefore, [t] *when I conſider,*

[l] Pſal. ciii. 11, 12. [m] Ibid. cxxxiv. [n] Iſa. li. 12, 13. [o] Ibid. viii. 12, 13.
[p] Prov. xxix. 25. [q] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [r] Dan. iii. 16. [s] Pſal. xvi. 8.
[t] Job xxiii. 15.

ſider, I am afraid of him. And, indeed, [u] if the Conſideration of never ſo mean a Perſon's being preſent with us, is ſometimes ſufficient to reſtrain us from a ſinful or indecent Action, how much more careful ought we to be of our Behaviour, before that Holy and Divine Majeſty, who fills Heaven and Earth, and whoſe Notice nothing can eſcape? Do we then really conſider what it is, to have an eternal God a conſtant Witneſs and Obſerver of all our Actions, and even of all our Thoughts and Intentions; that he keeps a perfect Regiſter of them, and enters them down into *Books*, which, we are told, will be opened at the great Day of Accounts, and out of which we muſt be judged? If we do conſider theſe Things, I ſay, and yet are not thereby reſtrained from ſinning; there is but one Argument more, that can be ſuppoſed to work upon our Fears; and that is,

2. THE Conſideration of God's Juſtice and Severity againſt Sin: For [x] *if God ſpared not the Angels* that ſinned, as St *Peter* argues, *but caſt them down to Hell; and ſpared not the old World, but brought in the Flood upon the Ungodly; turning the Cities of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *into Aſhes, and making them an Example to thoſe, that after ſhould live wickedly:* Nay, what is more, if God ſpared not his own Son, when, having no Sin of his own, he undertook only to be the *Proxy* and Repreſentative of Sinners, how much more will he not ſpare them, whoſe Impieties have provoked his Wrath, and *whoſe Damnation*, upon that Account, *ſlumbereth not?* Knowing then *the Terrors of the Lord, our Fleſh* may well *tremble becauſe of him*, and Reaſon good we have to *be afraid of his Judgments*; that Judgment eſpecially, which will end in an Eternity of Happineſs or Miſery, and therefore calls upon us daily *to work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling.*

4. *Of truſting in* GOD.

To truſt in God, what.

TO truſt in God, is to affect our Minds with ſuch a due Senſe of his Wiſdom, and Power, and Goodneſs, and Faithfulneſs, as may engage us to commit all our Concerns to his Providence, to depend upon his Help and Protection in all the Difficulties and Dangers, and upon his Care and Proviſion for us, in all the Wants and Neceſſities, that can befal us: For each of theſe Divine Attributes do point out the Duty of our Reliance upon God. [y] His *Wiſdom* teaches us, that he has all proper Knowledge of our Condition, and is therefore duly qualified to take the Adminiſtration of our Affairs into his Hands; his *Power*, that he wanteth not Ability to deliver us from the Calamities, under which we labour, and to beſtow upon us the Benefits, that we want; his *Goodneſs*, that he wanteth not Diſpoſition to accompliſh his gracious Purpoſes towards us, and, whenever it is fit and expedient for us, readily to grant what we requeſt; and his *Faithfulneſs*, that, having promiſed to be our Patron and Protector, he cannot *deny himſelf*, nor *alter the Thing that is gone out of his Mouth.* Upon theſe Foundations is our Reliance upon God eſtabliſhed; and our Purpoſe muſt be, 1. To enquire by what Reaſons and Inducements we are encouraged to it; and, 2. By what Means and Conſiderations we may promote it.

The Reaſonableneſs thereof.

I. ONE great Requiſite in any *Friend* or *Patron*, from whom we may have Expectance of Protection or Relief, is, that he be acquainted with the Nature of our Circumſtances, otherwiſe, be his Inclination never ſo much in our Favour, we may be undone, before his Helping-hand is ſtretched out to us. But now, in God, [z] *whoſe Underſtanding is infinite*, and whoſe Eye every Moment has the whole Creation under his View, there can be no Riſque of this Kind. For, be our Condition what it will; if *inward Grief and Uneaſineſs*, our moſt ſecret Thoughts and moſt inward Groanings are not hid from him; if *bodily Pain or Sickneſs*, he underſtands the beſt Means of Help, and the propereſt Seaſons of applying them; if *Poverty or Want*, he knows where all the Riches of the World are ſtored, and can [a] *fill*, when he pleaſes, *our Belly with hid Treaſures*; or, laſtly, if *Danger or Diſtreſs*, he is infinitely Wiſe, to contrive ſuch Ways of Safety and Deliverance, as will ſurmount all thoſe Difficulties and Perplexities, which would put human Wiſdom to a Loſs. So that, upon the Conſideration of this one Attribute, we may take up the Words of the Pſalmiſt,

1. From the Divine Attributes.

[u] *Fiddes's* Sermons. [x] 2 Pet. ii. 4, &c. [y] *Wilkins*, on Natural Religion. [z] Pſal. cxlvii. 5. [a] Ibid. xvii. 14.

Pſalmiſt, and ſay, [b] *God is our Hope and Strength, a very preſent Help in Time of Trouble. God is in the Midſt of us, therefore ſhall we not be removed; God ſhall help us, and that right early; for the Lord of Hoſts is with us, the God of Jacob is our Refuge.*

2. BUT it is not enough that our Friend be acquainted with our Condition, unleſs he has *Power* likewiſe to remove the Evil, we complain of, and to procure us the Good, we want: And therefore we may obſerve, [c] that there is nothing, which either Nature has made, or Art has contrived in ſuch a Manner, as may beſt ſerve for our Defence, from which the *Pſalmiſt* does not borrow *Alluſions*, in order to excite in us a lively Senſe of the mighty Power of God to defend his Servants in the needful Time of Trouble; [d] *The Lord is my Rock, and my Fortreſs, and my Deliverer, my God, my Strength, in whom I will truſt; my Buckler, the Horn alſo of my Salvation, and my high Tower:* And to ſhew his great Care and Proviſion for our Wants, [e] *the Lord*, ſays he, *delivereth the Souls of his Servants, and all they, that put their Truſt in him, ſhall not be deſtitute.* Thoſe indeed, that throw themſelves out of the Providence of God, and ſet up for the Carvers of their own Fortune, may [f] *earn* perhaps the *Wages* of Iniquity, but *putting them into a Bag with Holes*, as the Prophet expreſſes it, they find themſelves often defeated; but though [g] *the Lions* (to underſtand the Word for once in a metaphorical Senſe, for ſuch as live by plundering and oppreſſing others) *do lack, and ſuffer Hunger, yet they, that ſeek the Lord, ſhall want no Manner of Thing that is good.*

3. NOR is it enough that our Friend have it in his Power to ſupply our Wants, and ſtand by us in Danger, unleſs he is *willing* and diſpoſed ſo to do; and therefore to remove all Doubts of this Kind, the ſame *Pſalmiſt* hath aſſured us, that God is not only eſſentially and immutably good, but good univerſally, good everlaſtingly, good to the *Pious* without Reſerve, and good to the *Wicked* too, if they will but repent of their Sins and live; for *the Lord is good, and doth Good*; [h] *his tender Mercies are over all his Works*; and, as [i] *he preventeth* the Righteous *with the Bleſſings of Goodneſs*, ſo is [k] *he ready to forgive* the Sinner, *and plenteous in Mercy unto all them, that call upon him.* Conditions in Life make no Diſtinction with him; for [l] *lo! the Poor crieth, and he heareth him, yea, and ſaveth him out of all his Troubles.* Many, in our proſperous Days, will be forward enough in their Profeſſions of Kindneſs and Zeal, but when Trouble begins to ariſe, they think it convenient then to withdraw, and leave us to ſtruggle alone with our Misfortune: But now [m] the very Thing which among Men is uſually the chief Cauſe, that takes off their Affection and Kindneſs, with God is an Argument of a contrary Nature: For though his Mercy and Goodneſs extend to all, yet are they more eſpecially concerned for ſuch, as are in a State of Miſery, the *Fatherleſs*, the *Widow*, the *Priſoners*, the *Poor*, the *Stranger*, the *Friendleſs*, and *ſuch as have no Helper.* And, from a Senſe of this, we find the Devout in all Ages truſting not in Man, nor his fallacious Friendſhip, but fleeing to God for Shelter, as they found the Cloud approaching. [n] *Our Fathers truſted in thee, and thou didſt deliver them; they called upon thee, and were holpen: They put their Truſt in thee, and were not confounded*; wherefore *go not far from me, O Lord; for Trouble is hard at Hand, and there is none to help me: Thou art my Succour; haſte thee to help me, to deliver my Soul from the Sword, my Darling from the Power of the Dogs.*

4. NOR is it ſufficient that a Perſon have Knowledge, and Power, and Goodneſs enough, to be a fit Inſtrument of our Relief and Support, unleſs, in ſome Meaſure, he be under *Obligations* to do it for us: And, in like Manner, though [o] we may deſire and expect unpromiſed Favours from God, yet we can infallibly be ſure of no Bleſſings, but what he, in his Word, has been graciouſly pleaſed to promiſe. Now Promiſes of Help to thoſe, that are righteous, and put their Truſt in God, are innumerable; and on theſe Promiſes, if our Conſciences bear us a comfortable Teſtimony, we may ſecurely rely; [p] *the Eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their Cries*; and *though their Afflictions be many*, yet *he ſhall deliver them out of them all. He ſhall redeem the Souls of his Servants, and none of them, that truſt in him, ſhall be deſolate.* Having therefore theſe gracious Promiſes, we may,

[b] Pſal. xlvi. 1, &c. [c] *Smalridge's* Sermons. [d] Pſal. xviii. 2. [e] Ibid. xxxiv. 22.
[f] Hag. i. 6. [g] Pſal. xxxiv. 10. [h] Ibid. cxlv. 9. [i] Ibid. xxi. 3. [k] Ibid. lxxxvi. 5. [l] Ibid. xxxiv. 6. [m] *Wilkins*, on Natural Religion. [n] Pſal. xxii. 4, &c.
[o] *Smalridge*, ibid. [p] Pſal. xxxiv. 15, &c.

with undaunted Courage, ſpeak the Words, and take up the Reſolution of the Pſalmiſt; [a] *God is our Refuge, and Strength, therefore will we not fear, though the Earth be moved, and though the Hills be carried into the Midſt of the Sea; though the Waters thereof rage and ſwell, and though the Mountains ſhake at the Tempeſt of the ſame.* Such bold Expreſſions as theſe, have been uttered by brave and gallant Men among the *Heathens*; [b] but what was extravagant in the Mouths of ſuch, as had no Strength, but their own, to bear them up; no Proſpect of any other Recompence, than that of an *imaginary* Fame for behaving under Difficulties with Magnanimity; that, when ſpoken by *one*, who has the Aid of God, to ſupport him under Sufferings, and the Promiſes of God, to reward his Patience and Conſtancy, either with the Bleſſings of this Life, or with the Glories of the next, is a wiſe, ſolid, and well-weighed Reſolution.

From our own Experience.

THUS, if we look into the Nature of God and his moſt ſacred *Attributes*, we find ſtrong and irrefragable Arguments, why, in all our Troubles and Diſtreſſes, we ſhould put our whole Truſt in him; and if we now turn our Eyes upon ourſelves, and conſult our own Experience of his former Loving-Kindneſs to us, we ſhall perceive abundant Reaſon to continue the ſame Affiance in him for the future. For, of the many Calamities incident to human Life, how many, through the Goodneſs of God, have we eſcaped? How many, juſt hanging over our Heads, and what we ſaw no Poſſibility of avoiding, has his watchful Providence averted from us? How many, after they had ſeized us, and began to preſs hard upon us, has he at firſt abated, and afterwards wholly removed? And how many, by his over-ruling Power, have had ſo good an Effect, that we have Reaſon to rejoice for having been viſited by them? Have we never, by a painful and lingering Sickneſs, been brought to the very Brink of the Grave, and when Medicines have failed, and Phyſicians have pronounced our Doom, by ſome unexpected Turn, been reſtored to our Health again? Has our good Name never been aſperſed by ſome foul and baſe Slanders, under which we have long lain, without being able to clear it, and has not God, by his good Providence, [c] *brought forth our Righteouſneſs as the Light, and our Innocence as the Noon-Day?* Have we never ſeen [d] *Poverty coming upon us as an armed Man*, when, on a ſudden, God has raiſed up unhoped for Benefactors to relieve us, or ſtruck out for us unforeſeen Means of Subſiſtence? Have we never known the Wrath and Malice of Men ſet againſt us, when, without any Offence of ours, they *came gaping upon us*, and [e] *were ready to ſwallow us up quick*, when God has either * *reſtrained the Fierceneſs of their Wrath*, or [x] *covered us*, as it were, *under the Shadow of his Wings, until their Tyranny has been over-paſt?*

IF then we have had any ſuch Inſtances of God's Goodneſs to us, (as certainly we all of us have had, and, unleſs we have been very careleſs Obſervers of Providence, muſt have taken Notice of) from the Senſe of paſt Mercies to us, we may draw this comfortable Concluſion, that [f] *he, who hath delivered us from ſo great Dangers, and doth deliver, in him we may ſafely truſt, that he will yet deliver us*: For *his Hand*, which has ſo often *been* ſtretched forth for our Help, *is not* ſince [z] *ſhortened, that it can no longer ſave*; neither is *his Ear*, which has been ſo often opened to our Prayers, grown *heavy, that it can no more hear.* Commit we but then our Souls to him in Well-doing, and the Experience we have already had of his watchful Care over us, will be our ſtanding Conviction, that, in all Circumſtances of Danger or Diſtreſs, he [a] *will defend us under his Wings; under his Feathers we ſhall be ſafe; his Faithfulneſs and Truth ſhall be our Shield and Buckler.*

Means to beget and improve this Grace in us.

II. IF then our Truſt and Reliance on God, [b] under all the Pains of Body and Anxieties of Mind, under all the Frowns of Fortune and Difficulties of Life, which have befallen us, and all the Apprehenſions of Evils, which we fear may befal us, be both our *Duty*, and our *Remedy*, it may be a Matter well worth our Enquiry, by what farther Means and Conſiderations we may beget and nouriſh in us this happy Temper of Mind; and in order to this,

1. THE firſt Thing we are to do, is to diveſt our Minds of all Preſumption and Self-confidence. [c] For when, without any Regard to God's Providence, Men are bold

[a] Pſal. xlvi. 2, 3.
[b] Pſal cxxiv. 3.
[c] Iſa. lix. 1.
[d] *Smalridge*'s Sermons.
[e] Ibid. lxxvi. 10.
[f] Pſal. xci. 4.
[g] Pſal. xxxvii. 6.
[x] Ibid. lvii. 1.
[h] *Smalridge*, ibid.
[i] Prov. xxiv. 34.
[y] 2 Cor. i. 10.
[c] *Barrow*'s Works,

bold enough to rely on themſelves and their own Abilities, and vainly imagine, that, without the Divine Help and Direction, by the Contrivance of their own Wit and Diſcretion, they can compaſs their Deſign, and make themſelves Maſters of their utmoſt Wiſh; it is no Wonder, that they ſhould ſo frequently miſcarry; and therefore *truſt thou in the Lord* (as the wiſe Man adviſes) *with all thine Heart, and lean not on thine own Underſtanding; in all thy Way acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy Paths*; for [e] *he that truſteth in his own Heart*, as he ſays in another Place, *is a Fool*. And a Fool he is without all Controverſy; for,

2. CONSIDERING the Situation of human Nature, [f] it is abſolutely neceſſary, that there ſhould be ſomething for us to lean upon, and have Recourſe to, as our proper Support and Refuge. Every Man in his beſt Eſtate is but a feeble and infirm Creature: What from the Impotence of his Mind, and the Diſorder of his Paſſions *within*; what from the Troubles and Difficulties which he meets with from *without*; together with the Mutability of all human Affairs, which cannot be aſcertained by all the imaginable Foreſight which Men are capable of; it is impoſſible for us to live *independent*. [g] Evils there are innumerable, from which, neither the Wiſdom of the moſt prudent, nor the Riches of the moſt wealthy, nor the Forces of the moſt powerful, nor even the Virtue of the moſt innocent, can always ſecure us; and therefore *Faith*, and *Hope*, and *Truſt*, are altogether neceſſary in our preſent State; and the Man muſt be in a very unſafe and uneaſy Condition, that is not provided with ſomething to ſupport and relieve him in his Neceſſities. But now, if ſuch a Support be neceſſary, we can have it no where placed ſo commodiouſly, as in the Hands of Almighty God; [h] For where can we find a ſafer *Director* of our Affairs, than an all-comprehending Wiſdom? Where a better *Protector* againſt Dangers and Inſults, than omnipotent Power? Where a better *Provider* of every Thing that we want, than that Goodneſs which is infinite?

SINCE then the Neceſſity of truſting in ſomething, the Folly of truſting in ourſelves, and the Wiſdom of truſting in God is ſo apparent; theſe are Conſiderations wherewith we ſhould frequently entertain our Thoughts: And to give them a ſtronger Impreſſion, we ſhould always bear in Mind the Promiſes, that God hath made us of his Readineſs both to guard us in Danger, and to relieve us in Want: [k] *Becauſe thou haſt made the Lord, which is thy Refuge, even the moſt High, thy Habitation, there ſhall no Evil befal thee, neither ſhall any Plague come nigh thy Dwelling; for he ſhall give his Angels Charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy Ways: They ſhall bear thee up in their Hands, leſt thou ſhouldſt daſh thy Foot againſt a Stone.* This is our Protection from Danger, and our Security from Want are the comfortable Words of our bleſſed Saviour: [l] *Take no Thought for your Life, what you ſhall eat, or what you ſhall drink; neither for your Body, what you ſhall put on: Is not your Life more than Meat, and your Body than Raiment? Behold the Fowls of the Air! for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into Barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them: Are ye not much better than they? And why take ye Thought for Raiment? Conſider the Lillies of the Field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they ſpin, and yet I ſay unto you, that Solomon, in all his Glory, was not arrayed like one of theſe. Wherefore, if God cloath the Graſs of the Field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is caſt into the Oven, ſhall he not much more cloath you, O ye of little Faith? Therefore take no Thought, ſaying, what ſhall we eat? or what ſhall we drink? or wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed? for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have Need of theſe Things. But ſeek ye firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, and then all theſe Things ſhall be added unto you.*

[e] Prov. iii. 5, 6. [f] Ibid. xxviii. 26. [g] *Wilkins*, of Natural Religion. [h] *Smalridge*'s Sermons.
[i] *Collier*'s Sermons. [k] Pſal. xci. 9, &c. [l] Matth. vi. 29, &c.

5. *Submiſſion*

5. *Submiſſion to* GOD.

SUBMISSION to the Will of God is of two Kinds, the Submiſſion of *Obedience*, which conſiſts in a ready Compliance with his Commands in all Things, and the Submiſſion of *Patience*, which is nothing elſe, but a quiet and chearful Suffering of whatever Afflictions he ſhall think fit to lay upon us; which is the Duty we are here to enforce and recommend.

The Nature of Patience.

[m] PATIENCE then is that Virtue, which qualifies us to bear all Conditions and all Events, by God's Diſpoſal incident to us, with ſuch Apprehenſions and Perſuaſions of Mind, with ſuch Diſpoſitions and Affections of Heart, and with ſuch external Deportment and Practice of Life, as God and good Reaſon require, *viz.* with a thorough *Perſuaſion*, that nothing befals us, but either by the Permiſſion or Direction of Divine Providence; a firm *Belief* that all Occurrences, however contrary to our Deſires, are both conſiſtent with God's holy Attributes, and conducive to our Good; a full *Truſt* and *Dependance* on him, either for Strength to enable us to bear our Afflictions, or for a ſeaſonable Removal or Mitigation of them; abſtaining from all diſcontented Complaints and Murmurings againſt Providence; from all malicious and revengeful Thoughts againſt the *Inſtruments* of our Sufferings; and from all unworthy and irregular Courſes, to extricate ourſelves from them; that ſo [n] *ſuffering according to the Will of God, we may commit the keeping of our Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

IN theſe, and ſuch-like Acts, does the Practice of this Virtue conſiſt; and the Inducements we have to it ariſe, I. From the Conſideration of the Nature of God, and our Relation to him; and II. From the Benefits of Virtue itſelf, and the Advantages that accrue to us from our Afflictions.

Its Reaſonableneſs.

I. IT is an Obſervation made by *Eliphaz*, in the Book of *Job*, that [o] *Affliction cometh not forth of the Duſt, neither doth Trouble ſpring out of the Ground*, but are diſpoſed and appointed by God, who has a ſovereign Right and Dominion over us, and may therefore deal with us as he pleaſes, ſo long as he leaves us in a State preferable to *Non-exiſtence*. And, from this Conſideration, the devout Pſalmiſt, in all the Calamities that befel him, was not [p] *only dumb, and opened not his Mouth*, in any Murmuring or Complaint, *becauſe it was God's Doing*, but even carried his Reſolution to the higheſt Pitch of Reſignation, [q] *while I live, will I praiſe the Lord, yea, as long as I have any Being*, though deprived of every Thing elſe, *will I ſing Praiſes unto my God.* He had the Conſideration before him of the numberleſs Favours and Benefits, which from Time to Time God had extended to him, and if he ſo frequently *received Good at the Hand of God*, it was but equitable, he thought, that he ſhould ſometimes *receive Evil.* [r] He conſidered the infinite Wiſdom of the ſupreme Diſpoſer of Things, and implicitly believed, that there was an exact Harmony in all his Adminiſtrations, and that, at the laſt Day, when [s] *we ſhall behold his Preſence in Righteouſneſs*, and the deep Plot of this great and wonderful *Drama* ſhall be laid open and revealed, every one ſhould be ſatisfied with the Beauty and juſt Conduct of it, though to us, who ſit now in a dark Corner of the *Theatre*, ſome of its Parts ſeem very cloudy and perplexed. He called to Remembrance his *paternal* Relation, and knowing, that [t] *like as a Father pitieth his own Children, ſo is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him*, he could not but perceive, that the Afflictions, he laboured under, were neceſſary for the Chaſtiſement of his Faults: He therefore reflected upon his own State and Condition of Life, [u] and perceiving that, as he was by Nature God's *Servant*, it was but decent for him to acquieſce in that *Rank* and *Station*, which he had appointed him in his large Family; that as he was a *Sinner*, and *leſs than the leaſt of God's Mercies*, it was no more than his Duty to be content and thankful for any Thing on this Side Damnation. * *We will bear the Indignation of the Lord*, ſays the afflicted Church in the Prophet *Micah*, *becauſe we have ſinned againſt him*; for [x] *wherefore doth a living Man complain, a Man for the Puniſhment of his Sins?* Since Afflictions are the natural Fruits of our voluntary Miſcarriages,

[m] *Barrow's* Works, Vol. III. [n] 1 Pet. iv. 19. [o] Job v. 6. [p] Pſal. xxxix. 9.
[q] Ibid. cxlvi. 2. [r] *Norris's* Diſcourſes, Vol. II. [s] Pſal. xvii. 15. [t] Ibid. ciii. 13.
[u] *Barrow*, ibid. * Micah vii. 9. [x] Lam. iii. 39.

Miſcarriages, 'tis reaſonable that we ſhould blame ourſelves, rather than pick Quarrels with Providence about them: Eſpecially conſidering, that were we much more *innocent* than we are, this World is not a Place of perfect Pleaſure and Delight; that we came not hither to do our own Will, or enjoy our own Wiſhes, but are naturally [y] *born to Trouble, as the Sparks fly upwards*, and need not therefore be ſurprized, if, in a Vale of Tears, we meet with ſuch Calamities and Croſſes, as are ſuitable to our Nature and Condition; that no Adverſity, either in Kind or Degree, is peculiar to us, but, if we take a View of other Men, and compare our Caſe with theirs, we ſhall find, that we have many Aſſociates in Miſery, many far worſe, and moſt as ill afflicted as ourſelves: That it has all along been the Lot of the beſt Men, and greateſt Favourites of God, to be exerciſed in this Manner; and that [z] *the Captain of our Salvation*, [a] *a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*, was himſelf *made perfect through Sufferings*. If therefore we either look upon God, as the Author and Diſpoſer of all our Afflictions, or upon ourſelves, either as *Men*, that are ſubject to them, or as *Sinners*, that do juſtly deſerve them, it muſt needs be great Partiality and Perverſeneſs in us, to be diſpleaſed, that we are not exempted from bearing, either the Wages of our Iniquity, or the common Burthen of our Nature: Eſpecially if we conſider,

II. SOME of the Advantages, that do accrue to us from our Afflictions, as well as the great Benefits of bearing them with Patience. The Maſters of *Ethicks*, who have looked into the Properties of the Mind, are generally of this Opinion, [b] that Impatience and Diſcontent, under any Kind of Tribulation, proceed from a *Poorneſs of Spirit*; argue a Man conſcious of his own Weakneſs, and that he has not Courage to reſiſt an Evil; whereas, had he but Reſolution to face it, he would be ſo employed, as to have no Leiſure to complain; his Blood would be ſo heated with the Senſe of Honour, and the Hopes of Victory, that the Blows and Smarts of the Encounter would ſcarce be felt. He, that *in Patience poſſeſſes his Soul*, is always eaſy and ſerene: His Spirits do not riſe and fall with his Circumſtances: The actual Suffering of Adverſity cannot deject him: He relies upon his Innocence and his God: Upon this Foundation he ſtands fixed like a Rock, and though Waves and Storms may paſs over him, yet he remains unſhaken, nor can all the Shocks of Adverſity ever deprive him of his Principles, or his Peace. He is perſuaded, that as God ſtands in no Need of our Happineſs, much leſs of our Miſery, ſo [c] *he does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men*; and therefore whenever he is compelled to do ſo, it is either for the Correction of our Failings, or the Improvement and Purification of our Virtues, [d] *that the Trial of our Faith*, as the Apoſtle has it, *being much more precious, than that of Gold, which periſheth, though it be tried with Fire, might be found unto Praiſe, and Honour, and Glory, at the Appearing of Jeſus Chriſt*. For this is another Inducement to Patience and Reſignation under all Conditions, that [e] *our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, while we look not at the Things that are ſeen, but at the Things which are not ſeen; for the Things, which are ſeen, are temporal, but the Things, which are not ſeen, are eternal.* [f] And is there now any room for ſuch a Paſſion, as Grief or Diſcontent, after ſuch a Conſideration as this? Can a Man, acting upon this Perſuaſion, be diſturbed at any Accident, or be impatient in any Condition of Life? Can he murmur or repine at the Strokes of God's afflicting Hand, which he knows are given with a gracious Intent, which are preſent Interruptions, but future Enlargements of his Happineſs, like the miſty *Vail* of the Morning, which for a while ſhuts in the Rays of the Sun, but at length contributes to the greater Luſtre and Triumph of the Day? Shall not I then *drink the Cup*, be the Ingredients what they will, which *my heavenly Father* has given? "My Father, who is too "*perfect* to need my Miſery, though, in reſpect of his ſupreme Dominion, he "might afflict me as he pleaſes; who is too *wiſe* to miſtake my true Intereſt; and "too *good* to preſcribe any *Draught*, but what he knows is wholeſome for me; who "has given me all the Happineſs I enjoy, and parted with more, for my Sake, than "he can poſſibly take from me in this World: Has parted with his beloved Son "for my Redemption, and, in Lieu of what he takes, has provided for me an *In*"*heritance incorruptible*; and ſhall I then refuſe the Cup, which ſuch a Father as

Its Benefits and Advantages.

[y] Job v. 7. [z] Heb. ii. 10. [a] Iſa. liii. 3. [b] *Collier's* Sermons. [c] Lam. iii. 33.
[d] 1 Pet. i. 7. [e] 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. [f] *Norris's* Diſcourſes, Vol. II.

" this has given?" No, *may the conſidering Sufferer ſay*, I will [g] *count it all Joy, when I fall into divers Temptations*; I will reſt heartily ſatisfied with the ſevereſt Diſpenſations; welcome the ſharpeſt Arrow, that comes from his Quiver; and *though he kill me, yet will I truſt in him.*

6. *Of inward Purity.*

Inward Purity, what.

PURITY *of Heart*, in the general Notion of it, may be conſidered in a double Senſe; [h] either in Oppoſition to *Mixture*, and ſo it removes *Hypocriſy*; or in Oppoſition to *Pollution*, and ſo it removes *Senſuality*. In the *former* Senſe, it denotes the Simplicity and Sincerity; and, in the *latter*, the Sanctity and Cleanneſs of our Thoughts and Intentions: So that in the Senſe, wherein we mean, at preſent, to take it, " *the Pure in Heart* are ſuch, as, meaning to recommend themſelves chiefly to God's Acceptance, who *ſearcheth the Heart*, regulate, not only the " *external* Conduct of their Lives, but alſo the *inward* Frame and Habit of their " Minds, and conform, not only their Actions, but their Wills and Deſires, their " Thoughts and Deſigns, to the Rule of the Law, and to the Dictates of the *in*" *ternal Light* of God in their Soul: Such as *ſanctify the Lord God in their Hearts*; " compoſe the inmoſt Receſſes of their Minds into an holy Awe and Reverence of " the Divine Preſence; ſet a Law to all their *intellectual* Powers, and ſuffer not the " leaſt Thought or Paſſion to violate the Order either of Reaſon or Grace: Such, " laſtly, as yield no Conſent either to the Being or Stay of irregular Motions; as " delight themſelves with no pleaſing Recollections, no *imaginary* Scenes of their " paſt Immoralities; but ſet themſelves at the greateſt Diſtance from Sin, reſiſt the " very firſt Beginnings, and, as near as they can, *abſtain from the leaſt Appearance* " *of Evil.*"

THIS is the moſt reſembling Idea we can frame to ourſelves of the *Pure in Heart*: And, that it may not be taken for a mere Idea, or a Thing of Notion, rather than Practice, we ſhall, I. Repreſent the Neceſſity and Happineſs of this Diſpoſition of Soul; and then, II. Suggeſt ſome of the moſt probable Means, that may be conducive to our attaining it.

The Neceſſity of it from Scripture.

I. [i] THE beſt of the Heathen Writers did not always reſolve the Goodneſs of *moral* Duties into a true Principle: They argued, indeed, from the Convenience, the Utility, the Beauty, and Credit of it, but they ſeldom derived its Origin from the *Spring-Head*, or diſcovered, that all its regular, its proper and vital Motions proceeded from the Heart. Nay, the *Jews* themſelves ſeemed, in a great Meaſure, to be ignorant of this Doctrine; and their Ignorance herein was the Ground of a common Error among them, that *Concupiſcence*, actual Concupiſcence, had not *formally* the Nature of Sin; and provided they performed the *exterior* Act, commanded by the Law of *Moſes*, they were leſs ſollicitous what became of the *inward* Diſpoſitions of the Mind. But our Bleſſed Saviour has raiſed human Virtue to its proper Height, and his improving Expoſitions of the *Moſaic* Law have taught and inſtructed us, wherein the Holineſs of a Chriſtian muſt conſiſt. [k] *Ye have heard, that it has been ſaid by them of old Time, Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery; but I ſay unto you, that whoſoever looketh upon a Woman, to luſt after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart.* By *luſting*, however, here, as we ſaid [l] in another Place, muſt not be underſtood the bare natural Appetite of Concupiſcence, which, as ſuch, is *indifferent*, but the irregular Determination of it, always attended with the Conſent of the Will; which Conſent may either relate to the Deſire itſelf, or to the acting of it: If to the *Act*, then the Man is, in all moral Accounts, a compleat *Adulterer*, and will be ſo eſteemed by God, who as he ſees, ſo he judges by the Heart, and will not think a Man more innocent, only for wanting an Opportunity of committing what he intended. But if the Conſent be only to the *Deſire*, then, tho' the Man be not a compleat Adulterer, yet he may be truly ſaid, in the Stile of the *Pſalmiſt*, to be [m] *a Partaker with the Adulterer*, to have entered within ſome Degrees of *Unchaſtity*,

[g] James i. 2. [h] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. II. [i] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [k] Matth. v. 27. [l] *Vid.* the Expoſition of the Seventh Commanment. [m] Pſal. l. 18.

Unchaſtity, and to have tranſgreſſed againſt that *Chriſtian* Purity, which forbids all Conſent, not only to the compleat Acts, but alſo to the firſt Motions of Sin.

AND indeed, the very Genius and Deſign of the Chriſtian Religion, is, to deſtroy [n] *Corruption*, eſpecially that, which *is in the World through Luſt*; to teach us to [o] *crucify our Affections*, and inordinate Deſires; and to [p] *waſh, and ſanctify us in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God*: For [q] *this is the Will of God*, ſays the Apoſtle, *even your Sanctification, that ye ſhould abſtain from Fornication; that every one of you ſhould know how to poſſeſs his Veſſel in Sanctification and Honour; for God hath not called us unto Uncleanneſs, but unto Holineſs.* And as he has thus called us, ſo he hath given us Reaſons, entirely new, and ſuch as the World never knew before, to engage our Practice of this Duty: For [r] *know ye not*, ſays the ſame Apoſtle, *that your Bodies are the Members of Chriſt? Know ye not, that they are the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt, which is in you, and which ye have of God?* Know ye not, that *ye are not your own, but are bought with a Price; therefore glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which is God's?* [s] *Our Bodies are not our own* to uſe, or to abuſe at Pleaſure, becauſe our Saviour has actually purchaſed them to himſelf, by his Death and Sufferings for their Redemption. They are *the Members of Chriſt*, who, having thought fit to honour the whole human Nature, Body as well as Soul, by his appearing in it, has taken us into ſo near a *Relation* to him, as ought not to be abaſed to Filthineſs and Pollution: And laſtly, they *are the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt*, dwelling in them, to direct and influence our Minds, and therefore ſhould not be employed in any Thing unworthy his Preſence, or repugnant to his Purity.

AND if the Spirit of God is to *dwell* in our Minds, there is this Neceſſity for their Sanctification, [t] that, however his firſt Addreſſes and *influential* Viſits may prevent all previous Diſpoſitions, yet his fixed and reſidential Abode in us cannot be affected without an antecedent Preparation of Heart. And for this Reaſon, I ſuppoſe it is, that though all Men are, ſome Time or other, Partakers of the common and ordinary Motions of the Spirit, yet none, but very good Men, have the Privilege to be *the Temples* of his Reſidence, which ſeems to be intimated to us, in that remarkable Paſſage of the Revelation; [u] *Behold I ſtand at the Door, and knock; if any Man hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, and ſup with him*: For by *ſtanding at the Door, and knocking*, is meant common and preventing Grace, and this indeed is uſed to all, without any previous Qualifications; but he does not *come in and ſup*, he does not take up his Reſidence, and become a familiar Gueſt, till *his Voice be heard, and the Door opened, i. e.* till the Man has well attended to, and complied with, thoſe antecedent Motions and Suggeſtions.

Its Bleſſedneſs here,

GOOD Reaſon therefore had our gracious Saviour to pronounce a *Bleſſing* upon the *Pure in Spirit*, and to recommend this amiable Diſpoſition of Mind, under no leſs a Conſideration, than that *they ſhall ſee God*. For, having God always in their Hearts, they cannot fail, even at preſent, of having a ſenſible Perception of him: * They ſee him in his *Word*, how good and reaſonable all his Precepts are, how precious his Promiſes, and how juſt his Threatenings. They ſee him in his *Ordinances*, what Profit, what Advantage he intends by them, how he deſigns them for *Channels* to convey his Grace, and Spirit, and Influences to their Soul. They ſee him in his *Works*, how wonderful and powerful he is, with what rare Art and Contrivance he hath *founded the Earth upon nothing*, and *ſpread out the Heavens like a Curtain*. They ſee him in his *Providence*, how righteous, and holy, and regular he is, in managing the Affairs, and adjuſting the great Revolutions of the World. They ſee him in his *Mercies*, how gracious and condeſcenſive he is, how vigilant in his Care, and how bountiful in his Proviſion for them. They ſee him in their *Afflictions*, how wiſe and kind he is in ſending them, and what Love, and Benefit, and Edification he deſigns by them: They ſee him, in ſhort, in the Knowledge and Contemplation of his Divine Nature and Perfections *here*; and, when their own Nature comes to be *ſpiritualized*, ſhall live in his Preſence, and have an immediate and perceptive Sight of him *hereafter*.

and hereafter.

[x] THAT inward and ſpiritual Purity has a peculiar Aptneſs, in order to *the Viſion of God*, we need not doubt, if we conſider, that the only Reaſon, why we ſee

[n] 2 Pet. i. 4. [o] Gal. v. 24. [p] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [q] 1 Theſ. iv, 3, &c. [r] 1 Cor. vi. 15, &c. [s] *Gardiner's* Sermons. [t] *Norris's* Diſcourſes, Vol. II. [u] Rev. iii. 20.
* *Horneck's* Sermons, Vol. I. [x] *Norris's* Diſcourſes, Vol. I.

ſee not God now, is the Groſſneſs of this Tabernacle, wherein the Soul is incaſed. This is that black Skreen, which parts the *material* from the *intelligible* World; and therefore the more abſtract we are from the Body, and from the bodily Life, the more fit we ſhall be, both to behold, and to endure the Rays of the Divine Light. We find, that even now, the purer and finer our Blood and Spirits are, the freer and clearer are our Thoughts; the brighter and more tranſparent this *Glaſs* is, the more the *ideal* Light will dart in upon our Souls: And in like Manner hereafter, the purer the Soul is, the purer will all its Faculties and Operations be; the leſs it retains of corporeal Guſts and Reliſhes, the more recollected and undivided will its Powers be, and, conſequently, more ſtrong and vigorous upon the Object where they fix. Nor will the Soul itſelf only be prepared for the bliſsful Viſion, but convey a Fitneſs likewiſe to its *Reſurrection-Body*: For, though we muſt ſee through a *Glaſs* then, as well as now, yet will the Glaſs be clearer, according to the different Purity of the Soul, which, as we may obſerve even in this Life, gives a particular Brightneſs of Air to the Countenance, and makes the Face to ſhine with an inimitable Luſtre. Nor can we ſuppoſe, but that God, who is ſo great a Lover, will alſo be a liberal Rewarder of inward Purity, and, as he delights to dwell with Souls of this Complexion *now*, will reveal himſelf more plentifully, and make larger Communications of his Preſence, and Emanations of his Goodneſs to them *hereafter*.

* WHO *then ſhall aſcend unto the Hill of the Lord*, ſays the Royal Pſalmiſt, *and who ſhall ſtand up in his holy Place? Even he that hath clean Hands, and a pure Heart*: A pure Heart is indeed the *indiſpenſable* Condition of everlaſting Happineſs; for *without Holineſs none ſhall ſee the Lord*, and conſidering the cloſe and neceſſary Connexion there is between Purity of Heart, and Purity of Life, it may not improperly be ſaid, that it is the *only Condition* requiſite. For, if our Heart be pure, our Hands will be clean too, and if our Heart be with God, and all our Actions, our whole Service, though otherwiſe very imperfect, will be graciouſly accepted, and rewarded by him.

Means to attain it.

II. How then ſhall we acquire to ourſelves this neceſſary, and ſo beneficial a Virtue? And what Endeavours ſhall we uſe, in order to cleanſe our Hearts, and purify our Minds? 1. [x] The firſt Thing we are to do is, to attain right Notions of God, and a ſtrong Conviction of his Omniſcience and Inſpection; that [y] *he is the Searcher of all Hearts, and the Underſtander of our Thoughts afar off*; who [z] *compaſſes our Path and our Lying-down, and is acquainted with all our Ways*. And as he is the Inſpector of our Hearts, ſo *he is of purer Eyes than to behold Vanity*, and has that ſtrong Averſion to Sin, that he will never abide in that Breaſt, where a mad Rabble of depraved Appetites and vicious Imaginations have ſettled their Abode: For [a] *what Agreement*, as the Apoſtle argues, *hath the Temple of God with Idols?* Now *ye are the Temple of the living God, as God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People*. [b] Suppoſing we were to receive ſome mighty Prince, or Perſon of great Quality into our Houſe, would we not make all Things neat and clean, and take Care that nothing be wanting, that may give him Content and Satisfaction; that every Chamber, every Room in the Houſe, be ſet out, and garniſhed, and adorned, as far as our Ability reaches? But now what is the greateſt Man, the greateſt Potentate upon Earth, to the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; to a God purer than Angels, purer than the Sun and Stars, dwelling *in Light inacceſſible*, and by whoſe Will and Command the whole Creation ſtands or falls? Since then this Sovereign Majeſty is willing to lodge, nay, to dwell in our Souls, the Conſideration cannot but ſtrike us, how holy, how pious, how chaſte, how pure our Thoughts and Affections ought to be, in order to give ſo magnificent a Gueſt a ſuitable Entertainment.

2. † ANOTHER Means to implant in our Minds the Grace of *Purity*, will be frequently to contemplate the Joys and Felicities of the *beatific Viſion*, which God hath appointed for its Reward. For if we are pleaſed with the Sight and Converſation of an intimate Friend, eſpecially after a long and tedious Abſence, and think it a joyful Thing to behold the Face of a reconciled Enemy; let us then conſider, what it will be for us to be admitted into the Preſence and the bright Reflections of that Countenance, which alone can ſpeak Peace and ſolid Comfort to us. Nay, let

* Pſal. xxiv. 3, 4. [x] *Blackhall*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [y] 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. [z] Pſal. cxxxix. 2, 3. [a] 2 Cor. vi. 16. [b] *Horneck*'s Sermons, Vol. I. † *Gardiner*'s Sermons.

let us bear in mind the Honour and great Privilege of being called up to ſerve the King of Glory, in his own Court, and near his Perſon; where we may for ever contemplate, even at the neareſt View, his infinite Majeſty, Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs. Queſtionleſs, did we keep Heaven conſtantly in our Eye, and fix it upon our Minds, what it is to *ſee* and converſe with God, the Reflection would naturally ariſe, that we ought *to purify ourſelves, even as he is pure.* To which Purpoſe it will be neceſſary,

3. To be earneſt and importunate in our Prayers, that he would not *lead us into Temptation*, but keep us from ſuch Objects, as are apt to kindle evil Thoughts, and reſtrain the great Enemy of Souls from ſuggeſting any: Above all, [c] that he would ſend his Bleſſed Spirit to our Aid and Aſſiſtance; to enlighten our Underſtandings, to purify our Affections, and to fix it indelibly upon our Minds, [d] *that to be carnally minded is Death, but to be ſpiritually minded is Life and Peace.*

7. *Of Heavenly-Mindedneſs.*

THERE are two Senſes, wherein the Word *Heaven* may be taken, either for the State of another Life in general, or for the particular Glory and Happineſs of that State. In the *former* of theſe Senſes, [e] *Heavenly-Mindedneſs* implies our perpetual Remembrance of our *Mortality*; our having a conſtant Proſpect into the other World, which muſt be our final Home, and ſtedfaſtly looking beyond the Horizon of Time, to the long Day of Eternity; our dwelling, in ſhort, on the Meditation of the four laſt Things, *Heaven*, *Hell*, *Death*, and *Judgment*; how great they are in their Conſequence, how certain in their Event, and how near in their Approach; and, in Conſideration of this, always *waiting*, and preparing ourſelves for this great and important Change. *Heavenly-Mindedneſs, what.*

IN the *latter* Senſe of the Word, *Heavenly-Mindedneſs* implies our Contemplation of the infinite Perfection of the Divine Eſſence, the *firſt of Beings*, and the *laſt of Ends*, and the inconceivable Happineſs of thoſe, who ſhall enjoy the Communications of his Bleſſedneſs. It is to meditate upon, and have always in View, that *Weight of Glory*, that *incorruptible Crown*, with which the *Sufferings of this preſent Time are not worthy to be compared*, no, not to be mentioned: To meditate Day and Night upon that happy Time, when we ſhall be Partakers of *Moſes*'s Wiſh, and admitted to that intimate and naked *Viſion* of that myſterious and incomprehenſible Excellence, which is too great for our mortal Faculties, and which none can [f] *ſee* and *live*: To meditate upon the bleſſed Society of Saints and Angels; upon the delicious Repaſts of *Anthems* and *Hallelujahs*, and that more raviſhing Harmony of Divine Love, and intellectual Sympathy; upon the elevated and raiſed Perfections of a glorified Soul, the Enlargement of its Underſtanding, the Sublimation of its Will and Affections, and upon the Angelical Clarity and Divine Temper of our Reſurrection-Body; in ſhort, upon all thoſe glorious Things, which are *ſpoken of the City of God*, and upon the infinite Conſolations of that joyful Sentence, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you*: And laſtly, it is to contemplate all this, not in a cold and indifferent Manner, as if it were a diſtant and precarious Reverſion, but as a State that will ſhortly and certainly be, and therefore to be embraced with that Faith and Aſſurance, which is [g] *the Subſtance of Things hoped for, and the Evidence of Things not ſeen.*

ALL this the Word may be ſaid to import; and therefore, putting both of theſe Senſes together, we ſhall, 1. Obſerve the Reaſonableneſs of the Duty; and, 2. Some of the chief Benefits that ariſe from it.

I. WHAT worthy Notions the wiſeſt of the *Heathen* World (ſuch, I mean, as believed the *Immortality* of the Soul) had of a future State; how delightful they repreſented the Place, the Company, the Entertainments prepared for their Reception after Death, is what we had Occaſion, more than once, in the Courſe of this Work, to obſerve. Upon theſe Conſiderations the Account we have of their Philoſophers is, that they choſe to live abſtractly, and dwelt much upon the Contemplation of what *Reaſonableneſs of it, from the Light of Nature.*

[c] *Blackhall*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [d] Rom. viii. 6. [e] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. II. [f] Exod. xxxiii. 20. [g] Heb. xi. 1.

they were to be hereafter. The *Epicureans*, indeed, who had no Thoughts of a future Exiſtence, made this their ſtanding Maxim, *Let us eat and drink, for To-morrow we die:* And in this they acted conſiſtently enough; for, how vain and contemptible ſoever the World in itſelf may be, yet, upon their *Hypotheſis*, it was their greateſt Prudence to make as much of it as they could, becauſe it was *their All:* But thoſe, who had better Conceptions of their *rational* Part, and of its ſurviving the *Funeral* of the Body, had another Way of Reaſoning. They perceived, that their Soul, in this State, was, as it were, out of its *Element*, confined to a Priſon of Fleſh, and thence hindered from acting with that Freedom and Vivacity, which, upon ſome certain *Sallies*, they found was congenial to it. They perceived, that our preſent State of Life, both by reaſon of its Shortneſs, and the other Vanities and Vexations that attend it, was not conſiderable enough to juſtify the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God in creating the World. They perceived, that Man, endued with ſuch large Capacities, and impatient Deſires of Happineſs, which nothing on Earth could ſatisfy, was a very poor and contemptible Creature indeed, and the more ſo for being ſo highly exalted at preſent, if this was the only *Scene* he was to act, and finally periſhed when he died. And, from theſe Obſervations, they inferred, that this Life was but a *Paſſage* to the next, a ſhort Voyage to an Harbour of Reſt; that Heaven, in ſhort, was their Home, and their native Region, and, in Conſequence of this Perſuaſion, what was their End and ſovereign Happineſs, that they made the Subject of their Thoughts, and Deſires, and daily Contemplations.

From Revelation. 2. THIS was the Reaſoning of the honeſt *Heathens*, but the *Chriſtian* Religion has furniſhed us with Arguments of a peculiar Nature. St *Paul*, writing to the *Philippians*, propounds his own Practice, as a Pattern for their Imitation; [h] *Beloved, be Followers together of me, and mark them which walk ſo, as ye have us for an Enſample; for our Converſation is in Heaven, from whence alſo we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt:* [i] The Word, which we render *Converſation*, ſignifies *Citizenſhip*, and alludes to a Practice frequent among the *Romans* in particular, whereby not only *private Perſons*, but whole *Cities* and *Provinces*, were admitted to certain Rights and Immunities peculiar that *Commonwealth* and *Conſtitution*, though they were neither Natives, nor Inhabitants of the City of *Rome*. Theſe were ſometimes beſtowed freely, as a Mark of Friendſhip and Favour; ſometimes purchaſed at a conſiderable Price; ſometimes inherited by Deſcent: But which Way ſoever conveyed, the Poſſeſſion of them was eſteemed a very valuable Advantage: And, in Alluſion to this, the Apoſtle intimates, that Chriſtians are *Denizens* of Heaven, and, tho' living now at ſome Diſtance from thence, are nevertheleſs incorporated there; ruled by the ſame Laws, and admitted to the ſame Privileges, and therefore ought to live in the ſame Manner with the bleſſed Inhabitants of that City *which is above*.

WE cannot, indeed, in all Points, come up to their *Perfection*, till we come to live in the ſame Place where they do; but we are bound to aſpire at as great a Reſemblance of them, as our preſent Condition will admit; as therefore they are happy, beyond all Imagination, in the Viſion and Fruition of Almighty God, ſo ſhould we, by devout Prayers and pious Meditations, approach and draw near unto him; contemplate the Glory of his Majeſty, the Beauties of his Works, the Wiſdom of his Providence, the Wonders of his Mercy and Goodneſs, and that amazing Inſtance and Illuſtration of it, the Redemption of loſt Mankind by the Death of his dear Son. As they are ſet above the Vanities and Changes of this World, by the preſent Enjoyment of Bliſs unchangeable and eternal; ſo ſhould the Proſpect of that Bliſs raiſe our Hearts above the preſent World, inſpire a generous Diſdain of all the infincere Pleaſures and ſhort uncertain Advantages here below; lighten our Afflictions, moderate our Paſſions, and reconcile us to the Apprehenſions and Approaches of that *Diſſolution*, which, in Death, lays the Seeds of an endleſs Immortality. As they are freed from Sin, and ſhine in uninterrupted Holineſs; ſo ſhould we conſider ourſelves, as Perſons no longer under the Power of a carnal Principle, but animated by a Divine Spirit to a rational Life, a Life of Temperance and Chaſtity, of ſevere Virtue and exemplary Piety, of Activity and unwearied Induſtry in doing Good, and of ſuch habitual Mortification of thoſe Affections, which move us to Evil, that as with the Bleſſed above *they are not*, ſo with us they may be, as though *they were not*.

3. AN-

[h] Phil. iii. 17, 20.

[i] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III.

3. ANOTHER Argument, peculiarly *Chriſtian*, to engage our Endeavours and Aſpirations after Heaven, is what St *Paul* makes uſe of to the *Coloſſians*; [k] *if ye then be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe Things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the Right-Hand of God: Set your Affections on Things above, and not on Things on the Earth*; *for ye are dead*, dead to Sin and to the World, *and your Life is hid with Chriſt in God*; the Force of which Reaſonings is plainly this,——That it becometh the Diſciples to imitate their Maſter, and the Members to conform to the Head, to conform in a *figurative*, though they cannot in a *literal* Senſe. Though, therefore, with *Chriſt* we cannot as yet *looſen the Bands of Death*, and break through the Priſon of the Grave; yet we can now riſe with him from the Death of Sin to Newneſs of Life, and by his Reſurrection are not only enabled, but alſo admoniſhed ſo to do: And although, in his bodily Aſcenſion, *we cannot*, as he told St *Peter*, *follow him now*; yet we can, in ſome Senſe, aſcend with him by a proper Elevation of our Thoughts and Affections, and from the Contemplation of his Aſcenſion are myſtically invited ſo to do. [l] The Aſcenſion of our Saviour, in ſhort, as it is the Pledge and Pattern of *ours*, adds new Supplements of Support to our Hopes of arriving at that bleſſed Place whither he is gone before, and muſt needs therefore, at the ſame Time, fan the Flame of our Affections, and make them tend upward: For with good Reaſon therefore may the pious and devout Soul now bear up herſelf upon the Wings of Contemplation, Love, and Deſire, and follow her aſcending Lord, where the Eyes of the wondering Apoſtles were forced to leave him, and, in the Words of *Eliſha* to his departing Maſter, ſay, *As the Lord liveth, and as my Soul liveth, I will not leave thee*; *bleſſed and holy is he, that has Part* in this firſt Aſcenſion; for *on him the ſecond Death ſhall have no Power*. Which leads us,

II. To obſerve ſome of the chief *Benefits*, that ariſe from our being poſſeſſed of this Virtue; as it is the beſt Expedient to beget and confirm in us a Contempt of the World; to mitigate and aſſwage the Evils of Life; to give Pleaſure and Satisfaction to the Mind here; and to fit and prepare the Soul for Happineſs *heneafter*. *The* Benefits *of Heavenly-mindedneſs.*

1. WE, who live on the Face of the Earth, may think it a Body of conſiderable Magnitude, but, if we were to take a View of it from one of the higher *Orbs*, it would appear no greater than a *Point*. Now, though this might be demonſtrated upon *mathematical* Principles, yet, as every one is not capable of doing that, ſuch an high and elevated Proſpect would certainly ſave us the Trouble. The Matter is the ſame in the Caſe before us. This World, conſidered alone, may carry perhaps with it a ſpecious and good Appearance, and he that conſiders it in this Light, will need Reaſon and Argument to convince him of its *Vanity*; but now it is but converſing a little in the other World, and taking a View of it from thence, and we ſhall find, that, without any more ado, it will ſhrink away almoſt into nothing. From ſuch an elevated Proſpect, all the Pride and Gaiety of this Earth would be but like the Flutter of ſo many Butterflies, and the Buſineſs and Hurry of Life, like the Toils of ſo many Ants about a little Mole-hill.

2. AND as the Contemplation and Deſire of Heaven *leſſens the Good*, ſo it *leſſens the Evil* of the preſent Life, and is an effectual Means both to *wean* us from the one, and *ſupport* us under the other. That Wants and Afflictions, Diſeaſes and Languiſhings, Sorrow and Decay are Incumbrances upon Mortality, from which the brighteſt Virtue and moſt heavenly Diſpoſitions are not exempted, is verified by daily *Experience*; but then we miſtake the Matter much, if we ſuppoſe the ſame Calamities equally grievous to all. The Senſe of theſe is unqueſtionably more or leſs afflicting, as they find a Man's Mind more or leſs armed to encounter them; and every Impreſſion is proportionably tender, as it wounds us in the Part moſt ſenſible, and threatens the Deſtruction of that, wherein we eſteem our Happineſs to conſiſt: From whence it follows, [m] that *to mind earthly Things*, in St *Paul*'s Meaning, is to multiply Sorrows to ourſelves, by giving Afflictions a Power of making us miſerable; but that, *to have our Converſation in Heaven*, is the Way to conſult our preſent Eaſe, as well as our future Happineſs. For while we look upon Heaven as our Home and Place of Reſt, the Inconveniencies upon our Journey are eaſily diſpenſed with, and we learn to be content in our Travels, with the Want of thoſe Accommodations, of which we have

[k] Col. iii. 1, &c.
[l] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. II.
[m] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels,

have Plenty and Abundance to welcome our Arrival at our fixed Habitation; where, the more Troubles we have paſſed through, the kinder Uſage we ſhall find, and ſo either totally forget them, or remember them with Pleaſure, when [n] *our light Affliction, which was but for a Moment, hath wrought for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.*

3. AND as the Deſire and Contemplation of Heaven and heavenly Things mitigates the Afflictions of Life; ſo, at one and the ſame Time, it both furniſhes the Soul with the greateſt Pleaſure *here*, and prepares it for the higheſt Enjoyments *hereafter*. That *intellectual* Pleaſures are greater than *ſenſual*, the Senſualiſts themſelves will hardly deny: But now, of all intellectual Pleaſures, to contemplate the infinite Perfection of God, and the Happineſs of thoſe bleſſed Spirits that enjoy him; the Order of Angels, and that noble and bleſſed Company of Saints; to contemplate the laſt and richeſt Scene of Providence, and the Diſcovery of all the reſt that went before, when the Reaſon of all difficult and perplexing Appearances ſhall be made plain, and the *manifold Wiſdom* of God ſet in a clear Light; to have our Minds employed about the greateſt and beſt Things; to walk with God, and keep a conſtant Communion with him, muſt needs be the ſweeteſt, as well as the nobleſt Entertainment, on this Side Heaven. But, beſides the Entertainment it gives to our Minds, it preſents to our Thoughts the Nature and Quality of the Happineſs we are to enjoy above, *viz*, that it is a clear Viſion, and ardent Love of God, who cannot be ſeen by him that *lives*, much leſs by him that *lives ill*. And this cannot fail of putting us upon thinking, that an Holy and Divine Frame of Spirit is abſolutely requiſite, not only as a *Condition* to our *Admiſſion* into Heaven, but ſuch a Condition likewiſe to our *Enjoyment* of it, that, without this Diſpoſition, there is no being happy, even though we were in it. And from this Conſideration, a Man naturally paſſes, to fit himſelf for the Enjoyment of his Maker, *to purify himſelf, as he is pure*, and to purge and ſpiritualize his Nature, that ſo he may be qualified for the refined Joys above.

[o] WITH what Pleaſure then ſhould we think of theſe *great and glorious Things, which God hath prepared for them that love him*; [p] *of that Inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, which fadeth not away, reſerved for us in the Heavens?* How ſhould we welcome the Thoughts of that happy Hour, when we ſhall be removed from all the Troubles and Temptations of a wicked and ill-natured World; when we ſhall be paſt all Storms, and ſafely landed in the Regions of Bliſs and Immortality? O bleſſed Time! (may the good Chriſtians ſay) when *Mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up of Life*, and we ſhall enter upon the Poſſeſſion of that Happineſs and Glory, which God hath promiſed, and our Faith hath believed, and our Hopes have raiſed us to the Expectation of; when we ſhall be eaſed of all our Pains, and reſolved of all our Doubts, and purged from all our Sins, and freed from all our Fears; made happy beyond our Hopes, and have all that Happineſs ſecured to us, beyond the Power of Time or Chance: When we ſhall know God, and other Things, without Study; and love him, and one another, without Meaſure; and ſerve and praiſe him without Wearineſs; and obey him without Reluctancy; and ſtill be more and more delighted in knowing, and loving, and praiſing, and obeying him, to all Eternity. [q] *Bleſſed is the Man, whom thou chuſeſt, O Lord, and receiveſt unto thee: He ſhall dwell in thy Courts, and ſhall be ſatisfied with the Pleaſures of thy Houſe, even of thy holy Temple.*

[n] 2 Cor. iv. 17. [o] *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [p] 1 Pet. i. 4. [q] Pſal. lxv. 4.

SECT.

SECT. I.

Of external Duties to GOD, *and,*

I. OF PRAYER.

PRAYER [r] is a ſolemn Act of worſhipping the ſupreme Being, whereby we recognize his *eternal Power and Godhead*; whereby we acknowledge, that he is the Creator and Governor of the World; that we abſolutely, in every Reſpect, depend on him; that *every good and perfect Gift cometh from him*; and that, in all our Exigencies, he is ready to hear, and able to relieve us. So that [r] the Reaſon of our making our Requeſts known unto God, is founded upon the Belief of his infinite *Goodneſs*, which diſpoſes him to grant the Petitions of his Servants; of his unlimited *Power*, which enables him to fulfil all their Deſires; and of his *Truth* and Veracity, which make it impoſſible for him not to keep the Promiſes which he hath made, of *giving to thoſe that aſk*. This is the Duty: And, I. The Grounds and Reaſonableneſs hereof; together, II. With the Conditions requiſite to make it an acceptable Service to God, will be the Scope of this Diſcourſe. *Prayer, what.*

I. [s] IT has been the Opinion of the beſt and wiſeſt Men of all Ages, that the chief Deſign of making Man was, that there might be a Being able to apprehend and ſet forth the Glory of God in theſe lower Regions. For the Creation ſeemed to be imperfect, and the Glory, which redounds to God from his Works, obſcure, while there was no Creature able to take Notice of them. Man therefore, the laſt, beſt Work of God, was formed to ſupply this Want; and, as all other Creatures were made for his Uſe and Entertainment, he himſelf was ſet apart for the Service and Worſhip of God. To this End he was endued with the *angelick* Faculty of *Underſtanding*, and the no leſs uſeful and noble Inſtrument of *Speech*, by which he was capable of cloathing his Thoughts with outward Expreſſions, that, by his Reaſon, he might apprehend, and, by his Voice, celebrate the Divine Perfections; and, as the *Prieſt of Nature*, offer up the Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving for the whole Creation. And into what Raptures of Admiration, into what Expreſſions of Gratitude, may we ſuppoſe the *firſt Man* to break forth, when he awaked out of the Duſt into Being, and beheld this goodly Fabrick of the World, and himſelf, the greateſt and happieſt Creature in it! Whence the Order, whence the Beauty, whence the Variety of this bliſsful Paradiſe around him; nay, whence himſelf? Such wonderful Effects muſt neceſſarily raiſe him up to contemplate the firſt Cauſe, from whence they flowed; and we may piouſly preſume, that the firſt Time he opened his Lips, was to ſhew forth his Creator's Praiſe. *The Grounds of it, from our own Nature.*

THUS early did the Duty of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to God begin, commanded by no Laws, enforced by no Motives, but thoſe of Gratitude and Inclination. For our firſt Parents had no Wants to be relieved, no Grievances to be redreſſed; even their Deſires for future Mercies were *prevented*, and all they could aſk of God, in that bliſsful State, was only the Continuance of it. But when unhappily they fell from their Innocence, and thereupon contracted Guilt, and entailed Miſery upon their Poſterity, Supplication and Prayer became the neceſſary Duty of Mankind; and ſo will continue, as long as we have Infirmities to be healed, and Wants to be relieved, and Sins to be pardoned, which will be as long as we abide in this State of Mortality. [u] Our *Dependence* upon God makes it neceſſary to ſue to him for what we want, as well as to give him Praiſe for what we have: Our *Guilt*, and Liableneſs to his Juſtice, prompt us to ſeek his Favour by humble Contrition for Sin, and earneſt Deſire of his Pardon: Our *Infirmities* and Temptations ſhew us, how abſolutely needful it is to be aſſiſted by his Grace, both to recover ourſelves by true Repentance, and to perſevere in doing the Things that he requires: And, laſtly, the common *Ties* of Humanity, and the Religion of

[r] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [s] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [t] *Cotes*'s Sermons.
[u] *Clagget*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

Charity oblige us to pray for one another, as well as for ourſelves: So that natural Light diſcovers this Duty, and ſhews it through all the Ways of *Invocation*, or Calling upon God.

From univerſal Practice.

AND accordingly, if we look into the *Heathen* World, we ſhall find, that no Nation was ever yet ſo rude and barbarous, as not to have ſome Form of religious Worſhip; and that, however the Vulgar might differ in the *Object* of their Adoration, the wiſeſt, in moſt Nations, were generally of the *Roman* Orator's Opinion; * "That the Nature of God may juſtly challenge the Worſhip of Men, becauſe "of its ſuperlative Excellence, Bleſſedneſs, and Eternity; and that, whoever doubts "or denies this, (as [x] *Ariſtotle* aſſerts) ought not to be dealt with by Arguments, "but by Puniſhments." Their Acknowledgment therefore was, [y] that all their Actions ſhould *begin with the Gods*, and that a Bleſſing could not be derived upon them, without imploring their Aid; nay, [z] that the Sacrifices were not duly offered, nor the Gods rightly worſhipped, without Prayer. The *Stoics* indeed, who imputed ſo much to their own Strength, ſeemed [a] to exclude the Divine Aſſiſtance, and, in Conſequence of that, to ſhut our Prayer; but we find them frequently retracting this Opinion; and teaching their Diſciples, that [b] *as no Man can be good without God*, ſo their Buſineſs was, [c] *to pray for Health of Mind and Body, but more eſpecially for the former.* And indeed, whatever ſome profligate People may pretend, and, in the Height of their Jollity, ſay to themſelves, *Who is the Almighty, that we ſhould fear, and call upon him?* There are ſome certain Intervals, *viz.* when Anguiſh and Diſtreſs come upon them, and all human Means of Relief and Support fail, that they will naturally *cry unto God*, and endeavour to take Sanctuary in his All-ſufficiency: Inſomuch that it may juſtly be queſtioned, whether ever there was a Sinner, ſo wicked and obdurate, who, in the laſt Efforts of Life, (could we but ſee what paſſed *within*) was able to overcome all ſecret Prayer, and Motion of the Soul towards God.

The Reaſonableneſs of it.

AND indeed, if we conſider the Matter rightly, what can we ſuppoſe more reaſonable, than that the ſovereign Lord of all the World ſhould be acknowledged by us? [d] That we, who do continually depend upon him, ſhould, ever and anon, be looking up to him, and expreſſing that Dependence? For is it not fit, that we, who every Moment experience a thouſand Inſtances of his Kindneſs, partake of a thouſand Mercies and Favours from his Hand, and muſt periſh the next Minute, unleſs they be continued to us; is it not highly fit and reaſonable, I ſay, that we ſhould take Notice of theſe Things to our bounteous Benefactor? We ſhould think it very ill Manners to paſs by our *Prince*, or even any of our *Betters*, without ſaluting them, or, ſome Way or other, teſtifying our Reſpect to them, though they had no Way particularly obliged us; but if we were beholden to them for our *Daily Bread*, to come into their Preſence without taking Notice of them, or their Bounty to us, would be intolerable: How much more intolerable therefore muſt it be to paſs by the Almighty, Day after Day, nay, to be in his Preſence continually, (as indeed we always are) and yet neither pay any Homage and Reverence to him, as he is our *ſupreme Lord*, nor any Acknowledgments, as he is our *daily Preſerver?* Eſpecially conſidering, that this is one of the moſt delightful and honourable Employments that our Natures are capable of.

The Pleaſure and Honour of it.

VICIOUS Men perhaps may have other Conceptions, but, as they have no Experience of Devotion, they are not competent Judges; thoſe only, who have a good Senſe and Reliſh of God upon their Minds, and have uſed and accuſtomed themſelves to ſpiritual Exerciſes, can form right Notions of it: And to ſuch we appeal, whether the Delights, and Satisfaction, and Conſolation they receive from converſing with God, and an hearty pouring out their Souls unto him, be not inexpreſſible? Whether they do not find more Joy, and Peace, and Comfort, in their Attendance upon God's Service, either in publick or private, than ever they did from the Pleaſure and Gratifications of any of their outward Senſes. As much as the

* Nat. Deor. L. I. [x] Topic. i. 9.

[y] A Diis immortalibus nobis agendi capienda primordia, CIC. *de Leg. L. II.* Benè ac ſapienter majores inſtituerunt, ut rerum agendarum, ita dicendi initium à precationibus capere, quod nihil ritè nihilque providenter homines ſine Deorum immortalium ope, conſilio, & honore auſpicarentur. PLIN. *Paneg.*

[z] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. L. XXVIII. c. ii. [a] Quàm ſtultum eſt optare, cùm poſſis à te impetrare? Non ſunt ad Cœlum elevandæ manus. SEN. *Epiſt.* 41. [b] Vir bonus ſine Deo nemo eſt, *Ibid.*

[c] Roga bonam mentem, bonam valetudinem animi deinde corporis. *Epiſt.* 10. [d] *Sharpe's* Sermons, Vol. I.

the Soul is more pure and excellent than the Body, ſo much are the Pleaſures and Gratifications of *that*, more exquiſitely delicious than thoſe, which ariſe from corporeal Objects: But of all the Pleaſures of the Soul, thoſe, that it receives from the Communications of God, in the Exerciſe of Devotion, are incomparably the higheſt and moſt affecting; inſomuch that, however we talk of Pleaſures and Enjoyments, we may truly affirm, that no Man ever found them, until he became acquainted with God; until he was made ſenſible of his Love, Partaker of his Favours, and lived in an entire Friendſhip and Communion with him, which is chiefly, if not only, expreſſed and maintained by Prayer, and other Exerciſes of Devotion.

WE account it, and that very juſtly, a mighty Privilege and Dignity to be known to Princes and great Men; to have their Ear, and enjoy the Liberty of Acceſs to them at all Times: But what is this to the Honour and Dignity we receive, in having Leave given us, at all Times, to come into the Preſence of the Great King of the Univerſe, whoſe Power and Goodneſs are infinite? That we, poor ſinful Duſt and Aſhes, ſhould be permitted to ſpeak to ſo tranſcendent a Majeſty! Nay, ſhould have free Liberty given us to converſe with him, as with a Friend! to open all our Wants, to acquaint him with all our Concernments, to make known every Thought of our Hearts, and every Affair of our Lives to him! Nay, and to be aſſured, that he will be ſo far from taking amiſs this Boldneſs in us, that he will favourably accept all our Applications, and make us as kind Returns, as we ourſelves can wiſh or deſire! What greater Honour are we capable of than this? And how far are we ſunk below all the Ambition of human Nature, when we will not take all Opportunities of thus honouring and doing Credit to ourſelves, in making our Addreſſes to God? Eſpecially conſidering, farther, the many great Benefits and Advantages that accrue to us hereby.

The Benefits and Advantages of it.

OF what ſingular Efficacy the due Performance of this Duty is, to procure all temporal Bleſſings, and avert all temporal Judgments, we are inſtructed in *Solomon*'s Prayer, at the Dedication of the Temple: [e] *If thy People* Iſrael *be ſmitten down before the Enemy; if Heaven be ſhut up, and there be no Rain; if there be in the Land Famine and Peſtilence*; or *if thy People go out to Battle againſt their Enemy*; then *if they pray towards this Place, and confeſs thy Name, hear thou their Prayer and Supplication in Heaven thy Dwelling-place; deliver them from their Afflictions, and maintain their Cauſe.* So that, according to the wiſe Man's Account, if Wars infeſt a Nation, Prayer is the ſureſt Procurer of Peace or Victory; if Dearth or Famine rage in a Land, this reſtores Plenty and Abundance; if the *Heavens* be as *Braſs*, and the *Earth* as *Iron*, this diſſolves them, and makes them relent into Showers and Fatneſs; if the Peſtilence reigns in the Streets, this holy Breathing can purge the Air, and diſpel all noxious Vapours: In fine, whatever Calamities, whether private or publick, our Sins have drawn down upon us, a devout Performance of this Duty is able to remove them, and to ſecure the Bleſſing of God, both upon our Perſons and our Labours, upon our *Baſket* and *Store*, upon our Families, upon our Employments, and upon all that we either have or do. Nay, ſuch is the Virtue of Prayer, that it makes every Thing we have a Bleſſing of God; and all the Actions of our *natural* or *civil* Life, however indifferent in themſelves, turn into Acts of Religion.

To mention but one Benefit more, which naturally ariſes from a conſcientious Practice of this Duty. [f] As in Prayer we ſet our Wants and Infirmities continually before us; we ſolemnly place ourſelves in the Preſence of God, and call on him, who ſees all our Actions; we enter into certain Purpoſes and Reſolves againſt Sin; ſettle our Minds into Seriouſneſs and Deliberation; abſtract them from ſecular and worldly Affairs, and, by frequent converſing with God, are changed (gradually and inſenſibly changed) into his Image and Similitude; ſo it cannot be doubted, but that this Exerciſe muſt needs be highly ſubſervient to the Purpoſes of *Holineſs*, as it produces Humility and Heavenly-Mindedneſs in us, Care and Vigilance in our Conduct, a reverential Fear of God in our Minds, and a Reſemblance of the Divine Perfections in our Nature. Nay, ſo very conducive is this one Duty towards a Life of Godlineſs, that we may venture to lay down theſe three Things for undoubted Truths. 1. [g] That it is impoſſible for any Man to be *good*, that lives without conſtant Prayer. 2. That whoſoever is *good* at preſent, if he diſuſes himſelf to this Duty, will not continue good long. And, 3. That whoever makes a Conſcience of praying frequently and heartily,

[e] 1 Kings viii. 33, &c. [f] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [g] *Sharpe*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

heartily, and continues ſo to do, though he cannot, at preſent, be ſaid to be a *good Man*, yet it is impoſſible for him long to continue *bad*. He will certainly, at laſt, get the Victory over his Luſts and ill Habits; ſince *his praying*, as one expreſſes it, *will either make him leave* [h] *ſinning, or ſinning make him leave praying*.

An Objection againſt it.

" BUT if God [i] be ſo omniſcient a Being, as to know what we ſtand in Need " of, without our telling him, or where we are preſſed, without our complaining; " what Reaſon is there for our acquainting him with our Wants or Calamities? " And if he be an infinitely good and kind Being, more ready to give, than we are " to aſk or receive, what Occaſion for urging and ſolliciting him to do what his " own *eſſential* Goodneſs will prompt him to do for us, without our aſking? Eſpe- " cially conſidering, [k] that he is an unchangeable Being, the ſame *Yeſterday, To-day, " and for ever*; the ſame not only in his Nature and Eſſence, but alſo in his Coun- " ſels and Purpoſes. What he hath once reſolved, he ſteadily executes; and is not " therefore to be moved by the Prayers and Supplications of clamorous and impor- " tunate Petitioners."

Anſwered.

Now, in Anſwer to all this, it may be obſerved, that tho' the Knowledge of God be ſuch, that he cannot but be ſenſible of all our Wants and Diſtreſſes, nor can we tell him any Thing, that he did not know before; yet it is but fit and reaſonable, that, as we are really in Want, we ſhould own our Wants to him; that, as we are really dependent upon him, we ſhould acknowledge that Dependence; acknowledge, I ſay, that we are indigent and impotent Creatures; that we need many Things, and what Things they are that we need; that we cannot ſupply our own Wants, and that God alone is able to ſupply them. All this, I ſay, God knows as well, nay, much better, than we do: But, nevertheleſs, it is but fit and becoming us, that we ſhould profeſs and own what we know to be true, and freely declare the Senſe of our own Weakneſs, and his All-ſufficiency. In like Manner, tho' the Goodneſs of God be infinite, ſo that we can ſet no Bounds to it, yet may it be truly ſaid to be limited by his own Wiſdom and Juſtice; and therefore, ſhould he be ſo indulgent, as to give us every Thing we wanted, without aſking, however this might magnify his Fondneſs, it would not ſo well affect his Wiſdom; ſince hereby we might forget our Dependence on him, and impute his Bleſſings either to fortuitous Events, or the natural Courſe of Things. Whereas now, when good Things are, in a great Meaſure, with-held from Men, till they pray for them, and are made the Conſequence, as it were, of their Petitions; by this they perceive, from whoſe Hand *every good and perfect Gift cometh*; and by this they are convinced, how highly it concerns them to endeavour to procure his Favour and Good-will. And ſo again, [l] though the Purpoſes of God be unchangeable, yet are they not ſo *abſolute*, as to exclude all Conditions. He determines to ſupply the Wants of his Creatures, but then they muſt be ſuch, as are qualified to receive ſuch Supply. Now, among the Qualifications which he requires in thoſe, whoſe Wants he is determined to ſupply, the very chief of all is our Dependence upon him, and an entire Confidence in his Goodneſs and Bounty; and the proper Expreſſion of his Truſt and Dependence is our *looking up unto God, from* whom *cometh our Help*.

[m] THERE is, indeed, a Temper in Men, that affects to be courted and flattered, and fawned upon, and complies with the Requeſts of others out of mean and little Ends: But this is the Effect of Pride, and Paſſion, and Intereſt, much different from theſe Condeſcenſions of Almighty God, who, tho' he cannot be ſubject either to Weakneſs or Corruption, may yet be prevailed upon by ſuch Methods, as become a reaſonable, and wiſe, and generous Mind. And therefore, when Men pay the Homage due to his infinite Majeſty, when they throw themſelves entirely upon his Goodneſs, caſt all their Care upon him, commit their Souls, and all their Concerns into his Hands, and that with ſuch devout and ſtrong Perſuaſions of his being a faithful Creator, that no Delays, no Refuſals can tempt them to ſuſpect or diſtruſt him; this is ſuch an Inducement to help and favour People in Diſtreſs, as every great Spirit, every Man of Honour, and common good Nature, would think it a Fault not to comply with. So that for God to ſhew himſelf flexible, upon ſuch Occaſions, is not a Thing chargeable with *Fickleneſs* or Inconſtancy, but rather a gracious Compliance, upon juſt and reaſonable Motives; and to harden himſelf againſt the Cries and Complaints of Suitors thus qualified, would much leſs become the *Character* of the ſovereign Judge, and infinitely good Ruler of the World. [n] It is a groſs Conception therefore,

[h] *Blackhall*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [i] Ibid. Vol. II. [k] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [l] Ibid.
[m] *Stanhope*'s Occaſional Sermons. [n] *Smalridge*, ibid.

therefore to imagine, that our Prayers are *troubleſome* to him, as the Requeſts of importunate *Beggars* are to us: For though ſuch People as ſay nothing of their Poverty, may be more proper Objects of our Charity, than noiſy and clamorous Suitors are, yet it is certainly juſt in God to overlook the Neceſſities of thoſe, who are above aſking a Supply, and to grant the Requeſts of thoſe only, who, with full Aſſurance of Hope, fly unto him for Help in the Time of Need; ſince this is the Language of the Scripture: [o] *The Lord is nigh unto all them*, and them only *that call upon him; he will fulfil the Deſire of them that fear him; he will alſo hear their Cry, and will ſave them.* Which leads us to conſider,

II. THE Conditions requiſite to make our Prayers an acceptable Service to God. That an inward and true Senſe of Piety is abſolutely neceſſary to recommend our Prayers to God, is an evident Principle of Natural Religion; for [p] *this we know, that God heareth not Sinners, but if any Man be a Worſhipper of God, and doth his Will, him he heareth*; for which Reaſon the Apoſtle aſſures us, [q] *that if our Heart condemn us not, then have we Confidence towards God*, not only a general Confidence in his Favour, and the good Diſpoſitions of his Providence towards us, but in his *particular Goodneſs*, when we addreſs ourſelves to him by Prayer; for ſo it follows in the next Words, *and whatſoever we aſk, we receive of him, becauſe we keep his Commandments, and do thoſe Things which are pleaſing in his Sight.* That Purity of Intention, which is neceſſary to the Perfection of all other Chriſtian Duties, is much more neceſſary and indiſpenſable in this of Prayer, is apparent from hence, that, though this alone cannot render our Prayers acceptable to God, yet we are aſſured, that without it they will be unavailable: And therefore the Apoſtle acquaints us, that as there are ſome, who have not, becauſe they aſk not; ſo there are others, who [r] *aſk, and receive not, becauſe they aſk amiſs, that they may conſume*, what they hope to receive, *upon their Luſts.* *The Requiſites of Prayer.*

IF ever therefore we deſire that our Prayers and Addreſſes ſhould enter Heaven, and find Admittance to the Throne of Grace, we muſt be careful neither to *regard Iniquity in our Hearts*, nor any indirect End in our Intentions. Our Mind, wherewith we pray, muſt firſt of all be ſuch, as God delights in; our End, for which we pray, muſt be ſuch, as he approves; and then the Manner, in which we pray, muſt be ſuch, as he directs; [s] which, according to the beſt Inſtructions that we have, muſt be, 1. With firm *Truſt* in him, to whom we pray. 2. Serious *Attention* of Mind whilſt we pray. 3. A *fervent Deſire* of what we pray for. 4. *Humility* in the Act of praying. And, 5. *Perſeverance* in our Performance of it. The *Truſt*, wherewith we offer up our Prayers, muſt bear Proportion to the ſure Promiſes of God, on which it is to be built; our *Attention* to the Weight and Importance of that religious Duty, about which we are employed; our *Fervency*, to the Earneſtneſs of thoſe Wants, under which we labour; our *Humility*, to the Glory and Majeſty of that Being, to whom our Prayers are addreſſed; and our *Perſeverance*, to the ineſtimable Value of thoſe Bleſſings, which we promiſe ourſelves at laſt.

1. THE Majeſty of God indeed, upon our firſt Reflection, is more apt to ſtrike Awe and Terror into our Souls, than to give us any Truſt and Confidence in our Approaches to him. If we take a View of our own Meanneſs, and his Glory; of our own Sinfulneſs, and his Purity; and go about to meaſure the immenſe Diſtance there is between him and his Creature; and, if poſſible, the ſtill more immenſe Diſtance between a ſinful Creature, and that immaculate Being, who *hateth all Iniquity*; it will ſeem Preſumption enough to pray unto him, without adding to it the yet greater Confidence of hoping, of truſting, that the Prayers of ſuch impotent, ſuch mean, ſuch wretched Supplicants ſhall work upon ſo powerful, ſo ſublime, ſo awful a Majeſty. But when our Approaches to him are in Obedience to his Command; when our Hopes are built upon his ſure Mercies; when our Confidence is ſupported by his expreſs Promiſes; we cannot withdraw ourſelves from his Preſence, without Violation of his *Authority*; we cannot deſpair of Acceptance, without Derogation to his *Goodneſs*; we cannot doubt of Succeſs, without Diſtruſt of his *Veracity*. Whatever Arguments therefore can be offered, to weaken our Faith, or ſtagger our Hopes, or ſhake our Confidence, are all anſwered by this gracious Promiſe of our Saviour, [t] *I ſay unto you, what Things ſoever ye deſire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them,* Truſt *in God.*

[o] Pſal. cxlv. 18, 19.
[a] *Smalridge*'s Sermons.
[p] John ix. 31.
[t] Mark xi. 24.
[q] 1 John iii. 21, 22.
[r] James iv. 3.

and ye ſhall have them; for be the Things we deſire never ſo great, they are not without the Compaſs of his *Omnipotence* to grant; be they never ſo diſproportioned to our Deſerts, they do not ſurpaſs the Bounds of his Merits.

Attention *of Mind.*

2. ATTENTION of Mind is another Qualification of an acceptable Prayer; and a Qualification it is, not ſo eaſy to be attained, as we may imagine. If we conſider the Make and Frame of our Souls, and attend a little to what paſſes within us, we find, that there is a certain Train of Thoughts, which are conſtantly on Float in our Minds, ſome going, and others quickly ſucceeding in their Room; ſo that, when we take moſt Care to keep our Thoughts from roving, we find it not eaſy to ſettle and fix what, in its own Nature, is ſo wandering and volatile. God therefore, who expects that we ſhould ſerve him, in Proportion only to the Strength of thoſe Faculties, wherewith he hath endued us, will no Doubt graciouſly pardon our unavoidable Infirmities, our involuntary Wanderings, and the ungovernable Diſtractions of our Thoughts. But though God's Mercy will certainly acquit us from the Imputation of Guilt for ſuch Defects, as, from the Infirmity of our Natures, are unavoidable; yet it will in no Caſe clear us in Reſpect of thoſe Wanderings of Thought, which are affected and voluntary. [u] When, through the Power of our Luſts, or the Cares of the World our Minds are ſo totally immerſed in ſenſual and carnal Things, that we cannot call them off to ſpiritual and religious Duties; when, for want of due Care and Attention, we ſet our Thoughts adrift, as it were, and ſuffer them, without Check or Controul, to wander at Random; when, before our Entry upon this ſolemn Duty, we neither prepare ourſelves for it by imprinting on our Souls venerable and awful Notions of the tranſcendent Majeſty of that ſupreme Being, to whom we approach; nor, during our religious Exerciſe, retain a lively Senſe of the exceeding Glory of that God, before whom we ſtand; when the Words, in ſhort, we pour forth, are vain empty Sounds, unaccompanied with any inward Conceptions anſwering to them; ſuch wandering and diſtracted Prayers as theſe, are ſo far from being a * *reaſonable Service*, which alone is *acceptable unto God*, that the Royal Preacher calls them the Sacrifice of Fools, and thereupon ſubjoins this good Advice, *Keep thy Foot, i. e.* thy Thoughts and Affections, [x] *when thou goeſt into the Houſe of God: Be not raſh with thy Mouth, and let not thine Heart be haſty to utter any Thing before God; for God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth.*

Fervency.

THE Apoſtle, in the telling us, that [y] *the effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous Man availeth much*, does not only ſuppoſe an intenſe Devotion in Prayer to be a Duty, but a Means likewiſe to recommend it more effectually to the Favour and Acceptance of God. Real Want, where there is a quick Senſe of it, will find a Way of expreſſing itſelf in ſuch a Manner, as to excite Pity; and therefore, if we are thoroughly conſcious to ourſelves of our own Indigence, of our utter Inability to ſupply our preſſing Wants, and our neceſſary Dependence on God, who alone can ſupply them, this deep Senſe of our Neceſſities will make us warm and vehement for Relief. [z] *As the Hart panteth after the Water-Brook, ſo* David's *Soul panted after God; his Soul thirſted for God; his Fleſh longed for him, in a dry and thirſty Land*; his *Soul longed, yea, even fainted for the Courts of the Lord.* The Panting of a Hart wearied, purſued, and ſpent, the Drought of parched and gaping Land, the Cravings of Hunger and Thirſt, and the Faintings and Longings of a Woman with Child, are proper and lively Images of an eager and affectionate Concern for thoſe Bleſſings, which the Holy *Pſalmiſt* thus earneſtly deſired. This is the Life and true Spirit of Devotion, which aſcends up, and *takes Heaven*, as it were, *by Violence*: And for this Reaſon very likely our Prayers are called, in Scripture, a *Sacrifice*, and *Incenſe*, becauſe they become acceptable, by the ſelf-ſame Methods, that thoſe were uſed to be of old. It is Burning that creates the *ſweet-ſmelling Savour*; and it muſt be the Earneſtneſs and Warmth of our Prayers, that alone can make them *come up as Incenſe before the Throne of God.*

Humility.

4. ANOTHER Property, neceſſary and eſſential to give Succeſs and Efficacy to our Prayers, is *Humility*, which ariſes from the Nature of the Duty itſelf: For ſince, by Prayer we acknowledge ourſelves to be indigent and dependent Creatures, Want, one would think, is a ſure Remedy againſt *Pride*, as Dependence is a Motive to be humble. [a] Acceſs indeed we have, and are commanded *to come with Boldneſs to the Throne of Grace*; but it ſhould always be remembered, that it is a *Throne of Grace*, becauſe the *Seat*

[u] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. * Rom. xii. 1. [x] Eccleſ. v. 1, 2. [y] James v. 16.
[z] Pſal. xlii. 1, 2. [a] *Stanhope*'s Occaſional Sermons.

Seat of Judgment, not any of us is able to ſtand before; that Mercy is the only Thing we can pretend to, and that even this is, in no Degree, due to us for our own Sakes, but purely upon the Account of *another*, who purchaſed it for us at the Price of his own Blood; that therefore, if we obtain our Petitions, this is an Exceſs of Bounty; but if we wait long, or be denied, God is Maſter of his Favours, and *may do what he will with his own*. So that every Thing that may conduce to the laying us low in our Thoughts, every Thing that may help to ſpeak our Modeſty, and Reverence, and Submiſſion, is all little enough for Creatures ſo deſpicable by Nature, and by Sin ſo deteſtable as we, ſuing for Bleſſings, that they deſerve not, and for Mercies, that they have no Right to.

Perſeverance.

5. ONE Condition more of the final Succeſs and Validity of our Prayers is Patience and Perſeverance: For though God, for the Trial of our Faith, and the Improvement of our Humility, for the Manifeſtation of our Truſt in him, and Submiſſion to his Will, for the Increaſe of the Value of his Bleſſings, and the clearer Demonſtration of our entire Dependence on his Goodneſs and Bounty, may think it proper ſometimes to delay the Anſwer to our Prayers; yet muſt we not, upon that Account, deſpair of the Acceptance of our renewed Addreſſes. The relenting of the *unjuſt Judge* ſtands upon Record [d] in Scripture, as a plain Inſtance of the irreſiſtible Force of Perſeverance in Prayer. *He neither feared God, nor regarded Man*; and yet, *becauſe this Widow troubleth me*, ſaith he, *I will avenge her, leſt, by her continual Coming, ſhe weary me*. Now though it were Blaſphemy to think that God acts upon the ſame Motives with this *unjuſt Judge*; yet this we may learn from the Nature of the Parable, [e] that if a Man, who neither *fears God*, nor *regards Men*, who hath neither any Senſe of Religion or Humanity, may be ſuppoſed to be ſo far prevailed upon, by the earneſt Prayer of a miſerable neceſſitous Perſon, as to grant the Requeſt made to him, and to adminiſter Relief to the Supplicant, merely upon the Account of the Continuance and Importunity of the Petitions that are put up: How much more ought we to think, that God, who is infinite Goodneſs itſelf; who is always kind and bountiful to his Creatures; who delights to do them good, even without their deſiring it; and who is able to do them good with much leſs Pains, than they requeſt it: How much more ought we to think, I ſay, that this God, upon our earneſt and hearty Prayer to him, for any Thing we ſtand in need of, will return us a kind Anſwer, and grant us ſuch Supplies, as are proper for us? But then we are to remember, that we *pray always*, and *faint not*; that we be diligent, importunate, and perſevering in our Devotions; otherwiſe, we are not to expect any more favourable Return of them, than the Judge, in the Parable, made to the Widow, upon her firſt or ſecond Application to him.

THESE are ſome of the chief Qualifications that give Wings to our Prayers, and Strength to our Addreſſes: And that they may never fail of a kind Acceptance, we muſt be mindful at all Times to offer them up in the Name *of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. Having therefore not only a gracious God, *who heareth Prayers*, when offered up in a due and regular Manner, but a merciful Redeemer likewiſe, [f] *through* whom *we have Acceſs to the Father*; [g] *let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Aſſurance of Faith, having our Hearts ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience: And praying always with all* [h] *Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit*, let us *watch thereunto with all Perſeverance*.

2. *Of publick and private Prayer.*

Different Kinds *of Prayer.*

IF [i] we conſider the *Matter* of Prayer, we may diſtinguiſh it into Prayer for *ſpiritual*, and Prayer for *temporal* good Things; or into Prayer for *ourſelves*, and Interceſſion for *others*: If we conſider the *Manner* of Prayer, we may diſtinguiſh it into *mental*, which is, when we pray only with our Hearts, without uttering or expreſſing any Words; and *vocal*, which is, when we expreſs in Words, and utter with our Mouths the Deſires of our Hearts: But the only Diſtinction that we ſhall at preſent inſiſt on, is that of *publick* Prayer, which is, when we join with others in putting up our *common* Petitions; and *ſecret* Prayer, when, retired from all Company, we

[d] Luke xviii. 2, &c. [e] *Sharpe*'s Sermons. [f] Eph. ii. 18, [g] Heb. x. 22.
[h] Eph. vi. 18. [i] *Blackhall*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

we put up our private Petitions to God; and theſe, though for Matter and Subſtance the ſame, are yet two *diſtinct* Duties, and both neceſſary to be performed, as Occaſion calls for them.

Publick *and* private, *and their reſpective Advantages.*

THE Church is God's Houſe, the Place on Earth of his immediate Reſidence, and he hath promiſed, that [k] *when two or three are met together in his Name, he himſelf will be in the Midſt of them:* In the Cloſet however we do not ſhut ourſelves up from his all-ſeeing Eye; ſince our Saviour hath aſſured us, that [l] *if we pray in ſecret, our Father, which ſeeth in ſecret, ſhall reward us openly.* [m] The fitteſt Place to acknowledge publick Mercies, and implore the common Bleſſings of Life, is in *publick*, where the united Prayers of a Congregation are ſuppoſed to be more prevalent with Heaven, than ſingle Petitions: But there are ſome Favours we want, which it does not become us there to aſk; ſome Wounds to be healed, which are not to be expoſed to publick View; but common Decency requires, that particular Accounts be adjuſted betwixt God and our Souls in private: Nor can we ever properly deſcend into ourſelves, to know the true State of our Souls, but when we [n] *commune with our Hearts in our Chamber, and are ſtill.* In the Church, general Mercies are implored, and general Bleſſings acknowledged; but then there is no confeſſing our Guilt in all its Circumſtances, or affecting our Souls there with that holy Grief, which can only work a thorough Repentance: Whereas, in the *Cloſet*, we are at Liberty to indulge ourſelves in all the Expreſſions of Sorrow; and the pious Soul may let itſelf looſe to all the Fervour of Devotion, which, at the *Altar*, is ſo far from being praiſe-worthy, that it is highly blameable and indecent: For every Thing that is ſingular in publick, every Thing that draws the Eyes and Obſervation of others upon us, ſavours of *Hypocriſy* and *Oſtentation*, and is forbidden by our Saviour's Command [o] *of not performing* any Duty, *that we may be ſeen of Men.* But when we are under the Inſpection of no Eye, but that of God, who *ſpies out all our Ways, and underſtands our Thoughts, long before* they are formed, the more fervent our Devotions are, the more acceptable they are to him, becauſe there can be no Reaſon to ſuſpect the Sincerity of them: For we can never entertain ſuch unworthy Notions of God, as to imagine, that we can, by any Artifice, deceive him, and make him believe that *we honour him with our Lips, when* we know ourſelves, that *our Hearts are far from him.* So that, though by a falſe Zeal and pretended Sanctity in publick, we may prevail upon others to have a better Opinion of us, than we really deſerve; yet there is no Fear but that we ſhall act ſincerely, when we addreſs ourſelves in private to God; and then our Zeal cannot be too high, nor our Devotions too much inflamed, ſo long as they proceed from Sincerity, and are equally tempered with Fervour and Humility.

THERE is this farther Advantage of Retirement, that it is of ſingular Uſe to fix our Attention, which, by the Variety of the Objects we meet with in publick, is often broke and divided; and that we are leſs ſubject to ſpiritual Languors, when we are at Liberty to make Uſe of our own Thoughts and Expreſſions, to leave off when our Attention flags, and return to it again, at a more favourable Opportunity: But then we want in the Cloſet that awful Reverence, that Solemnity of Devotion, with which the Church inſpires us. *There* the *Beauty of Holineſs* appears in its brighteſt Luſtre, charms the Eyes, and inflames the Hearts of all Beholders. For what a decent, what an agreeable, what a raviſhing Sight is a well-ordered Congregation, offering up their Prayers, with one Conſent, and with one Voice, to their great Creator; laying aſide all Diſtinctions of rich and poor, mean and noble, and reſolving all their Differences into a pious Emulation of excelling each other in the Love of God, and Zeal for his Service? Certainly, if we could form to ourſelves any faint Image or Repreſentation of Heaven here on Earth, we muſt draw the *Model* of it, though in an infinite lower Degree, from the Uniformity and Order, the Reverence and Devotion of religious Aſſemblies; which, beſides their Reſemblance, have ſo neceſſary a Dependence on the other, that, to frequent the Service of the *Sanctuary*, to join in the religious Exerciſes of the *Church militant on Earth*, is the beſt Means to fit and prepare us to be worthy Members of the *Church triumphant in Heaven.*

BUT here a Queſtion may ariſe, " In what Manner it is moſt expedient for us to " make our Addreſſes to God in the publick Congregation, whether in *ſet Forms*, " or *extemporary Inventions*; and which ſerves the Ends of our Devotion beſt, one " *common*,

[k] Matth. xviii. 20. [l] Ibid. vi. 6. [m] *Cotes's* Sermons. [n] Pſal. iv. 4. [o] Matth. vi. 5.

"*common Liturgy*, or Words and Expreſſions *every Day new*." That *ſet Forms* of Prayer are no where prohibited in Scripture, nay, that, in ſome Places, they are expreſſly commanded and preſcribed, is evident to every one, that is converſant in the Writings of either *Teſtament*. [p] In the Old Teſtament, we find the Lord ſpeaking unto *Moſes* thus, [q] *Speak unto* Aaron, *and unto his Sons, ſaying, On this wiſe ye ſhall bleſs the Children of* Iſrael, *ſaying unto them, The Lord bleſs thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his Face to ſhine upon thee; the Lord lift up his Countenance upon thee, and give thee Peace*; nor can we ſuppoſe, that God was leſs ready to vouchſafe his Bleſſing to the People, becauſe his Miniſter always implored it in the ſame Form of Words. [r] And as the Prieſts, under the Law, were required to bleſs the People in a ſet Form, ſo were the People ſometimes enjoined to offer up their Prayers to God in Words that were prepared before-hand for them. Thus, when a Murther was committed, and the Author of it unknown, the Elders of the adjoining City were directed to aſk God's Pardon in this Form; [r] *Our Hands have not ſhed this Blood, neither have our Eyes ſeen it: Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy People* Iſrael, *whom thou haſt redeemed, and lay not innocent Blood unto thy People of* Iſrael's *Charge*: And ſo *the Blood was to be forgiven.* Set Forms *not prohibited,*

IN the New Teſtament, we find our Saviour preſcribing to his Diſciples a *ſet Form* of Prayer, when he ordered them to pray *after this Manner*; *Our Father*, &c. For it was not only the Cuſtom of the *Jews* in general to uſe *Forms of Prayer*, but for their *Doctors* likewiſe to teach their Scholars ſome particular Form, compoſed by them, in order to *diſtinguiſh* them from other People. In Compliance to this Cuſtom, *John the Baptiſt*, as it appears by the Place in St *Luke*, taught his Diſciciples a peculiar Form; and, for this Reaſon, one of our Saviour's Diſciples comes and requeſts of him, that he would be pleaſed to compoſe one for their Uſe, *Lord, teach us to pray, as* John *alſo taught his Diſciples*; upon which we find, that our Saviour complied with his Requeſt, and accordingly preſcribed them the Form, which he had given them before, as a *Pattern* of Prayer upon the *Mount*. And as our Saviour preſcribed them this Form, 'tis hardly to be queſtioned, but that, in Obedience to his Command, they made uſe of it, even tho' we have no expreſs Declaration in Holy Writ, that they did ſo; becauſe, we may obſerve farther, that wherever we have any Prayers recorded, there is Preſumption enough to believe, that they offered them up in a *ſet Form*. [s] Thus we find the whole Company of *primitive* Chriſtians, in Conjunction with the Apoſtles themſelves, [s] *lifting up their Voice with one Accord*, and ſaying, *Lord, thou art God, which haſt made Heaven, and Earth, and the Sea, and all that is in them*, &c. And as they all joined, not only with their Hearts, but with their Voices; not only in the ſame Thoughts, but in the ſame Words; unleſs we will ſay, that all were immediately inſpired to utter the ſame Syllables, for which there is no Ground in the Hiſtory, nor any Probability in Reaſon, we muſt allow, that they prayed by a *Form* compoſed before-hand. but enjoined.

[t] WHAT has been ſaid upon this Head is ſufficient to ſhew, if not the *Neceſſity*, at leaſt the *Lawfulneſs* of praying by a Form: For ſince God was pleaſed to preſcribe Forms to be uſed in his publick Worſhip in the *Jewiſh* Church; ſince Chriſt taught his Diſciples to pray after a Form; and they, upon ſundry Occaſions, in all Probability, made uſe of premeditated Forms; it will undeniably follow, that to uſe ſet Forms of Prayer is not repugnant to the Will of God; is no *ſtinting of the Spirit*, no Impediment to Devotion, no Inſtance of *Superſtition*, no Part of *forbidden Will-Worſhip*, no Invention of *Antichriſt*, &c.

THAT *all Things ſhould be done to the Glory of God*, we are very frequently warned in Scripture; and we may leave it to the Judgment of any ſober Perſon, whether the Glory of God is beſt promoted by ſuch Prayers, wherein ſtrict Care is taken, that nothing ſhould be uttered unbecoming the Divine Majeſty, or by ſuch *extemporary Conceptions*, wherein many unſeemly and irreverent Speeches, at leaſt, are too commonly, and in a Manner unavoidably, poured forth. That *all Things ſhould be done for Edification* is another Scripture-Precept; and whether thoſe Prayers, which are formed by the mature Advice of many Perſons, eminent for Wiſdom and Piety, and which are both known and underſtood by the People, or thoſe, which are conceived, on a ſudden, by one Man, whoſe Abilities, perhaps, are not very great, and which thoſe, who join with them, muſt firſt ſtudy to underſtand, before they can concur therein, are moſt likely to edify the Church, can, *Their Expediency.*

[p] *Smalridge*'s Sermons. [q] Numb. vi. 22. [r] Deut. xxi. 7, 8. [s] Acts iv. 24.
[t] *Smalridge*, ibid.

with unprejudiced Perſons, bear no Diſpute. "*If I know not the Meaning of the Voice*, ſays the Apoſtle, *I ſhall be unto him, that ſpeaketh, a Barbarian, and he, that ſpeaketh, ſhall be a Barbarian unto me*: Now the *Meaning of the Voice* may be as unknown to us, if a Prayer be made in a *Phraſe*, as if it be made in a *Language* that we do not underſtand; and he, that prays in an *unintelligible Manner*, is as much a *Barbarian* to thoſe that hear him, as if he prayed in an *unknown Tongue*: So that, unleſs all Miniſters are Maſters of *Perſpicuity*, which, perhaps, is a Talent as rare as any, then *he, that occupieth the room of the Unlearned*, nay, he, indeed, that is never ſo learned, may not always be able to ſay *Amen* to a Prayer, which he may not always be able to underſtand.

The Excellency of our Church Liturgy.

IN a Word, if earneſt Deſires, if devout Affections, if cloſe Attention and Fervour of Spirit do recommend our Prayers to God, all theſe Advantages may rather be hoped for by thoſe, who, uſing a prepared and known Form, have nothing farther to do, than to excite, in their Minds, Paſſions ſuitable to the Buſineſs they are upon; than by ſuch, who depending wholly upon the Conceptions of another, muſt *firſt* endeavour to catch thoſe Words, which fall from him; then be employed in finding out their Meaning; *then* conſider whether that which is aſked be lawful for them to aſk, and whether they can heartily join with ſuch a Petition, or Thankſgiving; which, before they can have determined in their own Thoughts, it may be too late for them to join in, becauſe the Miniſter is, perhaps, by this Time, paſſed on to another quite different Matter. If therefore, by compoſed Forms, the Infirmities of ſome Men are beſt remedied; if our Conſent and Communion with other Chriſtians is hereby beſt teſtified; if Errors and Irregularities in Worſhip be by this Means beſt prevented; if they are moſt ſubſervient to Edification, to true Devotion, and to the Glory of God; we may ſafely conclude, that a well-compoſed Form of publick Worſhip, in the Church, is not only lawful, but expedient, and in ſome Degree even neceſſary: And, upon this Account, we may well be allowed to congratulate our mutual Happineſs, in being made Members of a Church, * wherein there is ſo great a Treaſure of rational Devotion; where all the Prayers are directed to a proper Object, all cloathed in proper and ſignificant Language, and all diſpoſed in exact and regular Order; where the *Praiſes* are lofty, and ſuitable to the Majeſty of God; the *Confeſſions* humble, and ſuch as become Sinners; the *Interceſſions* comprehend all the Duties, and the *Supplications* are extended to all the Wants of Mankind: Where the Whole, indeed, is ſo admirably fitted to the common Concerns of a *Chriſtian Society*, that when (as the *Rubrick* enjoins) we make but uſe of ſome of them, our Worſhip is not *imperfect*, and when we uſe them all, there is none of them *ſuperfluous*: And therefore, if we be but careful to bring with us, to the Houſe of God, ſuch Affections as become his Saints, we need not doubt, but that we ſhall there find ſuch Prayers to expreſs theſe Affections in, as will prove a *reaſonable Service*, and make the Whole *an Offering of a ſweet-ſmelling Savour unto God*.

3. *Of Praiſe and Thankſgiving.*

The Diſtinction *between Praiſe and Thankſgiving.*

PRAISE and *Thankſgiving*, though they are frequently uſed promiſcuouſly, yet, in Strictneſs of Speech, have a different Signification. [x] Our *Praiſe* properly terminates in God, on the Account of his natural Excellencies and Perfections, and is that Act of Devotion, by which we confeſs and admire his ſeveral Attributes; but *Thankſgiving* is a narrower Duty, and imports only a grateful Senſe and Acknowledgement of paſt Mercies. We *praiſe* God for all his glorious Acts of every Kind, that regard either us, or other Men; for his very Acts of Vengeance, and thoſe Judgments, which he ſometimes *ſends abroad on the Earth*; but, properly ſpeaking, we *thank* him only for the Inſtances of his Goodneſs, and only for ſuch Inſtances too, as we ourſelves are, ſome Way or other, concerned in. This is properly the Diſtinction of the two Words: But, ſince the Language of the Scripture is generally leſs exact in this Matter, we, in what follows, ſhall think ourſelves at Liberty to uſe them in a promiſcuous Senſe; and accordingly ſhall enquire, I. What the Nature of this Duty implies; and, II. How reaſonable a Thing it is, that we ſhould perform it.

I. Now

[a] 1 Cor. xiv. 11. * *Cotes*'s and *South*'s Sermons. [x] *Atterbury*'s Sermons.

I. Now few are ſo ignorant, as not to know, that the Duty of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to God implies our having a lively and devout Senſe of his Excellencies, and of his Benefits; our recollecting them with Humility and Thankfulneſs of Heart; and our expreſſing theſe inward Affections by ſuitable outward Signs; by Songs and Hymns, and ſpiritual Ejaculations, as well as by a Tenor of Life, led anſwerable to ſuch Vouchſafements. * When therefore we ſet ourſelves down, and call to Remembrance the many Experiments we have had of God's Loving-kindneſs to us, when we dwell upon them by long Meditation, and imprint the Traces of them firm and indelible in our Minds; when we raiſe our Conceptions to a due Eſtimation of them, and, by attending to every Circumſtance, improve their Value to the higheſt Pitch; when upon this our Heart glows with Love, and we feel ourſelves carried to God by an affectionate Senſe of what he has done for us; when, thereupon, our Lips overflow with Praiſe, and we cannot forbear expreſſing the Riches of his Goodneſs to us in all the outward Acknowledgments of Love and Gratitude; and laſtly, when we order our Lives by the Rule of his Commands, and, in Return for his Favours, devote ourſelves, both Soul and Body, to his Service; 'tis then that we offer unto him an acceptable Sacrifice of Thankſgiving. *What they imply.*

AND accordingly, if we look into the great Exemplar of Gratitude, the Royal Prophet *David*, we ſhall find him regulating his Praiſes to God after this very Method: [a] *I will remember the Days of old*, ſays he, *and meditate on all thy Works, and talk of all thy Doings.* [b] *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits:* Here is his deep Recollection of the Mercies of God. Then he goes on; [c] *I will praiſe thee, O Lord, among the People; I will ſing unto thee among the Nations; for thy Mercy is great as the Heavens, and thy Faithfulneſs reaches unto the Clouds.* [d] *How excellent is thy Loving-kindneſs, O God, how precious are thy Thoughts unto me, how great is the Sum of them!* Here is his high Eſtimation of the divine Benefits. Then he proceeds; [e] *Becauſe thy Loving-kindneſs is better than Life, my Lips ſhall praiſe thee,* [f] *my Soul ſhall be filled with Marrow and Fatneſs, my Mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful Lips.* [g] *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me praiſe his holy Name.* Here is his grateful Reſentment of the Kindneſs of God. Whereupon he breaks out, [h] *I will praiſe the Name of the Lord with a Song, I will magnify him with Thankſgiving.* [i] *I will ſing of the Mercies of the Lord for ever, with my Mouth will I make known thy Faithfulneſs to all Generations.* And then to compleat all, he deliberates, how he may yet farther teſtify his Gratitude to God: [k] *what ſhall I render unto God for all his Benefits?* Whereupon he reſolves.; *I will receive the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord: I will pay my Vows unto him,* even the Vows of Amendment and better Obedience, that I made unto him in my Diſtreſs. Thus plainly has the Pſalmiſt chalked out the Duty, and taught us the Way to be thankful to our God. And,

II. How reaſonable a Thing it is for us to comply with ſuch Directions, we may perceive, by conſidering, 1. The Nature of *God*, as it is extended to us. 2. The Nature of *Man*, as it is related to God. And, 3. The Nature of the *Duty* itſelf. *The* Reaſonableneſs *of this Duty.*

1. [l] OFFER *unto God Thankſgiving*, ſays the Pſalmiſt; to God, *i. e. to him*, [m] who is the Author, Upholder, and Preſerver of our Being, without whoſe Goodneſs we had never been, and without whoſe Care we cannot ſubſiſt one Moment. *To him*, who hath created this ſpacious World for our Comfort and Delectation; given us Bodies of an excellent Order and Proportion, and inſpired them with Souls, impreſſed with conſpicuous Characters of his own divine Eſſence. *To him*, who grants us free Acceſs, a conſtant Intercourſe, and familiar Acquaintance with himſelf; ſtiles us *his Friends* and *his Children*, and, in Purſuance of his *paternal* Relation to us, pities our Infirmities, aſſiſts our Wants, comforts our Sorrows, and aſſwages all our Pains. *To him*, whoſe *Goodneſs is like the ſtrong Mountains*, and whoſe Mercies never fail, taking Care of us, when we regard not him, watching over us when we ſleep, and remembering us, when we forget ourſelves. *To him*, who, as [n] St *James* expreſſes it, *giveth freely, and upbraideth no Man*; who exacts no coſtly, no difficult, no impoſſible Returns *From the Nature of God.*

* *Scott*'s Works, Vol. II. [a] Pſal. lxxvii. 11, 12. [b] Ibid. ciii. 2. [c] Ibid. cviii. 3, 4. [d] Ibid. cxxxix. 17, 18. [e] Ibid. lxiii. 5. [f] Ibid. ver. 5. [g] Ibid. ciii. 1. [h] Ibid. lxix. 30. [i] Ibid. lxxxix. 1. [k] Ibid. cxvi. 11, &c. [l] Ibid. l. 14. [m] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. I. [n] James i. 5.

Returns for his Favours, but only a chearful Acknowledgment of them, and a ſincere Performance of ſuch Duties, as our own Welfare, did we but apprehend it, would abundantly bind us to. Is there any Thing more? Yes, *to him*, who, that he might redeem us from Miſery, condeſcended to the loweſt Humiliation, to inhabit our frail and mortal Nature, to undergo the Laws and Conditions of Humanity, and at laſt taſte the bitter Cup of a moſt painful Death: Yea, *to him*, who not only deſcended from his imperial Throne, and became a Servant for our Sake, but deſigned thereby to exalt us to a Participation of his Royal Dignity, his divine Nature, his eternal Glory and Bliſs, ſubmitting Crowns and Scepters to our Choice; Crowns, that cannot *fade*, and Scepters, that can never be extorted from us. *To him*, laſtly, whoſe Benefits to commemorate is the greateſt Benefit of all; whoſe Goodneſs to praiſe, whoſe Greatneſs to admire, whoſe Beneficence to feel, and whoſe Preſence to enjoy is Heaven itſelf, the Life of Angels, and the ſupreme Degree of all Felicity. In a Word, *to him*, whoſe Benefits are immenſely great, innumerably many, and inexpreſſibly good; for, [o] *Who can utter the mighty Acts of the Lord, or ſhew forth all his Praiſe?* Says one, who had ſpent moſt of his Thoughts, and the beſt of his Endeavours that Way.

From his Dealings with us.

2. THUS, if we look up to God, our great and only Benefactor, we cannot but perceive, that the Duty of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to him is bound upon us by Ties innumerable, and that the good Things we receive from above ſhould, in grateful Acknowledgments, be ſent back again thither, [p] *as the Rivers run into the Sea; to the Place*, the Ocean of Beneficence, *from whence the Rivers come, thither ſhould they return again.* And, in like Manner, if we turn our Eyes upon ourſelves, we cannot but remember, [q] that we are his *Creatures*, ſuſtained by his Alms, and fed by his Bounty; that every Drop we drink, every Morſel we eat, every Rag we wear, we receive from him; that we breathe in his Air, move on his Earth, and are every Moment ſupported by his all-powerful Arm. Nay, we are not only his Creatures, and Penſioners to his Bounty, but *ſinful* Creatures likewiſe, that abuſe his Kindneſs, and pervert his Bleſſings. For he gives us Breath, and we blaſpheme him with it; he gives us Health, and we expend it in Intemperance; he gives us Wealth, and we conſume it upon our Luſts; and yet, for all this, he continues to be gracious unto us, and paſſes by many Indignities, as if his *Long-ſuffering* were never to have an End. Nay, we are his *redeemed* Creatures, who had the Honour, when Beings of a ſuperior Order were paſſed by, to have our Lives ranſomed by the precious Blood of God; and, from the Power of Sin, and the Slavery of our moſt inveterate Enemy, are ſet free; ſet free the nobleſt Way, not ſo much as the *Spirit of Bondage* remaining, but are ſo become the Servants, as, at the ſame Time, to obtain the glorious *Liberty of the Sons of God.* Can we riſe any higher? Yes, we are to be his *glorified* Creatures, to be admitted into the Society of Saints and Angels, where, having our Bodies faſhioned like unto Chriſt's glorious Body, and our Souls exalted to a Participation of God, we ſhall [r] *be bleſſed with all ſpiritual Bleſſings, in heavenly Places, in Chriſt.* If then there be any Force in God's *creating* Goodneſs; if any Bonds in his *forbearing* Patience; if any Endearments in his *redeeming* Love; if any Obligations in the Hope of our high Calling; by theſe, all theſe are we bound to make thankful Returns to him, from whom we have received, and from whom we expect ſo much: Eſpecially conſidering, that there are other Inducements ariſing from the Nature of this Duty itſelf, that engage us to the Practice of it.

From the Excellency of the Duty itſelf.

As good.

3. THE Royal Pſalmiſt has given us a pretty good Account of the general *Properties* of Praiſe and Thankſgiving, under which moſt of its chief Advantages may be comprized. [s] *Praiſe the Lord, for it is good to ſing Praiſes unto our God; for it is pleaſant, and Praiſe is comely.* [t] *Praiſe the Lord, for it is good*, as it enlarges the Powers and Capacities of our Souls, turning them from little and low Things, upon their greateſt and nobleſt Object, the divine Nature; and employing them in the Diſcovery and Admiration of thoſe ſeveral Perfections that adorn *it*. *It is good*, [u] as it promotes and facilitates the Practice of all other Duties, inſomuch, that whoever is under a powerful Senſe of God's Goodneſs, (as the truly thankful always are) will, with the greateſt Chearfulneſs, *run the Ways of God's Commandments*, becauſe he has a Principle in him, which converts the moſt painful Duties into the moſt delightful Recreations. *It is good*, as it gives a great Support to our Hope and Dependence on God:

[o] Pſal. cvi. 2. [p] Eccleſ. i. 7. [q] *Scott's* Works, Vol. II. [r] Eph. i. 3. [s] Pſal. cxlvii. 1.
[t] *Atterbury's* Sermons, Vol. I. [u] *Scott*, ibid.

God: For, beſides that, the Conſciouſneſs of having made thankful Returns for what we have received, will be a great Conſolation to us in the Time of our Diſtreſs; the very Rememberance and Recollection of God's former Favours, which our grateful Senſe of them will not fail to impreſs in our Minds, will prove a conſtant Fund of happy Experience, for our Affiance in him to live upon for the future. *It is good*, as it heightens and improves the Enjoyment of God's Benefits, to ſuch a Degree, that whilſt the Unthankful, for Want of a due Eſtimate of his Favours, live diſſatisfied, and grumble, as it were, over their Prey, even while they are devouring it; thoſe, that have a grateful Senſe of his Goodneſs to them, feed upon every Bleſſing with Content, and, like induſtrious Bees, having ſucked out all the Sweetneſs of the Flowers they live upon, go ſinging home with it to their Hives. Once more, *it is good*, becauſe it mightily obliges God to continue and repeat his Favours to us: For, ſeeing he is the freeſt and moſt generous Benefactor in the World, we may depend upon it, that if we make the good Uſe of his Benefits, for which he deſigned them; if we render ſuch grateful Returns for them, as are both delightful to him, and beneficial to ourſelves; he will be ſo far from ſtinting his Hand to us for the future, that he *will rejoice over us to do us good*, and be as highly pleaſed to multiply his Benefits upon us, as we can be to receive them.

2. ANOTHER Commendation of the Duty is this; *Praiſe the Lord, for it is pleaſant*, * as it purſues the natural Bent and Inclination of our Minds, which are never more eaſy and delighted, than when we are able to make grateful Returns for the Favours we have received. *It is pleaſant*, [x] as it proceeds from *Love*, the Fountain of Pleaſure, the Paſſion, which gives every Thing, we do and enjoy, its Reliſh and Agreeableneſs; and from *Thankfulneſs*, which involves in it the Memory of paſt Benefits, and is, as it were, a repeated Enjoyment of them. *It is pleaſant*, as it procures Quiet and Eaſe to the Mind, by delivering it of thoſe Thoughts of Praiſe and Gratitude, thoſe Exultations it is full of, and which would grow uneaſy and troubleſome to it, if they were kept in; for, were the Thankful *reſtained* from making Mention of God's Mercies, it would be *Pain* and *Grief* to them; but then, then is their *Soul ſatisfied with Marrow and Fatneſs, when their Mouth praiſeth him with joyful Lips.* Pleaſant.

IN other Parts of our Devotion, there is ſomething painful and laborious to human Nature: [y] *Prayer* awakens in us a ſorrowful Senſe of Wants and Imperfections, and *Confeſſion* induces a ſad Rememberance of our Guilts and Miſcarriages; but *Thankſgiving* has nothing in it but a warm Senſe of the mightieſt Love, and the moſt endearing Goodneſs, as it is the Overflow of an Heart full of Love, the free Sally and Emiſſion of Soul, that is captivated and endeared by Kindneſs. We, indeed, in this State of our Defection, are, in a great Meaſure, unacquainted with the Pleaſure and Sweetneſs of this bleſſed Work; and the Reaſon is, becauſe we have not a quick Senſe and lively Reliſh of the Divine Goodneſs, upon which it terminates. Had we this always preſent with us, we ſhould feel ſo much Joy and Pleaſure in Thankſgiving, that it would be our Heaven upon Earth, to breathe up our Souls to God in Praiſe: But this we know, who know any Thing of Religion, that *to laud and magnify the Lord* is the End for which we were born, and the Heaven, for which we were deſigned; and that, when we are arrived to ſuch a vigorous Senſe of the Divine Love, as the bleſſed Inhabitants of Heaven have attained, we ſhall need no other, either Pleaſure or Employment, to make us for ever happy, but only to ſing eternal Praiſes and *Hallelujahs to our God, and to the Lamb that ſitteth upon the Throne:* The vigorous Reliſh of whoſe unſpeakable Goodneſs to us will ſo inflame our Love, and animate our Gratitude, that, to eternal Ages, we ſhall never be able to refrain from breaking out into new Songs of Praiſe; and then every new Song will create a new Pleaſure, and every new Pleaſure dictate a new Song, and ſo round again for ever and ever. But theſe Things are too ſublime for our preſent Comprehenſion: Only let us conſult the Experience of ſuch, as make this Part of Devotion their conſtant Buſineſs, and they will aſſure us, that there is nothing under Heaven ſo pleaſant and delightful, as, from a warm and vigorous Senſe of the Love of God, to breathe up our Souls to him in Praiſe and Thankſgiving; that this gives ſuch a Jubilee to the Mind, ſuch a ſprightly Recreation to the Heart, as far exceeds the moſt ſtudied artificial Pleaſures of Senſuality, and therefore, *praiſe the Lord; for the Lord is good: Sing Praiſes to his Name, for it is pleaſant.*

* *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. I. [x] *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [y] *Scott*'s Works, Vol. II.

And comely.

3. THE other Commendation of this Duty is, that *Praiſe is comely*; as certainly a more becoming Exerciſe cannot be conceived than this, wherein the beſt Inſtruments of *Nature* are employed in the higheſt Offices of *Grace*; our Hearts in recollecting, and our Tongues in relating the Loving-kindneſs of God. To have the Great King of Heaven and Earth ſurrounded with loud Acelamations of his joyful Subjects, his Excellence proclaimed and exalted above the higheſt Praiſe, his wonderful Works magnified and admired in triumphant Acknowledgments, and his Bounty and Love celebrated and adored with Songs and Magnificats; what an Emblem is here of the Bleſſed above; and what more graceful and comely Sight can we imagine, than a full Congregation of Saints, bleſſing and praiſing the Lord; and, all the while that their Voices are raiſed, exerciſing their Minds likewiſe, and mounting up to Heaven upon the Wings of divine Love and ardent Aſpirations; and all this out of pure Affections, and without any View of Self-Intereſt, [z] which is more than can be ſaid of other Parts of our religious Service? Our Prayers are deſigned for the Relief of our Wants, our *Faith* leans upon ſome future Good, and our *Hope* is a comfortable Expectation of it: [a] But *Praiſe* is a generous and unmercenary Principle, which propoſes no other End to itſelf, but to do as is fit for a Creature, endowed with ſuch Faculties, to do towards the moſt perfect and beneficent of Beings, and to pay the willing Tribute of Honour there, where the Voice of Reaſon directs us to pay it. In ſhort, Praiſe is the moſt excellent Part of our Religious Worſhip, the common Work of the Church, both *Militant* and *Triumphant*, the Source of Joy and Refreſhment here, and the very Soul and Spirit of Heaven hereafter; the Perfections of God's Nature are its Object, and the very Act itſelf is the Perfection of ours. And [b] therefore, whether it be for great or for ſmall, for common or extraordinary, for preſent or paſt, for private or publick, for temporal or ſpiritual Bleſſings; whether it be for the Occurrences of Providence, that are averſe to our Deſire, or for thoſe, that are accommodated to our Liking; in all States and Conditions, in all the Changes and Chances of Life, *let the Praiſes of God be ever in our Mouths*; and in our Mind this [c] *Song of* Moſes, *the Servant of the Lord*, and this *Song of the Lamb*; *Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty*; *juſt and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints*; *who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy Name?*

[z] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. II. [a] *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [b] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. I.
[c] Rev. xv. 3.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Our Duty towards our Neighbour; and,

1. *Of Universal Love and Charity.*

ST *PAUL*, in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, has given us a Description of this great Christian Duty, as it relates to our Neighbour, which far exceeds any *Delineation*, that we can possibly devise. [a] *Charity suffereth long, and is kind; Charity envieth not; Charity vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no Evil, rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth; beareth all Things, believeth all Things, hopeth all Things, endureth all Things:* So that, to explain the Nature and Properties of this Virtue, we need only give a short Comment upon the Apostle's Words; and then proceed, 1. To shew the Obligations of it; and, 2. The Measures and Inducements of our performing it. *Charity, what.*

1. CHARITY *suffereth long.* [b] The Man, that is possessed of this excellent Grace, is not apt, quickly, and upon every slight Occasion, to conceive a Displeasure, much less to meditate Revenge against those who behave themselves ill towards him. He considers, how subject to *Frailties* Mankind are, how easily betrayed by Infirmities, and Surprize, and Passion, to Things that are inordinate: he makes just *Allowances* therefore for Inadvertencies and Indiscretions, and suppresses his Resentment for Wrongs, that are avowed and manifest, so long as they continue to be tolerable: And in this he differs from the jealous and captious, the peevish and hasty, who either fancy themselves injured and affronted, when nothing like it is intended, or fume and take fire upon every Provocation and Neglect. *St* Paul's *Description of it explained.*

2. CHARITY *is kind*; and therefore he, that is Master of his Temper, as he is slow in taking Offence, so is he sure not to give any; and is so far from *rendering Evil for Evil*, that his Study is, to *overcome Evil with Good.* His Conversation is sweet and obliging, and his Carriage and Behaviour free, candid, and ingenuous. He considers, that the lowest of Mankind are of the same Make with himself, distinguished only by a few accidental Circumstances; and therefore, how exalted soever his own Station be, his Demeanour is full of Compliance and Condescension. And, as he thinks, that no one was ever born for himself alone; so he makes it his constant Aim and Endeavour to be as beneficial to all Mankind, as possibly he can: Quite contrary to that sour and sullen, that bitter and malicious Disposition, too common in the World, which is continually employed in doing Mischief, in disturbing the Quiet, in obstructing the Good of its Neighbour, and making Men, whom Nature ordained for mutual Helps and Comforts, continual Plagues and Torments to each other.

3. CHARITY *envieth not:* Though God vouchsafe others a larger Measure of Knowledge, or Riches, or Credit, or Honour, or indeed of any Blessing, whether *temporal* or *spiritual*, the *charitable* Man grudges it not, murmurs not at it, but is perfectly satisfied and contented in the Preference, which these distinguishing Favours give them above himself; nay, he makes their Happiness become really and truly his *own*, and finds as much, if not more Pleasure and Delight in their Success and Prosperity, than they themselves do; whilst all the Content and Joy, which their good Fortune administers to them, comes pure and unmixed to him, without bearing any Part in the Cares and Troubles, wherewith it is usually attended.

4. CHARITY

[a] 1 Cor. xiii. 4, &c.

[b] *Calamy*'s Sermons, and *Stanhope*, on the Epistles and Gospels, Vol. II.

4. CHARITY *vaunteth not itſelf*; and therefore he who is of this Temper, has always a modeſt and humble Opinion of himſelf, pretending to no Accompliſhments that he has not, and thruſting himſelf into no Buſineſs above his Capacity and proper Sphere. *In private*, he entertains himſelf frequently with the Senſe and Conſciouſneſs of his own Ignorance, Infirmities, and Demerits; and, *in publick*, affects no Noiſe or glaring Figure, but deſires rather to appear unobſerved and undiſtinguiſhed. Upon other Men's Abilities he always ſets a due Value; receives their Sentiments with Deference; offers his own with Diffidence; and, through his whole Behaviour ſhews, that *in Honour he prefers and eſteems others better than himſelf*. And as he pretends to no Talents that he has not, ſo is he not *puffed up* even with what he has: For he conſiders them as *Gifts* and Graces, which miniſter great Ground for *Humility* and Thankfulneſs, and all imaginable Care to anſwer the Purpoſes, for which they were entruſted, but no Manner of Pretence for *Vanity* and Self-conceit; which, whenever it gets Poſſeſſion of a Man, carries him ſo into the Contemplation of his own imaginary Perfections, as to make him ſlight and deſpiſe all the World beſides, and think himſelf wronged, and affronted, and unjuſtly treated, if every one does not value him and his Judgment in all Things, at the ſame Rate and Proportion that he does himſelf.

5. CHARITY *does not behave itſelf unſeemly*; and therefore he that is poſſeſſed of this Virtue, uſes no opprobrious Words or Geſtures, endeavours to diſhonour or diſparage no Man's Perſon; but is ſo courteous without Affectation, and ſo condeſcending without Intereſt or Deſign, that, as St *Chryſoſtom* and others interpret the Word, he thinks no Offices, though never ſo mean, below or miſbecoming him; but reckons, that, whatever Inconveniency ſuch Kind of Humiliations may occaſion, it is amply compenſated by the Benefits, which others receive from them. And well may Charity be thus liberal of its Services, and regardleſs of the Manner of its Condeſcenſions, when the next Character of it, as the Apoſtle tells us, is,

6. THAT *ſhe ſeeketh not her own*; and therefore he that is her *Votary*, is ſo far from projecting Gain and Profit to himſelf, by the Favours and good Offices he does to others, that he is beneficent *to the Evil and Unthankful*, to the Indigent, and thoſe that are unable to make him any Requital. The Largeneſs of his Heart, which is ſenſibly affected for human Nature, never *ſeparates* itſelf by any abſtracted Views; but, wiſhing Eaſe and Proſperity to all Mankind, contributes its utmoſt to ſerve and benefit them, and eſteems the Glory of God, and the greater Gain of his Brethren, an ample Reward for his own Labour and Sufferings, nay, (upon ſo beneficial an Account) for his own Loſſes and Inconveniencies.

7. CHARITY *is not eaſily provoked*; for it keeps the Mind calm and ſmooth; corrects that Heat, which either the natural Conſtitution, or the Greatneſs of a Provocation kindles in our Breaſt; and, even when our Reſentment is moſt juſt, prevents its flaming out into Rage and Fury, beyond the Bounds of Reaſon and Religion. It ſecures us from all *Paroxyſms* of Anger, as the *Greek* Word imports, and keeps that unruly Paſſion under ſuch *Limits* and *Reſtrictions* as never to betray us into any *Indecency* of Behaviour, much leſs any raſh and unwarrantable Actions.

8. CHARITY *thinketh no Evil*; is ſo far from ſuſpecting the worſt of Men, and their Actions, that it always puts the faireſt Interpretations upon them. To the Good which they do, it allows all juſt *Commendation*; and, as it never charges any, but upon undeniable Evidence, ſo it ever appears to *excuſe* and *extenuate* their Offences. It puts us in Mind, when we happen to be angry with an injurious Brother, of the many Kindneſſes he once did us, and ſets his former good Offices in Balance to his preſent Miſbehaviour. It imputes a great deal to Miſtake, to Miſinformation, to Age, to Ignorance, to Infirmities, *&c.* and would have any Thing be thought the Cauſe, rather than Ill-will, or propenſe Deſign to offend.

9. CHARITY *rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but in the Truth*; takes no Pleaſure in falſe Reports and malicious Inſinuations, which tends to defame and diſparage our Neighbour, a Pleaſure as common, as it is barbarous; but when ſuch Suggeſtions have not Ground, and ſhed their *Venom*, is heartily glad of hearing the injured Sufferer's Innocence vindicated, and his good Name reſcued from all the *Scandal*, that Malice or Miſtake had caſt upon it.

10. CHARITY *beareth*, or, as it ſhould be rendered, *covereth* and *concealeth all Things*; and is ſo far from expoſing Men's Failings to the World, or thinking itſelf at Liberty to make them the *Subject* of publick Diſcourſe, and the *Jeſt* and Diverſion

of all Companies, that it chuſes rather to *hide*, and caſt a Veil over them, be they never ſo many, or never ſo well known: For,

11. CHARITY *believeth all Things*: Without preſuming to judge Men's Hearts, or to pry into their ſecret Intentions, it diſpoſes us, *firſt*, to think favourably of every one, and *then* to credit all that can be ſaid in behalf of thoſe, that are ill-ſpoken of, if there be any Grounds for ſuch a Belief: And, if ever there be not, yet ſtill,

12. CHARITY *hopeth all Things*: Whoever *ſins*, ſhe hopes it is out of Weakneſs, or Surprize, or Inadvertency, and not out of Wilfulneſs, or habitual Cuſtom; whoever *errs*, ſhe hopes it is out of Ignorance, and unhappy Education, or unavoidable Prejudice, and not out of a wicked and depraved Mind; and, upon theſe Accounts, be the Man's Condition what it will, ſhe never deſpairs, but wiſhes, and prays, and, by all proper Methods, labours to bring about his Converſion. And,

13. LASTLY, though many Attempts of this Kind have been fruitleſs, yet ſtill Charity continues *unwearied*, and can away with Injuries and Delays, grievous to be borne, in Hopes that God will at laſt open the Eyes of the very worſt, and give them *Repentance to the Acknowledgment of the Truth*: And this I conceive to be the Senſe of *Charity's enduring all Things*.

THESE are the Characters, wherein the Apoſtle has deſcribed this moſt excellent and extenſive Virtue, which in the main may be ſaid to conſiſt [c] in an Eaſineſs to pardon, a Readineſs to oblige, Mercy to the diſtreſſed, Bounty to the Indigent, Candour and Sweetneſs, Generoſity and Diſintereſtedneſs in our Converſation towards all Men. And ſo we proceed to conſider,

I. OUR manifold Obligations to the Practice of this Duty. [d] That, by the original Order and Conſtitution of Nature, Men are ſo made and framed, that they neceſſarily want one another's Help and Aſſiſtance, for their mutual Support and Preſervation in the World; that they cannot ſubſiſt, at leaſt, cannot enjoy any Comforts of Life, independently on each other, but are manifeſtly fitted, by the very Frame of their Nature, to live in Societies, whereof *Charity* and mutual Friendſhip is the common *Bond*, is too plain to be controverted. In this Reſpect all Men naturally ſtand upon the ſame Level, have all the ſame Wants and Deſires, and are all in the ſame Need of each other's Aſſiſtance: Every Man therefore, as he is a Man, is bound by the Law of his Nature, *i. e.* by common Humanity, to look upon himſelf as a Part or Member of that one *univerſal* Body or Community, which is made up of all Mankind; to think himſelf born and ſent into the World, on Purpoſe to promote the Good and Welfare of all his Fellow-Creatures; and, conſequently, obliged, as the neceſſary and only effectual Means to that End, to embrace them all with univerſal Love, Charity, and Benevolence.

Our Obligations to it.

1. *From the Nature of Things.*

AND as it is founded in the Law of Nature, ſo is it conſonant to the Inclinations of Men's Minds, to be kindly affectioned to, and beneficial one towards another; inſomuch, that if Covetouſneſs, and Revenge, and other fooliſh and abſurd Paſſions were not ſuffered to over-rule this natural Diſpoſition, they would univerſally enjoy the happy Fruits and Effects of it. For, even in this preſent corrupt State of the World, as far as Men's Vices will permit them, they ſtill deſire to keep up a general Commerce and Communication with each other; they love to increaſe their *Dependencies*, by multiplying Affinities; to enlarge their *Friendſhips*, by mutual good Offices; and to eſtabliſh *Societies*, by a Communication of Arts, and Labour, and Induſtry: And ſince the only poſſible Means of preſerving ſuch Societies in any tolerable and durable Manner, is the Practice of mutual Love and univerſal Benevolence, this plainly ſhews us what the Direction and Tendency of uncorrupted Nature is.

AND as to love and do good to one another is conſonant to the *original* Inclinations of Men's Minds, ſo is it agreeable to that Nature of God, which we are required to *imitate*, and thoſe Laws of God, which we are bound to *obey*. *God is Love*, as the Apoſtle ſtiles him, an infinite and inexhauſtible Fountain of never-failing Goodneſs; who, being eternally happy in the Enjoyment of his own unſpeakable Perfections, could have no other Motive to create Things at firſt, but only that he might communicate his Goodneſs and Happineſs to his Creatures; as he continues to preſerve them for no other Reaſon, but that he may ſtill continue to

2. *From the Nature of God.*

[c] *Cotes*'s Sermons. [d] *Clarke*'s Sermons.

do good to them: For [e] *he maketh his Sun to riſe on the Evil and on the Good, and ſendeth Rain on the Juſt and on the Unjuſt, giving us from Heaven fruitful Seaſons, and filling our Hearts with Food and Gladneſs.* Now, for the ſame Reaſon, that God does himſelf continually delight in doing good, and ſeems to take an eſpecial Pleaſure in deſcribing himſelf by that particular *Attribute* of Love and Goodneſs; for the ſame Reaſon, it muſt neceſſarily be his Will, that all rational Creatures ſhould imitate him in that excellent Perfection. To this Purpoſe we may obſerve, that he hath given us noble Powers and Faculties; hath endued us with Reaſon and Underſtanding, to *diſcern between Good and Evil*; and implanted in our Minds ſuch Affections and Diſpoſitions, as naturally incline us to mutual Benevolence and Aſſiſtance. He hath ſo framed and conſtituted our Nature, and ſo ordered the Circumſtances of our preſent State, as to make Society and Friendſhip neceſſary to the Support and Comfort of Life, that Men might be continually exerciſed in the Practice of theſe Divine Virtues. He has interwoven the Intereſts of Men, and made the Happineſs of every particular Perſon ſo dependent upon the Welfare of the *Publick*, that each one, from the Senſe of his own Wants and Exigencies, might ſee the Reaſonableneſs, and Neceſſity of making it his principal Buſineſs, to do good to others. In fine, he has given us no other Way of expreſſing, ſo acceptably, our Love and Gratitude to himſelf, whom [f] *we have not ſeen*, as by loving and doing good to our Brethren, whom *we have ſeen*; for [g] *no Man hath ſeen God at any Time*, but, *if we love one another, hereby we know* that *God*, though inviſible, really *dwelleth in us*; that *his Love is perfected in us*, and that *we dwell in him, and he in us*, becauſe we are Imitators of his Nature, and Partakers *of his Spirit*.

3. From Scripture.

NOR are we only obliged to love, and to do good to one another, by the Ties of common Humanity, as we are *Men*, and Partakers of the ſame Nature; but, as *Chriſtians*, we are to look upon ourſelves as *Brethren*, in a more peculiar Manner, being all the Children of God in Chriſt, Members all of the ſame Body, Partakers all of the ſame Spirit, and Heirs all of the ſame bleſſed Hope of Immortality. For thus the Apoſtle argues, [i] *there is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your Calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* Wherefore [k] *I beſeech you, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation, wherewith ye are called, with all Lowlineſs and Meekneſs, with Long-ſuffering; forbearing one another in Love*, and *endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.*

Its Peculiarity to Chriſtians.

NEITHER have we only the Example of God's Love and Goodneſs in general propoſed to our Imitation, but, as Chriſtians, we have it in a more particular and extraordinary Manner ſet before us, in that ſingular Inſtance of the Redemption of Mankind by the Death of his Son; of which great and undeſerved Mercy we, being all Partakers, and having all our Hopes of Happineſs founded upon it, are conſequently under the ſtrongeſt Obligation to be, in our Proportion, kind, and merciful, and charitable to our Brethren, as God has been infinitely good and merciful to us; for ſo we find the ſame Apoſtle arguing again: [l] *Put on therefore, as the Elect of God, holy, and beloved, Bowels of Mercy, Kindneſs, Humbleneſs of Mind, Meekneſs, Long-ſuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; if any Man has a Quarrel againſt any, even as Chriſt forgave you, ſo alſo do ye: And, above all Things, put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfectneſs, and let the Peace of God rule in your Hearts, to the which alſo ye are called in one Body.*

ONCE more: Nor is this Duty *obligatory*, as it proceeds from the Word of God only, but as it proceeds with a ſingular *Enforcement*, being the peculiar Law and Command of our Lord and Saviour, on which he inſiſts particularly, and ſeems to recommend it above all others, as the moſt indiſpenſable Qualification of a ſincere Chriſtian. [m] *A new Commandment*, ſays he, *I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye alſo love one another*; and he makes it, as it were, the diſtinguiſhing Mark and Badge of his Profeſſion; for *by this ſhall all Men know that ye are my Diſciples, if ye have Love towards one another.* He himſelf, whilſt he was here upon Earth, *went continually about doing good*; and, in ſo doing, hath ſet us an Example, wherein he requires, *that we ſhould follow his Steps*: And accordingly, we find the Apoſtles every where declaring, that univerſal Love and Charity is the *End of the Commandment*, the principal Aim and Deſign of our whole Chriſtian Law;

[e] Matth. v. 45. [f] Acts xiv. 17. [g] John iv. 20. [h] 1 John iv. 12, 13.
[i] Eph. iv. 4. [k] Ibid. iv. 1. [l] Col. iii. 12. [m] John xiii. 34.

Law; and that, being deſtitute of this, all our other Pretences to Religion, all our Zeal for the Service and Honour of God, all our Gifts and Accompliſhments, of what Kind ſoever they be, whether *natural* or *ſupernatural*, will avail us nothing: For, [n] *though I ſpeak with the Tongues of Men and Angels*, ſays St *Paul*, *and have not Charity, I am become as ſounding Braſs, or a tinkling Cymbal*, i. e. all my Pretences to Religion are falſe and empty; *and though I have the Gift of Prophecy, and underſtand all Myſteries, and all Knowledge; and though I have all Faith, ſo that I could remove Mountains, and have not Charity, I am nothing; and though I beſtow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and though I give my Body to be burned, and have not Charity, it availeth me nothing.*

And great Excellency.

AND well may the Scriptures lay ſo great a *Streſs* upon the Practice of univerſal Love and Charity, ſince it is a Temper and Diſpoſition of Mind, of all others, the moſt *perfective* of our rational Nature. It is That, which makes the Soul like unto God, and is at once the *Condition* and *Ground*, both of our preſent Happineſs, and that which is to come: For we muſt be *like unto God*, if we will *ſee him as he is*, and muſt firſt attain that Frame of Mind, wherein the Happineſs of Heaven eſſentially conſiſts, if ever we hope to become Partakers of it. In a Word, *Charity* is the Diſpoſition of Heaven, the ultimate End and Deſign of that Religion, which was revealed on Purpoſe to conduct us thither; and to which moſt of the other Virtues, Gifts, and Excellencies are but *ſubſervient* Means, and ſuch as muſt be *done away, when that which is perfect is come*: For, [o] *whether there be Propheſies, they ſhall fail; whether there be Tongues, they ſhall ceaſe; whether there be Knowledge, it ſhall vaniſh away*. *Faith*, which is our firm Belief, and *Hope*, which is our preſent Expectation of Things future, ſhall both be made void by Fruition; but Charity and Goodneſs *never fail*; for they are the Diſpoſitions of Mind, which are begun in the *Virtues of this Life*, and compleated in the *Glories of the next*. And ſo we proceed,

The Rule *of it.*

II. To conſider in what Meaſure, and from what Inducements, we are farther engaged to perform this Duty. *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thyſelf*, this is the Rule; and it is the peculiar Excellency of this Rule, that by it we may eaſily diſcern all the *Specialities* of our Duty, without having Recourſe to any external Inſtruction. [p] For ſince every one, by his own Experience, knows what it is to love himſelf; ſince every one is conſcious in what Manner he uſes to treat himſelf, it is but conſulting his own Breaſt, and that will teach him, in what Manner he is to treat his Neighbour.

Do we not, for Inſtance, ſo highly value and eſteem ourſelves, that no Defects obſervable in us, no Miſchances befallen us, no Faults committed by us, can alter the good Opinion we have of ourſelves? This may teach us, what Regard and Value we ſhould ever preſerve for our Neighbour. Do we not ſincerely endeavour our own Welfare and Advantage of every Kind; wiſh good Succeſs to all our Undertakings; and, if we rightly underſtand ourſelves, deſire the Health and Happineſs of our immortal Souls? This may inform us, what we are to wiſh and deſire for our Neighbour. Have we not a ſenſible Complacency in our own Proſperity, and are extremely glad to find ourſelves thriving and flouriſhing in Wealth, in Reputation, or any other Accommodation or Ornament of Life? On the other Hand, do we not ſeriouſly grieve at our own Diſaſters and Diſappointments, and heartily bemoan and pity ourſelves, when fallen into Pain, or Poverty, or any other preſſing Calamities? This may inſtruct us, what Pleaſure we are to feel in our Neighbour's Proſperity, and how to condole and commiſerate his Misfortunes. Are we eaſily angry with ourſelves? Do we retain implacable Grudges, or execute malicious Deſigns againſt ourſelves? Yea, rather are we not meek and patient towards ourſelves, excuſing our own Infirmities and Follies, and forgiving ourſelves the moſt heinous Offences and Outrages againſt our own Intereſt, Honour, and Welfare? Hence we may learn the Leſſons of Meekneſs and Patience towards our Neighbour, in bearing his Infirmities, and remitting any Wrongs or Diſcourteſies, we have received from him. Are we rude in our Deportment, or harſh in our Language towards ourſelves, apt to cenſure our own Actions, blazon our Defects, and aggravate our Failings, and not rather conceal our Blemiſhes, and extenuate our Crimes? Do we delight to report, or to hear ill Stories of ourſelves, and

[n] 1 Cor. xiii. 1, &c. [o] Ibid. ver. 8. [p] *Barrow's* Works, Vol. I.

and not rather endeavour, all we can, to ſtifle them, to tie the Tongues, and ſtop the Ears of Men againſt them? Hence we may likewiſe learn, how civil and courteous in our Behaviour, how fair and ingenuous in our Dealing, how candid and mild in our Judgment or Cenſure, we ſhould be towards our Neighbour. Thus reflecting on ourſelves, and making our Practice towards ourſelves the Pattern of our Dealing with others, we ſhall not fail of performing this Duty, and making our Charity commenſurate to our Self-love.

The Reaſonableneſs of it.

AND, indeed, conſidering the near Relation we have to one another, and how, in the neceſſary and ſubſtantial Properties of our Nature, we are all the *ſame*, and diſtinguiſhed only by what is contingent and circumſtantial to us, we cannot but perceive the great *Reaſonableneſs* of loving our Neighbour to this Degree, as he is the expreſs Image of ourſelves, but much more, as he is created in the Divine Likeneſs and Similitude. The Prophet *Malachi* has a very wiſe Obſervation to this Purpoſe: [q] *Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why then do we deal treacherouſly every Man againſt his Brother?* 'Tis barbarous not to love our own Nature, but highly impious to hate or vilify him, in whom God hath formed *ſome*, though *weak* Reſemblances of his own Perfections. [r] How contemptible ſoever he may be in the Circumſtances of his Fortune, yet he has in him an immortal Spirit, that ſhall live for ever, and live with God and Angels; he has in him thoſe Powers and Faculties, that render him capable of ſerving and enjoying his Great Creator; and how dear and valuable he is to God, we may beſt perceive, by conſidering what God has done for him. He has not only *made him a little lower than the Angels, and crowned him with Glory and Honour*; but, as if this World were too mean, has prepared a more glorious one to receive him: He ſpares and indulges him, as a tender Parent his beloved Child; guards and provides for him by a kind and wakeful Providence; wooes and courts him by the Sollicitations of his Holy Spirit; and has provided a ſtanding Propitiation for his Sins, by the Sacrifice of his only beloved Son. In a Word, he rejoices over him, to do him good, and longs, as it were, to have him with him in Heaven: And can we think, that the *Almighty* loves with a fond Paſſion, and where there is no Ground and Foundation for his Love? Herein therefore we have an Example ſet us, how we are to love him, whom God loves ſo well; and [s] *this Commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God, love his Brother alſo:* The Fulfilling of which Law, which St *James* calls *the Royal Law*, is the great Perfection of our Natures, the Advancement and Enlargement of our Souls, the chief Ornament and Beauty of a great Mind; that which makes us *like God*, the beſt, moſt perfect, and happieſt Being; and in that too, which is the prime Excellency, and Happineſs, and Glory of the Divine Nature.

Motives to it.

OF what happy Tendency this univerſal Love and Charity is, [u] to free our Souls from thoſe unruly and diſquieting Paſſions of Anger and Envy, of Malice and Revenge, of Jealouſy and Diſcontent, which are the great Torments of our Spirits; to make our Minds calm and chearful, and maintain us in the Poſſeſſion and quiet Enjoyment of ourſelves; to preſerve us from many Miſchiefs and Inconveniencies, which Enmity and Ill-will continually occaſion; to gain Friends and reclaim Enemies, and make every Condition either pleaſant, or eaſy, or tolerable to us, is verified by every Day's Experience.

OF what particular Note and Obſervation, in the firſt and beſt Ages of Religion, the Practice of this Duty was among Chriſtians; how it was the Mark and Badge of their Profeſſion, and grew into a Proverb among the Heathens, *Behold, how theſe Chriſtians love one another*; how ſome of the * greateſt Enemies of our Profeſſion admired it, and eſteemed the Example not unworthy their own Imitation, is what we are informed of from the Records of Antiquity: And therefore, to conclude this Head in the Words of the bleſſed Apoſtle; † *If there be any Conſolation in Chriſt, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowſhip of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies*; if any Endearments in our common Nature and common Chriſtianity, if any Inducement in the Benefits and Advantages of any Duty, if any Encouragement in the Practice,

[q] Mal. ii. 10. [r] *Lucas*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [s] 1 John iv. 21. [t] James ii. 8.
[u] Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

* *Julian*, in his Letter to *Arſacius*, the Heathen High-Prieſt of *Galatia*, gives this memorable Teſtimony of the Chriſtians, that their Charity was not limited and confined only to themſelves, but extended even to their Enemies. His Words are theſe: *It is a Shame, when the* Jews *ſuffer none of theirs to beg, and the impious* Galileans (ſo he calls Chriſtians by Way of Reproach) *relieve, not only their own, but theſe alſo of our Religion, that we only ſhould be defective in ſo neceſſary a Duty.* Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*, ibid.

† Phil. ii. 1, 2.

Practice, and Examples of others, then *fulfil ye my Joy, that ye be like-minded; and, having the same Love,* [x] *be pitiful, be courteous; not rendering Evil for Evil, or Railing for Railing; but, contrariwise, Blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a Blessing.*

2. *Of Loving Enemies.*

THE *Jews*, having read, that their Ancestors [y] were commissioned by God, as Ministers of his Justice, utterly to destroy the *seven Nations*, that possessed the Land of *Canaan* before them; to *blot out the Remembrance* of *Amalek* under Heaven, and to have no Peace with the *Ammonites* and *Moabites*, their declared Enemies; [z] considered not, that these were special Cases, fixed by the Divine Command, and grounded upon Reasons both of *State* and *Religion*, but drew an Inference very falsely from them to their own private and personal Quarrels, and advanced it into a *Maxim*, that though in general they were to *love their Neighbours*, yet they not only *might*, but *ought to hate their Enemies*, especially such, as were Enemies to their Law, and the Manner of their religious Worship. This their *Doctors* taught with much Assurance, and the People received it with a malicious Readiness, being naturally violent and revengeful: But our Saviour, in his Sermon on the *Mount*, endeavours to correct their Mistake, and to prescribe to his Followers the very contrary Habit of Mind: *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thy Enemy; but I say to you, love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.*

The Occasion of our Saviour's commanding this Duty.

LOVE *your Enemies*; [a] here the *inward* Affection is required: *Bless them that curse you*; here *outward* Civility and Affability are enjoined, in Opposition to all rude and opprobrious Language: *Do good to them that hate you*; here real Acts of Kindness are commanded to be done, even to our bittерest and most malicious Enemies: *Pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.* The highest Expressions of Enmity that can be imagined, are *Calumny* and *Cruelty*, and yet we are commanded to pray for those, that touch us in these two tenderest Points of all, our *Reputation* and our *Life*: And to secure the Sincerity of our Charity towards our Enemies, we are required to express it by our hearty *Prayers* to God for them: *To God*, I say, before whom it is both impious and dangerous to *dissemble*, and from whom we can expect no Mercy for ourselves, if, with feigned Lips, we beg it of him for others.

To love our Enemies, what.

THIS is the Description that our Saviour gives us of the Duty, and accordingly we shall consider farther; I. Wherein it consists: And, II. By what Arguments it may be enforced.

I. 1. Now the first Step towards *loving our Enemy*, is discharging our Minds of all Rancour and Virulence towards him; for, where the least Particle of this is, it will not be long, before it discover itself in our Words and Actions. [b] Upon this Account, the Scripture very significantly call it the [c] *Leaven of Malice*, which, being of a spreading and fermenting Nature, will, in Time, diffuse a Sourness upon a Man's whole Behaviour. Nay, should we suppose, (which is very seldom found) that a Man has such an absolute Empire and Command over his Heart, as for ever to stifle his Disgusts, and to manage his Actions in a constant Contradiction to his Affections; yet all this is but a *Mystery* of Dissimulation, and *acting a Part*, instead of acting a Friend. Enmity, however, is a restless Thing, and not to be dissembled, without some Torment to the Mind that entertains it: And therefore we may presume, that he, who is resolved to hate his Enemy, and yet resolves not to shew it, has turned the Edge of his Hatred *inwards*, and becomes a *Tyrant*, and an Enemy to himself; nor can he wish his most mortal Adversary a greater Misery, than thus to carry a Mind, always big and swelling, and ever ready to burst, and yet never give it Vent. Are we then persuaded, that both our Duty and Interest require, that we should deport ourselves with all Signs of Love to our Enemies? Let us but take this easy Course, to entertain the Thing in our *Hearts*, which we would

It consists in a Freedom from Malice.

[x] 1 Pet. iii. 8, 9.
[y] *Vid.* Deut. vii. 16, *&c.* Ch. xxv. 19. Ch. xxiii. 3, 4.
[z] *Gardiner's* Sermons.
[a] Archbishop *Tillotson's* Sermons, Vol. I.
[b] *South's* Sermons, Vol. III.
[c] 1 Cor. v. 8.

manifeſt in our *Converſe*, and then we ſhall find ſmall Difficulty in the next Inſtance of our Love to our Enemies; which is,

In ſpeaking well of them.

2. BLESSING them *that curſe us.* The Word which we render *bleſs*, implies both our *ſpeaking them civilly to their Faces*, and *ſpeaking well of them behind their Backs*: And [d] therefore, though they reproach, revile, and ſlander us; treat us, when *preſent*, with the moſt contemptuous and inſulting, the moſt ſcurrilous and bitter Language; and, when we are *abſent*, make it their Buſineſs daily to leſſen and defame us, and to ſay all the bad Things of us, that they can either hear, imagine, or invent; our Conduct is to be directly the Reverſe of this. We muſt anſwer them in the moſt civil and courteous, the moſt obliging and good-natured Terms; and, whenever we have Occaſion to ſpeak of them in Company, labour to conceal their Faults, where Charity and Juſtice do not require us to diſcover them; put the beſt Conſtruction upon all their Actions, and be ready to publiſh whatever we know virtuous and commendable in them, even though they will acknowledge no ſuch Quality in us: For thus the Chriſtians behaved of old; *We are Fools*, ſays St *Paul* [e], *for Chriſt's Sake, but ye are wiſe in Chriſt; ye are honourable, but we are deſpiſed; being reviled, we bleſs; being perſecuted, we ſuffer; being defamed, we intreat.* What Harmony, what Beauty, what Sweetneſs, what Evenneſs, what Perfection muſt there be in ſuch a Temper as this! What Command over his Paſſions muſt we ſuppoſe in ſuch a Perſon! And how ſtately and magnificent does it look, to ſee him unmoved by Abuſe, and invincible by Reproach, returning Good for Evil, and gracious Wiſhes for baſe and horrid Imprecations! This certainly is one of the beſt Arguments of a great and generous Mind; for, according to the Obſervation of the wiſe Man, [f] *he that is ſlow to Anger, is better than the Mighty; and he that ruleth his Spirit, than he that taketh a City.*

In doing them all good Offices.

3. To *love an Enemy*, is to do him all the real Offices of Kindneſs and Beneficence, that Opportunity ſhall lay in our Way. Has Providence, for Inſtance, put any of my Enemy's Concernments, his Health, his Eſtate, his Preferment, or any other Thing conducing to the Convenience of his Life, under my Power or Influence? Why, in all this, it gives me an Opportunity to manifeſt, whether or no I can reach the Sublimity of this Precept. [g] Is my Enemy ſick and languiſhing, and is it in my Power to cure him, as eaſily, or to kill him, as ſafely, as if I were his Phyſician? Chriſtianity here commands me to be concerned for his Weakneſs, to reſcue him from Death and the Grave, and to preſerve that Life, which perhaps would have once deſtroyed mine. Do I ſee mine Enemy defrauded, and circumvented, and like to be undone in his Eſtate? I muſt not ſit ſtill, and ſuffer him to be ruined, but contribute my Aſſiſtance to diſcover the Fraud, or repel the Oppreſſion, and be as ready to preſerve him from Poverty, as I would to relieve him, if he were in it. Does it lie in my Way to put in a Word to daſh, or promote my Enemy's Buſineſs or Intereſt; to give him a ſecret *Blow*, that ſhall ſtrike him to the Ground for ever, and never know the Hand from whence it came? Can I, by my Power, obſtruct his lawful Advantage and Preferment, and ſo reap the *diabolical* Satisfaction of a cloſe Revenge? Can I do him all the Miſchief imaginable, and that eaſily, ſafely, and ſucceſsfully, and ſo applaud myſelf in my Power, my Wit, my ſubtle Contrivances? Yet all theſe vile Practices, and accurſed Methods of growing great, and riſing by the Fall of an Adverſary, are to be deteſted, as infinitely oppoſite to that Innocence and Clearneſs of Spirit, that Openneſs and Freedom from Deſign, which becomes a Profeſſor of Chriſtianity. On the contrary, amidſt all theſe Opportunities of doing Miſchief, I muſt eſpouſe my Enemy's juſt Cauſe, as his *Advocate* or *Sollicitor*; I muſt help it forward by favourable Speeches of his Perſon, a due Acknowledgment of his Merit, and a fair Conſtruction of doubtful Paſſages; and all this, if need be, in ſecret, where my Enemy neither ſees nor hears me do him theſe Services, and, conſequently, where I have all the Advantages and Temptations to do otherwiſe.

In praying for them.

4. THE laſt and crowning Inſtance of our Love to our Enemies, is *to pray for them*; for by this a Man acknowledges himſelf, as it were unable to do enough for his Enemy, and therefore he calls in the Aſſiſtance of Heaven, and engages *Omnipotence* to compleat the Kindneſs. Prayer for my own Proſperity, is, indeed, a neceſſary Duty, but, if we conſider it narrowly, 'tis but a kind of lawful and pious *Selfiſhneſs*: But now, when I pray as heartily for my Enemy, as I do for *my Daily Bread*,

[d] *Gardiner's* Sermons. [e] 1 Cor. iv. 10, &c. [f] Prov. xvi. 32. [g] *South's* Sermons, Vol. III.

Bread, and reckon his Felicity among my own Neceſſities; when I recommend him to God's infinite Power and Compaſſion, to reſtore his Health, relieve his Wants, and ſupply him with all needful Bleſſings, even at the ſame Time that he is maligning and perſecuting me; I then follow that Divine Pattern of perfect Charity, who, in the Midſt of the moſt barbarous and contumelious Uſage, made both this Prayer and Apology for his Murtherers; [h] *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*

[i] THIS then is the Perfection of Chriſtian Charity, to be kindly affected, not to our Friends and Benefactors only, but to our Enemies and Perſecutors. 'Tis a *good* Degree of Charity to ſpeak them fair, and give them good Words, at the ſame Time that they are reviling and reproaching us; 'tis an *higher* Degree of it, to confer real Benefits upon them, and contribute what we can to their Happineſs and Welfare; but 'tis the *Top* and Perfection of it, to recommend them to God, who can do them more Good than we can; can grant them that Grace of Repentance, which we can only wiſh them; can beſtow upon them that Pardon for their Faults, which we can only requeſt for them; and make them as great and as happy as he pleaſes, both in this World and in the next.

An Objection.

" BUT if all this is to be done for our Enemies, where is the Difference between " thoſe, that have done us Kindneſs, and thoſe, that have done us Wrong? The " moſt we can do for our beſt Friends, and kindeſt Benefactors, is to love them, " to bleſs them, to do good to them, and to pray for them; if therefore we are " obliged to do all this for our Enemies, there is plainly nothing more left to be " done for our Friends." [k] Now though it cannot be denied, that *Friendſhip in general* is to be extended to all Mankind, even to thoſe, that hate and injure us, as well as to thoſe, that do us good; yet that *particular* and *ſpecial* Friendſhip, *i. e.* the loving of one Perſon more than another, which induces an additional Obligation, and is one of the greateſt Comforts of Society, is ſtill as lawful, and as commendable as ever, we have an Inſtance in our bleſſed Saviour himſelf; who, though he was continually teaching and inſtructing, healing, and doing good to an ungrateful People, and though he purpoſely came into the World to *die for his Enemies*, (which is the ſtrongeſt Effort of Love, that can be made even to our deareſt Friends) yet nevertheleſs, he had his *twelve* Diſciples, with whom he converſed with more Intimacy; whom he inſtructed with more Diligence and Freedom; and prayed for, in a particular Manner, with more than ordinary Tenderneſs and Concern: And even, in that Number, *three* of them were ſingled out for ſpecial Confidences and Favours; and of theſe three, St *John* is eminently diſtinguiſhed, as his Boſom-Friend, and the *Diſciple whom he loved:* Which makes it evident, beyond all Controverſy, that however the Chriſtian Religion may require a very *extenſive* Charity, yet has it ſtill left Room for the Obligations of particular Friendſhips and Relations. I am bound, indeed, to relieve my Enemy if I can, when he wants; but I am not bound to make him *extraordinary Preſents*, to leave him *Legacies*, or make him the Inheritor of my Eſtate. I am required to love my Enemy, and to wiſh, and do him all the good I can; but it does not preſently become neceſſary, that I ſhould take him into my *Boſom*, and give him the ſame Place in my moſt ſecret Thoughts and Purpoſes, that is due to my moſt familiar Friend: And though I am to deny my Aſſiſtance to none, yet, when Friend and Foe ſtand in Competition, and both cannot be ſerved at once, the Apoſtle, I think, has determined the Preference; for [l] *as we have an Opportunity*, ſays he, *let us do good unto all Men, but eſpecially unto them that are of the Houſhold of Faith*; and by Parity of Reaſon, eſpecially to thoſe of this *Houſhold*, that are bound to us by a nearer Tie of *Friendſhip* or *Conſanguinity*.

Answered.

Another Objection.

BUT the greateſt Objection of all againſt the Practice of this Duty, ariſes from the vaſt Difficulty, that is ſuppoſed in it: " [m] What, *love an Enemy*, and embrace " a Wretch, that would take away my Life, had he a ſecure Opportunity! As " well may you bid me pull up Mountains by the Roots, or ſtop the Sun in its " Courſe: The Thing is *impoſſible*, and the whole Tendency of Nature is againſt " it. To forgive Injuries, and tamely put up Affronts, are *Leſſons* proper for the " Weak and Puſillanimous, for ſuch as want Power, or an Opportunity to ex- " preſs their Reſentments; but they badly comport with a Man of Spirit, and worſe " with a Man of Honour." Now to ſilence this Objection, we cannot do better than proceed,

II. To

[h] Luke xxiii. 34. [i] *Blackhall*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [k] *Gardiner*'s Sermons. [l] Gal. vi. 10.
[m] *Horneck*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

Answered, from the Motives and Arguments for this Duty.
1. *From the Consideration of our Enemy.*

II. To some of the Motives and Arguments, that may recommend the Love of our Enemies, and reconcile us to the Practice of it, would we be impartial, and lay aside our Prejudice, we might perhaps discern several great and good Qualities in the Person that hates us: And, even in an Enemy, *whatsoever is lovely, whatsoever is of good Report*, should not go without its due Praise and Acknowledgment. [n] Nay suppose the worst, that he is never so much an Enemy, and never so bad a Man, yet still he is a *Man*, joined with us in the Society and Communion of the same Nature, and partaking of the Image and Super-inscription of our Heavenly Father; and we paint our Enemy then in wrong Colours, when we think him capable of affording us no Benefit at all; since [o] by him we may be admonished of our Faults, which our Friends perhaps would be shy of mentioning, and too tender in reproving: By him, and the Fear of his Censures, restrained from those Liberties, which, if we had taken, might have proved a Snare and Temptation to us: And by him, and his Injuries, have an Opportunity given us, of improving our Faith and Patience, and thereby of increasing our future Happiness. In him, indeed, there is no such Intention, and all that he does is in pure Hostility against us; but still we are to consider him as an *Instrument* in God's Hand, without whose Appointment or Permission nothing can befal us, and, consequently, not fasten our Eyes with Indignation upon him, but have always an awful Regard to the divine Providence that employs him; [p] and upon this Consideration it was, that *David* suppressed all impatient and resentive Thoughts, when he was sadly reviled, and treated with Indignity by *Shimei*. He had those about him, no doubt, that were ready enough to be the Executioners of his Revenge; but all that he had to say was; [q] *let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him: Who shall then say, wherefore hast thou done so?*

THIS Enemy of ours perhaps, at present, may create us some Uneasiness, yet who knows, but that, in Time, he may become (what reconciled Enemies usually are) one of our best Friends, and the Matter of our Joy and Consolation? And to bring about this Event, what can we imagine so prevalent, as a continual doing of kind and good Offices to those that bear us Ill-will? For [r] if, to see an injured Person, when insulted by outrageous Malice, not only patient in bearing it, but quietly passing by all other Methods of Revenge, beside that of a generous Contempt; if such a surprising Sight as this, I say, cannot but fill, even him that does the Injury, with secret Shame and Confusion; what Operation may it not be expected to have, when the same innocent and injured Person, not contented only to forbear and forgive, pursues his very Persecutor with Courtesy and Kindness, and endeavours to reduce him by all seasonable good Offices, and by all the Overtures of Reconciliation, and Invitations to Friendship, that he can think of? Such *resolved* Goodness, without Dispute, must be enough to subdue the most obstinate Ill-nature, and can hardly fail of the Effect, whereof the Apostle gives us this Assurance; [s] *if thine Enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him Drink; for, in so doing,* [t] *thou shalt heap Coals of Fire on his Head.*——Coals that, when once they come to touch the Heart, will melt him down, be he made of never so stubborn Metal, into Easiness and Compliance, refine him from all his unsociable Passions, and fit him for your Familiarity and Friendship.

2. *The Nature of the Duty.*

BUT if this Event should not follow, nay, if even we are assured before-hand, that the Malice our Enemy bears us, is so settled and implacable, that no Love or Kindness on our Part can work upon his Temper, and regain his Friendship; yet, herein is the great Advantage of this Duty, that, in loving our Enemies, we really exercise and express our Love to ourselves: *By loving an Enemy*, notwithstanding his Hatred to me, I free my Mind of those boisterous Passions of Anger, Hatred, and Revenge, which put the Spirits into an unnatural Fermentation and Tumult. By *not being* easily *provoked*, I blunt the Edge of the Weapon, wherewith he seeks to hurt me; and, by *returning Good for Evil*, I have it in my Power sufficiently, though innocently to be revenged of him. I can make his very Eyes sore, to see so much Goodness in one that he hates; I can gall and vex him to the Heart, by a generous Return to an unworthy Provocation; and, in short, can shame and confound him quite, by shewing myself to be, in all the Contention between us, much the better, and the wiser, and the greater Man of the two.

AND

[n] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. I. [o] *Blackhall*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [p] *Mos*'s Sermons. [q] 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11.
[r] *Mos*, ibid. [s] Rom. xii. 20.
[t] The Metaphor is taken from the Method used by Artificers in Metals, who, when they meet with any too hard to be dissolved by putting Fire under them, take and pour live Coals upon them, and, by that Means, bring them to their Purpose. *Hammond, in Locum.*

AND now, [u] what a pleaſing Proſpect muſt it be to the meek, the humble, and the patient Soul, whenever an Enemy approaches, to perceive himſelf placed, as it were, in Eminence above him, and that he is ſtill able to keep himſelf quiet and undiſturbed, notwithſtanding all the rude Attacks that can be made upon him; nay, to perceive, that, without any outward Force or Violence, without ſtriking a ſingle Stroke, or ſaying one Word, he can moſt ſweetly and innocently be revenged, only by continuing firm to his Duty? Nor can it but enhanſe this Pleaſure, to conceive ſome probable Hopes of vanquiſhing the ſturdieſt Oppoſition of an Enemy, by pure Dint of Courteſy and Kindneſs; and like a great and wiſe *General*, (as [x] one fitly compares it) by Art and Stratagem, by Skill and Conduct, by Patience and wiſe Delay, to make an End of the War, without ever putting it to the Hazard of a Battle.

3. *The Example of God.*

BY our Lord's Authority, we may venture to carry the Practice of this Duty to a ſtill higher Pitch of Commendation. [y] For, as Love for Love is but Juſtice and Gratitude, and Love for no Love Favour and Kindneſs; ſo Love for Hatred and Enmity is a moſt *divine* Temper, and that whereby we [z] *become the Children of our Father, which is in Heaven: For he maketh his Sun to riſe on the Evil and on the Good, and ſendeth Rain on the Juſt and on the Unjuſt.* [a] Who then can think it beneath him to paſs by an Injury, or to put up an Affront, when he ſees that God, the ſovereign Creator and Lord of all Things, whoſe Power no Creature is able to reſiſt, does nevertheleſs ſpare and preſerve us (vile Worms, and ſinful Duſt and Aſhes) who provoke him every Day, and, by our continual Abuſe of his Forbearance and Long-ſuffering, call for the ſevereſt Vengeance upon us? Who can think it unbecoming his Dignity or Greatneſs, even to buy his Peace with his Neighbour, who has done him Wrong, by doing him, as he has Opportunity, all Offices of Goodneſs and Kindneſs, when he has before him the Example of God himſelf, intreating us to be reconciled to him, and, notwithſtanding our manifold Provocations, deſirous to purchaſe our Friendſhip at any Rate: When we have the Example of the Son of God, our crucified Saviour, [b] *who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth*; and yet, *when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he ſuffered, he threatened not:* When we have the Example of his *glorious Company of Apoſtles*, who in all Things [c] *approved themſelves, as the Miniſters of Chriſt*, and his faithful Followers, *in Honour and Diſhonour, by evil Report and good Report, as Deceivers, and yet true:* When we have the Example of his Church, in the beſt Ages, who, as *Juſtin Martyr* tells the *Jews*, [d] prayed for them, and all others, that were unjuſtly their Enemies, that repenting of their Wickedneſs, and ceaſing to blaſpheme Chriſt Jeſus, they might, together with Chriſtians, be ſaved by him, at his ſecond glorious Coming: When we have his gracious Promiſe of a Recompence to be made us, for all that we ſuffer upon this Score; for [e] *bleſſed are ye, when Men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſay all Manner of Evil againſt you falſly for my Sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your Reward in Heaven:* And laſtly, when we have his ſevere Comminations, that, without *forgiving our Enemies*, we can have no Remiſſion of our own *Tranſgreſſions*; for, [f] *if he that is but Fleſh* (as the Son of *Syrach* obſerves) *nouriſheth Hatred, who ſhall intreat for Pardon of his Sins?* And therefore he concludeth, *Remember thy End, and let Enmity ceaſe: Remember Corruption and Death, and abide in the Commandments: Remember the Commandments, and bear no Malice to thy Neighbour: Remember the Covenant of the moſt High, and wink at Ignorance.*

SECT. I.

Of Juſtice in general.

Juſtice, *what, and the ſeveral Kinds of it.*

JUSTICE is that Virtue, which is concerned in the Obſervance of thoſe *Laws*, whether *human* or *divine*, which reſpect the ſeveral *Rights* of Men, whether *natural* or *acquired.*

1. *With Relation to our* natural *Rights.*

1. THE *natural* Rights of Men are thoſe, which appertain to them, as *rational* Creatures, dwelling in mortal Bodies, joined together in mutual Relations, and united in

[u] *Moſs*'s Sermons. [x] *Barrow.* [y] Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [z] Matth. v. 45.
[a] *Blackhall*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [b] 1 Pet. ii. 22. [c] 2 Cor. vi. 4, 8. [d] *Cave*'s Primitive Chriſtianity.
[e] Matth. v. 11, 12. [f] Eccleſ. xxviii. 5, &c.

in one common Society. Theſe are Rights inherent in them, antecedently to all human Conſtitutions, and what they may juſtly claim of one another, as *eternal Dues*, which no *Laws* can cancel, no *Cuſtom* diſſolve, no *Circumſtances* make void or abrogate. [1] To do juſtly then, with Reſpect to this kind of *Rights*, is to render to every Man what we are indebted to him by the Obligation of Nature; as he is a *rational Creature*, to treat him *equitably*, and to do him all the good we can juſtly deſire he ſhould do to us, if we were in his Circumſtances; quietly to permit him to judge for himſelf, without endeavouring to *tyrannize* over his Conſcience, by perſecuting, cenſuring, and reviling him, becauſe he is not of our Opinion; freely to ſuffer him to comply with the Dictates of right Reaſon, and not to put him, by any kind of Violence or Neceſſity, upon any wicked or diſhonourable Act; and, in a Word, to pay him all thoſe fair Reſpects, and Inſtances of Courteſy, that are due to the Dignity of human Nature. Theſe are Debts, which every rational Creature owes to his own Kind, and which we cannot with-hold from one another, without manifeſt Injuſtice to human Nature: But then, as we are rational Creatures, *inhabiting theſe mortal Bodies*, we are obliged in Juſtice not to maim, or deſtroy, or captivate another Man's Body, unleſs it be in the neceſſary Defence of our own Lives, Eſtates, or Liberties; not to deprive him of his neceſſary Livelihood and Subſiſtence, but out of our Abundance (if he be rich and we poor) to ſupply his pinching Neceſſities. Theſe Things we owe to one another, as we are all the *Tenants* of God, ſent down into this lower World, and quartered in theſe *Houſes of Clay*. And ſo again, as we are rational Creatures, *joined together by natural Relations*, we are obliged to pay each other all thoſe Reſpects and Duties, which the Nature of our Relation calls for; as we are *Parents*, to love, and inſtruct, and make ſuitable Proviſion for our Children; and, as we are *Children*, to love, and reverence, to ſuccour, and obey our Parents; and ſo in all other Relations. Once again, as we are rational Creatures, *united* in one *common Society*, we owe Love and Peace, Truth and Credit, Protection and Participation of Profit to our Fellow-members; and when, inſtead of theſe, we hate and malign, we vex and diſturb one another; when we lye, and equivocate, and violate our Promiſes and Oaths; when we are negligent and prodigal of each other's Lives, Eſtates, and Reputations, and uſurp to ourſelves all the Profit of our mutual Intercourſe, we then deſtroy the *natural* Rights of human Society, and demean ourſelves as open *Enemies* to Mankind.

Our acquired *Right.*

2. THE *acquired* Rights of Men are ſuch, as ariſe from their *ſacred* and *civil* Relations, from their *legal* Poſſeſſions, their *perſonal* Accompliſhments, their *outward* Rank and Quality, and the like; of which we intend to diſcourſe ſomewhat more diſtinctly, after we have conſidered, 1. Our Obligation to *Juſtice in general*; and, 2. The *Rule* and *Motives*, that may engage our Practice of it.

Our Obligation to Juſtice.

I. THAT there is a ſecret Inclination, or Impreſſion upon the Minds of Men, whereby they are naturally carried to approve ſome Things, as good and fit, and to diſlike other Things, as having a native Evil and Deformity in them; and that, by theſe natural Inclinations and Impreſſions, the great Lines of our Duty may be traced out, a Man needs but conſult the Oracle of his own Breaſt to be ſatisfied. That to be juſt in our Dealings, true in our Truſts, faithful in our Promiſes, and in all Things to do to others, as we would they ſhould do unto us, are Actions eternally *good*, and fitted to the genuine Propenſions of our Nature; as on the contrary, to be falſe and perfidious in our Words or Deeds, to injure the Innocent, or oppreſs the Impotent, or defraud the Ignorant, are Actions eternally *evil*, and abhorrent to our natural and undepraved Notions, is viſible from the *Glory* and *Appearance*, which is known to attend the *one*, and the *Shame* and *Confuſion* which uſually accompanies the *other*; for Glory and Shame are nothing elſe, but an Appeal to the Judgment of others, concerning the Good or Evil of our Actions.

From the Dictates of our Nature.

From the Nature of God.

AND, as by our natural Propenſions we are called upon to the Practice of all Manner of Juſtice, ſo are we no leſs obliged to perform it, in Conformity to the *Nature*, in Submiſſion to the *Providence*, and in Obedience to the *Will* of our great Creator. As God, by the infinite *Self-ſufficiency* of his Nature, is ſecured from all Temptation to Injuſtice, ſo, by the infinite *Goodneſs of it*, he ſtands unvariably bent and inclined to deal juſtly and righteouſly by his Creatures, never to with-hold from them any Right, never to afflict them beyond their Demerit; and therefore the Royal Pſalmiſt

[1] *Scott's* Chriſtian Life, Part III.

Pſalmiſt makes his Acknowledgment; * *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy Judgments*; even as the ſeven Angels, in the Song of the Lamb, declare, *Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty, juſt and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints.* Since then the Nature of God is the great *Exemplar* and *Pattern* of all reaſonable Natures, as being in itſelf the moſt *perfectly reaſonable*, whatever is imitable in it, that we are obliged to tranſcribe into our own; and, conſequently, ſince he is eternally juſt, we are obliged to be juſt likewiſe. For indeed, conſider- *His Providence.*
ing that God, as the ſupreme Lord and Proprietor of all Things, has an eternal Right to ſhare his own Goods amongſt his own Creatures, as he pleaſes, to *deprive* another Man of what his Providence has allotted him, beſides the Injury done the Perſon, is a direct Oppoſition to the Divine *Ordination* and Appointment; a ſetting ourſelves up to carve for ourſelves out of thoſe Allowances, that he has diſtributed to others, and living in open Rebellion to his wiſe Government. Well therefore *His revealed Will.*
might the Word of God *teach* and admoniſh us, *that denying Ungodlineſs, and worldly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World*; that, in all our Dealings, we ſhould maintain *a Conſcience void of Offence, not going beyond, or defrauding one another*; but, in every Thing, dealing with other Men, as we would they ſhould deal with us: For † *he hath ſhewed thee, O Man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* What doth the Lord require of thee? All thy other Works, and Performances, *thy coming before him with Burnt-Offerings, with Calves of a Year old*; thy bringing to his Altar *Thouſands of Rams, and ten Thouſand Rivers of Oil*; nay, *thy giving thy Firſt-Born for thy Tranſgreſſion, the Fruit of thy Body for the Sin of thy Soul*, will avail thee nothing: ‖ So long as thou art a Tranſgreſſor of the eternal Rules of Righteouſneſs, whatever thy Worſhip, whatever thy Form of Religion be, it will never recommend thee to the Favour of that God, who loves Juſtice more than Sacrifice, and the Integrity of thy Dealings, more than all the Solemnity of thy other Services. And ſo we proceed,

II. To ſtate the *Meaſure*, and enforce the *Motives* of this Duty. It is reported *The Rule or Meaſure of this Duty.*
of *Alexander Severus*, the *Roman* Emperor, that he had ſo great an Eſteem for our bleſſed Saviour, upon Account of his being the Author of this one Sentence, ‡ *All Things, whatſoever ye would that Men ſhould do unto you, do you even ſo to them*; that he was once minded to have built him a *Temple*, and received him into the Number of the Heathen Gods. And well might the Emperor have ſo good an Opinion of its Author, ſince this, of all others, is a Rule ſo plain and clear, ſo near at Hand, and accommodated to all the common Caſes of human Life, that nothing more excellent can be deviſed for the Regulation of our Intercourſe with one another; only there may be ſome Doubt concerning the *Extent* of the *Matter* contained in it, which we will firſt endeavour to explain, and then ſhew the manifold Uſefulneſs of it.

Now though this Rule be of excellent Uſe towards the Direction of our Behaviour *The Limitation of this Rule.*
in general, yet there are ſeveral Caſes, wherein it will not hold; wherein we are obliged not to grant that to others, which we ourſelves perhaps, were we in their Circumſtances, and they in ours, might be willing enough, *unreaſonably willing*, to obtain from them. ‖ A *Benefactor*, for Inſtance, is not bound to comply with the Demands of ſuch, as aſk *unmerited* Favours, though conſcious, that he himſelf might be apt to make as extravagant *Requeſts*, were it his Turn to be the Object of another Man's Beneficence: Nor is a *Magiſtrate* at Liberty, much leſs under an Obligation, to turn the *Edge* of Juſtice from an importunate Offender, becauſe, if he himſelf were the *Criminal*, he ſhould certainly and equally deſire to eſcape unpuniſhed. The Rule therefore, which makes what we deſire of other Men the Meaſure of our Dealings toward them, is to be underſtood, not of *vicious* or *exceſſive* Deſires, but of ſuch only as are fit and reaſonable; ſuch Requeſts as we can, in our calmeſt Thoughts, juſtify to ourſelves; ſuch as we are ſure may be made with *Decency*, and cannot be refuſed without *Inhumanity*.

THIS is the neceſſary Limitation of the Rule: And, were it but duly obſerved, *The Excellency of it.*
the *Seller* would not take Advantage of the Ignorance of the *Buyer*, nor the Buyer make an Advantage of the Neceſſity of the Seller; becauſe his own Conſcience would tell

* Pſal. cxix. 137. † Micah vi. 8, &c. ‖ *Cave*'s Primitive Chriſtianity. ‡ Matth. vii. 12. ‖ *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

tell him, that if he were the Buyer, and another ſhould take ſuch Advantage of his Ignorance, if he were the Seller, and another ſhould make ſuch Advantage of his Neceſſity, he ſhould have Reaſon enough to complain of his being cheated, or oppreſſed. If this Rule were duly obſerved, the *Borrower* would reckon himſelf ſtrictly bound to reſtore what was lent him, in due Time; and the *Lender* would be far from exacting any extravagant Conditions for the Loan of his Money or Goods, becauſe he knows, that, when he *lends*, he expects the Borrower to be *punctual*, and, when himſelf is forced to *borrow*, he ſhould be very loth to fall into the Hands of an *Extortioner*. Were this Rule well remembered and obſerved, there would be no Need of ever binding Men in Obligations, or ſuing them at Law to perform their Bargains, or execute their Truſts; becauſe whoever ſtrikes a Bargain, or accepts a Truſt, cannot but know *what* he would *account* another, that ſhould falſify in either of theſe Particulars; and therefore ſhould he himſelf do ſo, he muſt be convicted, and condemned by his own Conſcience. In fine, (for to run through all Particulars would be endleſs) who is there, that does not call that Man a *Knave*, or an unjuſt Perſon, who robs him, who cheats him, who keeps from him his own, or who any Ways abuſes him in Word or Deed? Every Man has a quick Senſe, and is ready to make loud Complaints of the Injuries and Affronts that are put upon him; and therefore, if he would but make another Man's Caſe his own, he would have the ſame Reſentment of the Injuries that are done to another, and, conſequently, be reſtrained from doing any himſelf.

Motives to the Practice of Juſtice.

From its Obviouſneſs.

[m] THIS *Commandment* (ſays *Moſes*, to engage the People to the Obſervance of the *Moral* Law) *is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in Heaven, that thou ſhouldſt ſay, who ſhall go up for us to Heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the Sea, that thou ſhouldſt ſay, who ſhall go over the Sea for us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart, that thou mayſt do it:* And if this might be ſaid of the Law in general, much more is it true of thoſe eternal Rules of Righteouſneſs, which lie open to common Uſe, are obvious to all Sizes of Apprehenſion, and ready at all Times for preſent Application. The greater therefore, and more inexcuſable muſt the Violation of theſe Precepts be, ſince, [n] however other Sins may be excuſed by our Ignorance, and, in ſome Meaſure, alleviated upon Account of the natural Defects of our Underſtanding, this can admit of no Cloak or Extenuation; becauſe, whenever a Man deals unjuſtly by another, his Conſcience (if he puts but the Queſtion to his Conſcience) will be ſure to tell him, that he would not be ſo dealt with, were the Caſe and Circumſtances his own; and therefore, if he reſolves to deal unjuſtly, notwithſtanding ſuch Conviction, he can claim no Indulgence, deſerves no Pity, and can pretend to no Mitigation of his Stripes, ſince *he knew his Maſter's Will, and did it not.*

From the Unprofitableneſs,

IT may be conſidered farther, that, however the unjuſt Man may make Profit and Advantage his *ultimate* End, yet, one Way or other, he is generally diſappointed; becauſe, how ſecretly ſoever he may carry on his *Myſtery*, yet it will not be long, before ſome unforeſeen Accident will draw the Curtain, and bring to Light the Fraud and Villainy, which he practiſes behind it; and when theſe are once detected, farewel Credit and Reputation for ever. The Man, that has ſuffered by his Diſhoneſty, either out of Charity to others, or out of Reſentment of the Injury, will divulge his Knavery, and caution others againſt him; and what Expectance can he then have of thriving in his Trade or Calling, when his Houſe becomes haunted, as it were, and his Frauds and Cozenages appear like Spectres at his Door, to

Uneaſineſs,

frighten all Men from his Converſation? But ſuppoſe the beſt, and (what ſometimes comes to paſs) that the Man thrives, and grows great in the World by his Frauds and Injuſtice; yet alas! what Comfort can he take in his ill-gotten Wealth, when every Part of it throws Guilt in his Face, and awakens ſome dire Reflection in his Conſcience? By a continued Tumult of Exceſs and Riot he may make a ſhift perhaps to drown theſe Remonſtrances; but, in all Probability, when Death, in ſome Diſeaſe or other, begins to approach him, and to place him within the Sight of a dreadful Eternity, his Conſcience will then begin to *rouſe* and *awake*, and raiſe an hideous Outcry againſt him. And what a wretched and deplorable Condition muſt he then be in, when his laſt *Will* and *Teſtament* ſets before him a woeful *Catalogue* of uncancelled Guilts, and every ill-gotten Penny puts him in Mind of his approaching Damnation?

[l] *Blackhall's* Sermons, Vol. II. [m] Deut. xxx. 11, &c. [n] *Scott's* Chriſtian Life.

Damnation? Under these Circumstances, he has but these two Things to chuse, either to refund his unjust Acquisitions, or to venture to perish eternally for them. If his Resolution is to live and die with the Spoils of his Injustice about him, he thereby exposes himself *to the Wrath of God, which is revealed from Heaven against all Unrighteousness of Men*, and surrenders his immortal Soul, which the Gain of the whole World can never compensate, to the Pangs and Agonies of everlasting Death. But, if he is not so desperate as to intend this, he must then make Restitution of what he hath wrongfully taken from his Neighbour, and in doing so, perhaps, strip himself of all. And now, [o] what Folly and Madness is this, for a Man to take a great deal of Pains, only to create himself more Trouble and Vexation? To spin a Thread, which he knows himself must unravel? And to load and cumber himself, as it were, with bringing home to his own House his Neighbour's Goods, which he must afterwards carry back again upon his own Shoulders, and when that is done, leave his own House more naked and unfurnished, than it was at first? He certainly is the wiser, as well as the honester Man, wiser, I say, for this World, as well as the next, who, though he has but little, can call that little his own, as being the Fruit of God's Blessing upon his honest Industry, and may therefore (as the primitive Manner was) [p] *eat his Meat with Gladness, and Singleness of Heart, praising God, and having Favour with all the People.*

Desperateness,

and Folly of Injustice.

SECT. II.

Of Relative Justice.

BESIDES the *general* Justice, which is common to all Men, there is a *special* Kind of Justice, arising from the Respects and Relations, wherein we stand, as *Superiors* and *Inferiors*, to each other. Now Superiors, with their respective Inferiors, are such, either with Regard their *Authority*, or their *Excellency*. 1. Superiors in *Authority* are those, who, by God's Ordinance, have Power over us, and a Right to rule and govern us; and these are either in the *State*, in the *Church*, or in *private Families*. *In the State*, the Superiors are the Princes, or chief Magistrates, who are the *secular* Fathers of the Country, and God's *Vicegerents* in it. *In the Church*, they are the Ministers of the Gospel, who are the *spiritual* Fathers of the People committed to their Charge. *In a Family*, they and their respective Inferiors are Husband and Wife, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants. 2. Superiors in *Excellency* are such, as surpass others, either in the Gifts of the Mind, or in Wealth and Honour, or in Beneficence and Liberality, &c. and our Purpose must be to shew, what are the several *Rights*, that these Men may claim, and consequently, what are the *Duties*, that interfere between the Prince and Subject, the Pastor and People, [q] Parents and Children, the Husband and Wife, the Master and Servant, Friend and Friend; between Superiors in *Rank* and *Riches*, in *Parts* and *Abilities*, and their respective Inferiors.

Different Kinds of it.

1. *Between Prince and Subject.*

WHOEVER will give himself Pains to reflect upon the State and Condition of Things in this World, and to consider how much stronger Influence Men's *Passions* have over them, than their *Reason*, may soon be convinced of the Necessity of Government to the Peace and Happiness of it. We may perceive, by the Injustice and Wickedness that is done every Day, in Defiance of Law and Punishment, what Mankind would be, if these Restraints were withdrawn, and Will and Pleasure were the sole Principle of every one's Actions. It is of happy Design therefore, that God has appointed governing Powers in the World, for the Support and Comfort of human Society, [r] to be *his Ministers to us for Good*, and *Revengers to execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil.* [s] But then these Governors

The Reasons of Government.

[o] *Blackhall*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [p] Acts ii. 46, 47. [q] The Duties relating to Parents and Children, we have sufficiently treated of in our Exposition of the *fifth Commandment*. [r] Rom. xiii. 4. [s] *Hoadley*'s Sermons.

The Duty of Princes, *both in* ſecular *and* ſpiritual *Affairs.*

vernors are not to look upon themſelves, as Perſons exalted, by the immediate Direction of Heaven, to an Height above other Mortals, merely to be *Arbitrators*, at their own Pleaſure, of the Lives and Fortunes of their Fellow-Creatures; but as Perſons called, by the Providence of God, to a difficult and laborious Taſk; not to live in *Eaſe* and *Delicacy*, but to *watch*, Day and Night, for the Good of that Society, in which they preſide; to be diſtinguiſhed indeed from others, by the *Enſigns* of Greatneſs and Authority, but this only to make them more capable of ſerving the Publick, and conſulting the Intereſt of all their Subjects, in their endeavouring, by all proper Means, to promote the Honour and Intereſt of true Religion, but without *uſurping* an Authority over other Men's *Conſciences*; in their taking Care to have the Laws duly executed, and yet that Execution tempered with all the *Lenity* and Goodneſs, that may be conſiſtent with the publick *Safety*; in *protecting* their Subjects againſt all outward Violence, and *providing* them ſuch Things as are neceſſary for the Relief of their Wants; and in encouraging and promoting Perſons of Merit and Probity, and making them the more peculiar Objects of their Favour and Confidence.

IN the Language of Scripture, [t] *Kings* and *Queens* are called the *nurſing Fathers*, and *nurſing Mothers* of their People; [*] and the Terms (in what Senſe ſoever we take them, whether for *natural* Parents, or for ſuch as ſupply their Place in the Care and Tuition of Children, *viz.* Guardians and Nurſes) do certainly imply a wonderful Truſt repoſed in Princes, and a wonderful Care, Sollicitude, and Tenderneſs required of them, with relation to thoſe that are committed to them. As therefore *they are nurſing Fathers*, they are to ſecure and promote the *temporal* Peace and Happineſs of their Subjects; and, accordingly, ſhould think themſelves obliged to look into the Affairs of the Kingdom with their own Eyes, and to ſee that all Magiſtrates under them do their Duty, in their reſpective Stations and Offices; to take care that their *Favourites* incroach not upon them, or make uſe of the Credit they have with them, for the Oppreſſion of the meaneſt of the People; and to provide, that *impartial Juſtice* be adminiſtered to all; but Juſtice, (as we ſaid before) that is *tempered* with Mercy, becauſe they ſhould remember, that [x] *their Thrones ſhould be upholden by Mercy*. And as *they are nurſing Fathers*, with a more immediate Regard to the *Church* of God, their Buſineſs muſt be, to maintain and defend the true *Religion*; to encourage Piety and Virtue; to oppoſe and diſcountenance all *Atheiſm* and *Infidelity*, all *Schiſms* and *Hereſies*, and all Vice and Wickedneſs, and Impiety of what Kind ſoever; to uſe their utmoſt Endeavours to make all their Subjects good Men, and good Chriſtians; and, in order to this, not only to be exemplary themſelves in Piety and Devotion, in Temperance and Moderation, and all other Virtues; but to take eſpecial Care, that Godlineſs be not defamed, and the *Ways of Truth evil ſpoken of*, by reaſon either of the ill Lives, or ill Principles of thoſe that encompaſs the Throne: For this was holy *David*'s Reſolution, and the Meaſure he deſigned to follow in his Government, when God had advanced him to the Kingdom of *Iſrael*: [y] *I will walk in my Houſe in a perfect Heart: I will take no wicked Thing in Hand: I hate the Works of the Unfaithful; no ſuch ſhall cleave unto me. A froward Heart ſhall depart from me: I will not know a wicked Perſon; but mine Eyes ſhall look upon ſuch, as are faithful in the Land, and whoſo leadeth a godly Life, he ſhall be my Servant:* For [†] *take away the Wicked from before the King*, (ſays his wiſe Son *Solomon*) *and his Throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed in Righteouſneſs.*

TO be ſhort, as *ſovereign* Power was ordained by God for a publick Good, to guard and defend the Innocent, to ſhelter and relieve the Oppreſſed, to fence and propagate true Religion, and adjuſt and balance private Rights and Intereſts, every *Subject* has a Claim to be protected by it, (as far as he is able) in his Perſon and legal Rights, in his juſt Liberties and Privileges, and in the Profeſſion and Exerciſe of God's true Religion; and the Prince, who, being inveſted with ſovereign Power for this Purpoſe, either betrays, oppreſſes, or any Way enſlaves his Subjects himſelf, or, out of Negligence or Malice, permits others to do it, is an injurious Invader of their Rights and Properties, and, though not accountable to any *human* Authority, ſhall one Day anſwer for it at the *Tribunal* of God.

AND,

[t] *Plutarch* makes this to be the Character of a King: Ὑπηρετῶν Θεῷ πρὸς ἀνθρώπων ἐπιμέλειαν καὶ σωτηρίαν, God's Miniſter or Servant for the Good and Welfare of Mankind. [u] Iſa. xlix. 23. [*] *Sharp*'s Sermons. 1

[x] Prov. xx. 28. [y] Pſal. ci. 2, 3, &c. [†] Prov. xxv. 5.

AND, on the other Hand, as Kings are God's *Vicegerents* here on Earth, and reign by his Authority, they have a Right to be obeyed in all Things, wherein they do not interfere with the Commands of God. As they are the *Repreſentatives* of his Power and Majeſty, they have a Right to be honoured and reverenced by their Subjects: And, as they were *ſubſtituted* by him to maintain the publick Weal, and to guard the Properties of their People, they have certainly a Right to be aided and aſſiſted by them; [z] *for they are God's Miniſters*, ſays St *Paul*, *attending continually upon this very Thing: Render therefore to all their Dues; Tribute, to whom Tribute is due; Cuſtom, to whom Cuſtom; Fear, to whom Fear; Honour, to whom Honour.* *The Duty of Subjects.*

[a] SOVEREIGN Princes and States are the chief Inſtruments, which the Providence of God employs in his Adminiſtrations here below: To them is intruſted the Execution of all Laws; and Laws, we know, are the Source of every Advantage, that redounds to Mankind from Society. Even *ill* Princes cannot help doing a great deal of Good, by preſerving ſome Degree of Order and Government in the World; but when Virtue aſcends the Throne, it diſpenſes Bleſſings, without Number, and without Meaſure. Seeing therefore, that, by the Adminiſtration of our [b] *Princes, we enjoy great Quietneſs, and many worthy Deeds are done to this Nation* by their Care and *Providence*; it is certainly our Duty to *accept it always, and in all Places, with all Thankfulneſs*; and, inſtead of cenſuring and reviling, to *eſteem them highly in Love, for their Works ſake.* *To honour and eſteem their Governors.*

CHRISTIAN Charity and Beneficence is certainly a Debt, which we owe to *Kings*, as well as the meaneſt of their Subjects; but how ſhall we extend our good Offices to thoſe, who move in ſo high a Sphere? How, but by entertaining a ſincere Eſteem for their Perſons, and a good Opinion of their Adminiſtrations; by concealing their Faults, and commending their Virtues; by ſilencing the Clamours, and ſuppreſſing the Jealouſies, which proud, and envious, and ſelf-deſigning Men are too apt to propagate: Theſe, together with our hearty Prayer to God for their Proſperity and Preſervation, are the only *Compenſation*, or Return, which moſt of us are capable of making them, for their Vigilance and Concern for the publick Safety; the Pains which they take, and the Hazard which they run, to ſecure it.

[c] MOST Men, indeed, by their Condition of Life, are ſet at too great a Diſtance from the *Springs* of Government, to be rightly inſtructed in Facts and Circumſtances, and much leſs to enter into the Reaſon and Foundation of publick Councils; and therefore for ſuch to cenſure the Conduct of their Superiors, is talking without Knowledge, and judging without Examination. And even thoſe, who are placed in higher Stations, and have a nearer View of the publick Management, cannot but know what a large and weighty Taſk the Concerns of the *Publick* are; how many Difficulties ariſe, which the wiſeſt Councils cannot foreſee, nor the greateſt Diligence ſurmount: And hereupon they ſhould be ſo far from being the firſt in cenſuring and accuſing the publick Conduct, that they ought, in Reaſon and Equity, to be the *Correctors* of others, whoſe Ignorance in theſe Matters ſhall, at any Time, betray them into too great Freedom and Severity. *Not to cenſure, or revile them,*

[d] WHEN St *Paul*, ſtanding before the *Council of the Jews*, made a ſolemn Profeſſion of his Innocence, and that he *had walked in all good Conſcience before God, even until that Day*, the Declaration was thought an inſolent Boaſt, and offended the High-Prieſt to that Degree, that he commanded him to be *ſmitten on the Mouth*. Provoked at this opprobrious Uſage, the Apoſtle indeed charges him with *Hypocriſy*, in ſitting there to *judge him after the Law*, and yet commanding him to be *ſmitten contrary to the Law*: And though the Groſſneſs of the Affront he received might juſtify the Severity of this Charge, yet, when he is put in Mind, that it was the *ſupreme Magiſtrate*, of whom he had ſaid this, ſo far was he from vindicating, that he preſently revoked it, and condemned himſelf for it. [d] *I wiſt not, Brethren, that he was the High-Prieſt; for it is written, Thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of thy People.* Inſtead of [e] *deſpiſing Dominion* then, and *ſpeaking evil of Dignities*; inſtead of [f] *reviling the Gods, and curſing the Rulers of the People*, what is the Advice that this ſame Apoſtle gives us, equally conducive to our own Happineſs and Intereſt, as well as theirs? *I exhort*, ſays he, *that, firſt of all, Supplications, Prayers, Interceſſions,* *but pray for them.*

[z] Rom. xiii. 6, 7.
[a] Biſhop *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[b] Acts xxiv. 2, 3.
[c] Biſhop *Gibſon*'s Sermons.
[d] Acts xxiii. 5, &c.
[e] Jude, ver. 8.
[f] Exod. xxii. 8.

ſions, and giving of Thanks be made for all Men, and eſpecially, [s] *for Kings, and all that are in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life, in all Godlineſs and Honeſty; for this is good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour.*

2. *Between Paſtor and People.*

THAT the Miniſters of God were, at all Times, a *diſtinct Order* of Men, inveſted with a peculiar Character, and appointed to the Office of preaching the Word, adminiſtering the Sacraments, and ordaining others to ſucceed in their Function, is what we had Occaſion to evince [h] in another Place, and ſhall now conſider them in a farther View, as they are the *ſpiritual Fathers* of the Flock of Chriſt: For that there is ſuch a Relation between them and their reſpective *Congregations*, St *Paul* has more than intimated, when he tells the *Corinthians*, that [i] *though they might have Ten thouſand Inſtructors in Chriſt*, yet had *they not many Fathers*; none, indeed, beſides himſelf; *for in Chriſt Jeſus*, ſays he, *I have begotten you through the Goſpel.*

The Paſtor's Duty.

St *PAUL*, being about to take his Leave of the Church of *Epheſus*, ſends for the *Elders* that preſided therein, and gives them this Injunction; [k] *Take Heed unto yourſelves, and all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt has made you Overſeers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own Blood; for I know this, that, after my departing, ſhall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not ſparing the Flock; and alſo of yourſelves ſhall Men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe Things, to draw away Diſciples after them; and therefore watch.* In his canonical Epiſtles to *Timothy*, he abounds with ſuch Exhortations as theſe; [l] *Take Heed unto thyſelf, and unto thy Doctrine: Continue in them; for in doing this thou ſhalt both ſave thyſelf, and them that hear thee:* [m] *Study*, therefore, *to ſhew thyſelf approved unto God; a Workman that needeth not to be aſhamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.* [n] *Preach the Word; be inſtant in Seaſon, and out of Seaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all Long-ſuffering and Doctrine;* and [o] *be thou an Example of the Believers, in Word, in Converſation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity;* and, to compleat the Duty of God's Clergy, St *Peter*'s Exhortation runs thus; [p] *Feed the Flock of God, which is among you, taking the Overſight thereof, not by Conſtraint, but willingly; not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind; neither as being Lords over God's Heritage, but being Examples to the Flock; and when the chief Shepherd ſhall appear, ye ſhall receive a Crown of Glory, that fadeth not away:* For [q] *they that be wiſe, ſhall ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament; and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever.*

THESE are ſome of the Lines, wherein the Spirit of God has drawn the *paſtoral* Care and Duty, by which he reminds every one, that has undertaken the *ſacred* Function, that he ought to preach ſuch *ſound Doctrine*, as may not be reproved, and in a Manner adapted to the Capacities of his Hearers; that he ſhould guard them againſt ſuch *Errors* in Opinion and Practice, as are contrary to the Principles and Rules of the Goſpel; that he ſhould be very diligent and induſtrious in his Calling; [r] in inſtructing the Ignorant, in reproving the Wicked, in exhorting the Negligent, in ſtrengthening the Weak, in viſiting the Sick, in comforting the Afflicted, in confirming thoſe that ſtand, and reducing thoſe that err; that he ſhould execute this Office freely and willingly, not ſo much for the *ſecular* Advantage and Emoluments of it, as for the *ſpiritual* Good and Salvation of thoſe Souls, that are committed to his Truſt; and, above all, that he ſhould be *blameleſs* himſelf, and, in his own Perſon, ſhew the People an Example of religious Behaviour, recommending them daily to God's Care and Protection, and [s] *always, without ceaſing, making Mention of them in his Prayers.*

NOR

[s] That the Primitive Chriſtians, in Obedience to this Advice of the Apoſtle, prayed devoutly for their Governors, we may learn, more eſpecially, from *Tertullian*'s Apology, where, in ſeveral Places, he tells us, that they conſtantly prayed for the Emperors, and their Miniſters, the Secular State, and Repoſe of the Realm. *Precamur pro omnibus imperatoribus*, ſays he, *vitam illis prolixam, imperium ſecurum, domum tutam, exercitus fortes, ſenatum fidelem, populum probum, orbem quietum*, &c. *Cave*'s Primitive Chriſtianity.

[h] *See* Pages 748 and 759. [i] 1 Cor. iv. 15. [k] Acts xx. 28, &c. [l] 1 Tim. iv. 16.
[m] 2 Tim. ii. 15. [n] Ibid. iv. 2. [o] 1 Tim. iv. 12. [p] 1 Pet. v. 2, 3. [q] Dan. xii. 3.
[r] *Lucas*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [s] Rom. i. 9.

NOR is the Scripture leſs expreſs in declaring the Rights of the Church, and what the Duties of the People are with regard to their Miniſters. [t] *We beſeech you, Brethren,* ſays St *Paul, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you; and to eſteem them very highly in Love for their Works ſake*; for [u] *they are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech us* by them, and they *pray you, in Chriſt's ſtead, to be reconciled to God.* [x] *Obey them* therefore *that have the Rule over you, and ſubmit yourſelves; for they watch for your Souls, as they that muſt give an Account, that they may do it with Joy, and not with Grief*; and [y] *let him, that is* taught in the Word, communicate to him that teacheth, in all *good Things*; for [z] *as they, which wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the Altar; even ſo hath the Lord ordained, that they, which preach the Goſpel, ſhould live by the Goſpel.* *The People's Duty to him.*

THUS Honour and Reſpect, Submiſſion and Obedience, an high Eſteem, and a liberal Maintenance, are what the People owe to their Miniſters, beſides their daily Prayers to God for his Bleſſing, and Succeſs upon their Labours.

St *PAUL*, writing to the *Epheſians*, exhorts them to [a] *pray always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and to watch thereunto with all Perſeverance, and Supplication*, as for all *Saints in* general, ſo more particularly for himſelf; *that Utterance* might *be given unto him*, and that he might *open his Mouth boldly, to make known the Myſtery of the Goſpel*: And what he requeſts for himſelf in this Place, he elſewhere enjoins to be done for every one, that is employed in this ſacred Office: [b] *Finally, Brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free Courſe, and that we may be delivered from unreaſonable and wicked Men; for all Men have not Faith.* *More eſpecially to pray for him.*

[b] AND indeed, if ſpiritual *Knowledge*, whereby we diſcern our Duty, is conveyed by the *Word*, which God's Miniſters preach, and if ſpiritual *Strength* to perform our Duty is communicated by thoſe *Sacraments*, which they adminiſter; if they are appointed by God, as *Guides*, to direct his People in the right Way to Heaven; as *Paſtors*, to feed his Flock; as *Watchmen*, to prevent any Danger, that might ſurprize his Church; and as *Stewards*, to take Care of thoſe of his *Houſhold*: If ſo many and ſo valuable Bleſſings, I ſay, are imparted to the People of God by theſe Inſtruments, then will they deſerve the Love of thoſe, to whom their Miniſtry is ſo ſerviceable; and that Love will expreſs itſelf, as in other Acts, ſo particularly in praying to God for thoſe, by whom he beſtows his Mercies and Loving-Kindneſſes unto them. *For what Reaſons.*

AND, if the Conſideration of the Advantages, which God's People reap from the Miniſtry of their *Paſtors*, engages them to pray for them out of *Love* and *Gratitude*; the Weightineſs of their Charge, the great Difficulty of executing it as they ought, and the great Peril, that attends their not executing it, are no leſs powerful Motives, to engage all good Chriſtians to pray for them out of *Pity* and *Compaſſion*. The more eminent their Dignity is, and the more beneficial their Work is, if rightly performed, the greater Danger do thoſe, that aſſume this Dignity, and undertake this Work, expoſe themſelves to, if they are guilty of any Thing, which may bring a Blemiſh upon their ſacred Function, or if they do this *Work of the Lord deceitfully*. There is ſufficient Reaſon therefore, that they, who are called to this Function, ſhould not only themſelves conſtantly fly unto God, for the Pardon of their Defects, and for a plentiful Supply of his Grace; but ſhould beſeech all good Chriſtians likewiſe to *ſtrive together with them in Prayer*, that they, [c] *who are not ſufficient of themſelves*, may, by that *Sufficiency, which is of God*, be made *able Miniſters of the New Teſtament*, and, in a due Diſcharge of their Office, ſave *both themſelves, and thoſe, that hear them.*

[t] 1 Theſſ. v. 12, 13. [u] 2 Cor. v. 20. [x] Heb. xiii. 17. [y] Gal. vi. 6.
[z] 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14. [a] Eph. vi. 18, 19. [b] 2 Theſſ. iii. 1, 2. [b] *Smalridge's* Sermons.
[c] 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6.

3. *Between Husband and Wife.*

THE Rights and Duties which arise from a married State, may be considered, either, 1. As they belong to the Man and Woman *promiscuously*; or, 2. As they more peculiarly belong to each of them, considered *distinctly*.

Duties common to both.

1. SINCE *Marriage* then is a Conjunction of Man and Woman, after the most strict and indissoluble Manner, and for their mutual Happiness, *as long as they both shall live*; 'tis most agreeable to the Nature, and absolutely requisite to this End of it, that they should entirely *love* one another; because it is impossible, that where this Passion is not strong and *reciprocal*, either the *Unity should be preserv'd*, or the *Happiness* attained, which is proposed by both Parties, when they contract to enter into it. [a] And this Reflection may serve to discover to us the imprudent Conduct of those, who, upon Motives of Interest, or any temporal Views whatever, marry without consulting their *Inclination*, or perhaps, in some Respects, contrary to it, and so involve themselves in Inconveniencies, greater than the Advantages, which they could propose, are capable of balancing. [b] By this Means it comes to pass, that many Times People of great Degree and Rank are made miserable, and more miserable than their Inferiors. Respect is generally had to nothing but Birth and Quality, but Fortune and Alliance, without any Regard to Person, Shape, and Figure; to Virtue, and good Qualities, and other Endowments, proper to engage, and detain the Affections: And hence they become *splendidly* and exemplarily unhappy, as if it were the *Sport* of Fortune to level Mankind, and, by some odd Disaster, or their own Folly, to reduce the *greatest* People to an *Equality* of Misery and Trouble with their *Inferiors*.

1. Love.

THOSE therefore, that propose Happiness to themselves in the *Conjugal* State, must be sure to lay the Foundation thereof in *Love*; and as their Love is to continue *unto their Lives End*, must needs be obliged to take such Courses, as are proper to *confirm* and strengthen it; and to avoid all Manner of Occasions, that may any ways impair, or weaken it. Some of the ancient Christians would allow the Wives to employ more Art and Cost, in decking and adorning themselves, than they did single Women; because they judged it absolutely necessary to the Peace and Happiness of their Lives, to preserve and secure to themselves the Affections of their Husbands: And, in like Manner, Husbands should take more Care than ordinary to continue their Affections to them; and, to this End, should not suffer Error or Mistakes, Miscarriages or light Offences, Infirmities and heedless Indiscretions, to alienate their Hearts, or give them a mean Opinion of their Understanding or Management. They, who cannot bear with many Failings and Defects, and cannot make a great many Allowances, are but badly fitted for Society and Friendship *in general*, and much less for a Society so *constant* and *continued*, as the married State requires; and therefore, if those, that are engaged therein, will not consider with themselves the Imperfections of human Nature; if they will not remember their own Mistakes and Miscarriages; if they will be unreasonable, take Advantages, and make ill-natured Observations and Reflections on the Follies and Weaknesses of their *Partners*; if they will treasure them up in Memory, and make them Occasions of Distrust, and Topics of Upbraiding, and unseemly Revilings; they will quickly see an End of Peace and Quietness, and find their Love cool and languish.

2. Fidelity.

2. ANOTHER Duty, common to Husband and Wife, is *Fidelity*, or a just Observation of their Engagements, and solemn Vows; and this is a Duty so essentially necessary to the *Marriage-State*, that any notorious Breach and Violation of it, not only invalidates the most religious Contracts, and sets the *innocent* Party at full Liberty, but even dissolves the *Marriage-Band* itself immediately before God. It is indeed the Ground and Foundation of all Marriage-Promises, and the Supposition, upon which all such Engagements are built; and therefore, when this Supposition fails, when this Ground and Foundation of the Contract and Engagement is removed and overturned, the Contract is itself no longer binding to the innocent and unoffending Party. They may proceed in their Engagements indeed, if they please; but the Transgression

[a] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [b] *Fleetwood*'s Relative Duties.

greſſion of the other Side ſets them at Liberty, notwithſtanding the moſt ſerious and moſt ſolemn Promiſes.

AND as Perfidy in this Kind is the Diſſolution of the Band of Matrimony, ſo is it a Crime of ſo deep a Guilt, as can never be attoned in this World, and of ſuch horrible Injuſtice, as can admit of no Reparation or Amendment. And therefore [f] how careful ſhould all married Perſons be, not only to adhere *ſtrictly* to the Letter of their Marriage-Vow, ſo as never to falſify it by any direct Violation; but to forbear, as much as poſſible, all *Advances*, and avoid all *Occaſions*, that may betray them into ſo heinous a Crime! And to this Purpoſe, the beſt and ſafeſt Way will be, to *keep* their *Heart with all Diligence*, ſo as to admit no foreign Inclination, or Deſire; but if they cannot always ſhut their Eyes againſt thoſe *Objects*, which are apt to affect them; if, through Inadvertency or Surprize, it cannot be helped, but that ſome irregular *Emotions* muſt unavoidably ariſe in their Minds, their next and immediate Care ſhould be, to repel, and, as ſoon as they can, totally to ſuppreſs them; leſt by Degrees they gather Strength, and get the Dominion over them; which has poſſibly been the Caſe of many Perſons, who, in the firſt *Eſſays* of their Inclination, apprehended nothing dangerous, nor deſigned any Thing criminal.

3. ANOTHER Duty, common to both, is their taking all ſuch prudent Methods in their Behaviour, as may remove all Occaſions of *Jealouſy* and Diſtruſt. For as all *private Advances* towards other Perſons, by Way of *criminal* Addreſs, are highly culpable, and to be avoided with the greateſt Caution; ſo, when they are made in an open or more undiſguiſed Manner, when they break out into Indecencies too notorious to be concealed, even from the offended Party, this is provoking to the laſt Degree, and apt to excite a *Paſſion*, of all others the moſt difficult to be reſtrained, and called by *Solomon*, *the Rage of a Man*, though the other Sex are ſometimes tranſported with it beyond the Nature, the Mildneſs, and Modeſty of their Temper. And therefore all Freedoms and Familiarities with others, that may give an untoward *Umbrage*, muſt be declined; and all Diſcourſes, that may allure into Sin, rejected with Abhorrence. The Eye, the Tongue, and the Ears muſt be all kept chaſte; the Garb and Apparel be modeſt and unaffected; and the whole Carriage honeſt and inoffenſive, and void of *Suſpicion*, as well as *Blame*. Nor are the Occaſions of Jealouſy and Diſtruſt to be mutually avoided only in the tender Point of *matrimonial* Chaſtity, but even in all others, wherein either their *common*, or their *ſeparate* Intereſts (ſo far as they can be ſuppoſed to have any ſeparate) are concerned. They ought, particularly, to concur in all the Methods of *Frugality* and prudent Management, and, in lower Life, of *Labour* and Induſtry, towards acquiring a competent Subſiſtence; and though it be ordinarily incumbent on the Huſband to have the Direction of Affairs relating to this End; yet, as Circumſtances ſometimes require, that he ſhould commit it to the Wife, ſo every Neglect in this Caſe, every Extravagance, every unneceſſary Expence, wherein his Concurrence is not implied, is at once a Breach of Truſt, and a Violation of her *Conjugal* Love: For Love will always conſult the Inclination and Intereſt of thoſe, who are the true Objects of it, and regulate itſelf accordingly.

3. Prudent Behaviour.

4. I MENTION but one Duty more, which is mutually incumbent upon them, *viz.* that they ſhould promote the Spiritual Good and Edification of one another, by recommending each other to God's Grace and Protection in their Prayers, and by admoniſhing and inſtructing each other in the Principles of Religion. The Buſineſs of *Admonition* and *Inſtruction*, by the Superiority of his Sex, ſeems more eſpecially to belong to the Man, but when it ſo happens, (as it ſometimes does) that the Woman is ſuperior in all the Advantages of *Knowledge* and a good Underſtanding, and that the Man is either guilty of ſuch Errors, or liable to ſuch Dangers, as both deſerve and require *Admonition*, the Woman is indulged the Liberty of ſpeaking in ſuch a Caſe: But then ſhe muſt *intreat*, rather than *dictate*, and *inſinuate* her Advice, rather than *aſſume*, on any Occaſion indeed, but eſpecially in the Preſence of others, ſuch *magiſterial* Airs, as are neither agreeable to the Character of her Sex, nor the Relation, wherein ſhe ſtands, as are both a Breach of *Decency*, and of that neceſſary Duty, which, *diſtinctly conſidered*, ſhe owes to her Huſband; and that is *Subjection*.

Admonition, and Inſtruction.

II. THAT where Nature has given the greateſt Strength and Abilities, [g] where ſhe has made the Body and the Mind fitteſt to undergo the Labours and Toils, that are

The Duty peculiar to the Wife, viz. Obedience.

[f] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. I.

[g] *Fleetwood*'s Relative Duties.

are neceſſary to the Being and Well-being of the World, there ſhe has deſigned the *Superiority*, can hardly be conteſted: That Women, in this Reſpect, are inferior to Men, and how neceſſary ſoever in *domeſtick* Affairs, with all the Uſe and Education imaginable, can never be qualified for the great Buſineſſes of *Trade* and *Merchandize*, of making *Wars* abroad, and executing *Juſtice* at home, is demonſtrably certain; and therefore, ſince Nature has made Men neceſſary for thoſe Offices, ſhe has certainly made them ſuperior to ſuch as are not able to perform them: Becauſe it muſt be admitted, that where People are, in other Reſpects, equal, Strength of Body and Capacity of Mind will undoubtedly make them ſuperior. And agreeable to this Ordination have been the Cuſtoms and Uſages of all Nations, which, in ſome Places, have done a manifeſt Injury to the Sex, by placing them in a Condition not much above Slaves and *menial* Servants; and even in Nations that have been accounted the moſt *civilized*, to provide for the Solace of Mankind, the Continuance of the World, and the Care of *domeſtick* Affairs, has been thought the chief End of their Creation.

Proved from Reaſon,

And Scripture. WITH good Reaſon therefore might St *Paul* order all Wives [h] *to ſubmit themſelves unto their own Huſbands, as unto the Lord; becauſe the Huſband is the Head of the Wife, even as Chriſt is the Head of the Church: As therefore the Church is ſubject unto Chriſt, ſo let the Wives be to their own Huſbands in every Thing.* The Apoſtle means *in every Thing*, that is innocent and lawful; for it is certain, that a Wife owes no Subjection to her Huſband againſt the Laws, either of God or Man. [i] Religion and good Morals claim the firſt Place in her Obedience; and though I think the Laws, or rather Cuſtoms of the Land, are very tender to Women, offending in the Company of their Huſbands, as preſuming them under ſome Kind of Conſtraint; yet Religion has no ſuch Conſideration, but *includes* them *all under Sin*, who commit any ſinful Actions. Where the Huſband's Commands therefore are evidently contrary to any *natural* or *revealed* Law of God, they muſt be rejected with Abhorrence; where his Commands are evidently unreaſonable and indiſcreet, unuſual and unheard-of, unbecoming the Age, the Credit, the Quality, and Condition of the Wife, they may be paſſed by and omitted, rather than deſpiſed: But where his Commands have nothing of this Nature in them, and relate only to ſuch Matters, as are common and indifferent, her Diſobedience will be faulty, if ſo be that Reaſon and Diſcretion, allow'd-of Cuſtom, Decency, and good Fame will not plead her Excuſe; for [k] *I ſuffer not*, ſays St *Paul*, *a Woman* (whoſe greateſt [l] *Ornament is that of a meek and quiet Spirit) to uſurp Authority over the Man; but to be in Silence, with all Subjection:* And for this he ſubjoins theſe Reaſons; *for Adam was firſt formed, then Eve; and Adam was not* [firſt] *deceived, but the Woman, being deceived, was* [firſt] *in the Tranſgreſſion*; where he plainly intimates, that her being *laſt* in the *Creation*, and *firſt* in the *Tranſgreſſion*, made her altogether uncapable of ruling; ſince he, that was firſt formed, muſt naturally have a Right of Dominion over all, that deſcended from him; and ſhe, that tranſgreſſed firſt, when left to her own Conduct, could never be preſumed afterwards qualified for a State of *Independence*; and therefore we find it made a Part of the Sentence for her Tranſgreſſion, that [m] her *Deſire* ſhould be *towards her Huſband*; *i. e.* "That ſhe ſhould "not be Miſtreſs of herſelf, nor have any Deſire ſatisfied, but what was approved of "by her Huſband; that ſhe ſhould be wholly under his Power and *Tutelage*; and "though he ſhould command her many Things that were contrary to her Will and "Good-liking, yet ſhould ſhe not be left at her Diſcretion, whether ſhe would "obey." For, to make this Subjection a *Curſe* to her, and her Poſterity, it muſt needs be ſuppoſed to relate to Things difficult and unacceptable; ſuch as the fooliſh, ſurly, and imperious Humours of ſome Huſbands are ſometimes known to impoſe upon their Wives.

The Duty peculiar to the Huſband, viz. *ruling with* Lenity,

BUT though the *Puniſhment* of the one be, in ſome Meaſure, the *Privilege* of the other Sex; though the Wife, both by the Order of Things, and the Declarations of God's Will, be obliged to *obey*; yet ought not the Huſband to employ his Authority after an *arbitrary* and *tyrannical* Manner, but in a Way agreeable to the Nature and Ends of the *Conjugal* State, which conſiders the Wife as allied to him by the ſtrongeſt Ties of Love, Friendſhip, and common Intereſt. Well therefore does St *Paul* adviſe all Huſbands, [n] *not to be bitter againſt their Wives:* Where the Phraſe

proved from Scripture.

ſeems

[h] Eph. v. 22, &c. [i] *Fleetwood*'s Relative Duties. [k] 1 Tim. ii. 12. [l] 1 Pet. iii. 4.
[m] Gen. iii. 16. [n] Col. iii. 19.

ſeems to be taken from the Offence and Diſguſt, which bitter Things give, when taſted, and not liked; and the Advice is, —— that Huſbands ſhould not, by a peeviſh and moroſe, by a churliſh and ill-natured Carriage, make themſelves as uneaſy and ungrateful to their Wives, as *bitter Things* are diſtaſteful to the *Palate*; or that they ſhould not be provoked to Anger and Averſion, to unkind Words or Actions, by any Failings and Imperfections of their Wives, as the Palate and Stomach are provoked to Diſguſt or Loathing, by the Taſte of any Thing very bitter: In a Word, that they ſhould not uſe, either in Deed or Word, any Unkindneſs or Severity towards them.

Bitterneſs of Language cutting to a Wife.

[o] THERE is a *Bitterneſs* of Language, that every one underſtands, and Words, that *wound* to the quick: But then, that which uſually gives them their *Edge*, is the Conſideration of the *Perſon* that ſpeaks them, and the *Relation* he ſtands in to us. The Words of a *Stranger*, though never ſo ſevere, affect us but little; the Words of an *Enemy*, as proceeding from Malice, make no deep Impreſſion: But the hard Words of Friends and Neighbours, of Acquaintance and Relations, occaſion us Grief and great Concern. The ill Uſage we receive from indifferent Perſons ſtirs us to Anger and Indignation indeed, but 'tis againſt *them* only; whereas the ill Uſage we receive at the Hands of thoſe we love, occaſions Pain and Uneaſineſs within. 'Tis the *Defeat* of our Expectation and Deſire, that hurts us moſt on theſe Occaſions: We know we love, and we would be beloved; we try to oblige, and we would again be obliged in our Turn; we favour and eſteem them, and would, in like Manner, be favoured and eſteemed by them: But, failing of theſe Returns, which we expected and deſired, we are the more afflicted and diſconſolate. 'Tis upon this Account, that harſh Words and ill Uſage become ſo grievous to near Relations, becauſe they are ſo little looked for and expected. The Mind is full of other Hopes, and ſurprized to find them ſo deceived; and therefore, when, inſtead of Gentleneſs and Patience, of Affability and Condeſcenſion, and every Thing, that can proceed from Conſideration and Good-nature, the Wife generally meets with Moroſeneſs and Peeviſhneſs, with Clamour and Impatience, with Revilings and ungenerous Upbraidings; this, to ſoft and tender Diſpoſitions, is a cruel Uſage, that ſits heavy on the Mind, and wounds the Heart moſt *ſenſibly*.

Reaſons for treating her kindly.

WELL therefore does the Apoſtle adviſe the Huſband, that, [p] *dwelling* with his Wife *according to Knowledge, he ſhould give Honour unto her, as unto the weaker Veſſel, i. e.* ſhould treat her with all Lenity and Softneſs, even as Veſſels which are of a *finer*, but weaker Contexture, are to be handled with greater Caution and Tenderneſs. And indeed, whoever gives himſelf Time to conſider, to what extraordinary Difficulties and Sufferings, God, by his Order and Appointment, has moſt unavoidably ſubjected and expoſed the Women above Men, as well by their own natural Frame and Make, as by a great many ſad, but uſual Accidents; will ſee himſelf obliged, in common Pity, to deal gently with them, to ſuſtain them under their Infirmities, and, by Patience and Forbearance, to endeavour to make their Burthen lighter. And if he conſiders farther, notwithſtanding theſe Diſadvantages, of what ſingular *Uſe* and Benefit a good and prudent Companion, in all the Viciſſitudes of Life is; what *Solace* in Health, what *Comfort* in Sickneſs, what *Help* in Diſtreſs, what *Security* in Trouble is occaſioned by her Means; and, above all, what Labour and Hardſhips, what Watchings and Diſquietudes, as well as many *humbling Offices*, ſhe is content to bear, with all the Chearfulneſs and Delight imaginable, in bringing up the Children, that are the *Delight* of his Eyes, and the *Strength* of his Old-age; he that conſiders this, I ſay, inſtead of taking Pleaſure in oppoſing and inſulting *the Wife of his Boſom*, will find himſelf bound, in Gratitude, and by the mutual Pledges of their Love, [q] *to nouriſh and cheriſh her*, even as his *own Fleſh*.

4. *Between Maſter and Servant.*

AS *we are many Members*, ſays St *Paul*, [r] *in one Body, and all Members have not the ſame Office*, but ſome are deſigned for nobler, and others for meaner Uſes, and yet all conſpire towards the Preſervation, and more commodious Support of the whole; ſo God hath ordained, that, in the *civil* or political Body, there ſhould be

[o] *Fleetwood*'s Relative Duties. [p] 1 Pet. iii. 7. [q] Eph. v. 29. [r] Rom. xii. 4.

ſuch a *Diverſity* of States and Conditions, that, each ſupplying the Neceſſities of the other, *there might*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, [s] *be no Schiſm in the Body, but that the Members might have the ſame Care one for another.* This is the true Reaſon, according to God's own Appointment, of the different Conditions of *Maſters* and *Servants*: And to give the *former* Precedence in this Matter, we ſhall, I. Conſider what in Juſtice is required of them: And then, II. What in Return may reaſonably be expected from the latter.

The Duty of Maſters to Servants.

I. St *Paul*, treating of the Relations, wherein we ſtand towards one another, has compriſed the whole Duty of Maſters to their Servants in this ſhort Sentence; [t] *Maſters, give unto your Servants that which is juſt and equal, knowing, that ye alſo have a Maſter in Heaven*; [u] for though *juſt* and *equal* Terms be of near Affinity, yet may they be conſidered, as having a different Signification, and ſo, *to give that, which is juſt to a Servant*, is to deal with him according to the *Contract* and *Agreement* that is between us; to give him what we have actually covenanted for, and what; in Point of Law, he may demand: *But to give him what is equal*, is to deal fairly, honeſtly, and kindly with him; and to give him what is his Due in Reaſon and Conſcience, although we have not *formally* contracted with him. So that there is this Diſtinction to be made between *Juſtice* and *Equity*, that *Juſtice* makes our *Contracts*, and *Equity* our *Conſciences* the Meaſures of our Dealings with others. And accordingly,

Juſtice.

1. IN *Point of Juſtice*, every Maſter is obliged to ſtand to his Agreement, and give his Servants what they have contracted for, whether it be Inſtruction, or Wages. *Inſtruction* is the Thing, for which *Apprentices* chiefly contract; for which they give their Money, their Time, and Labour; and therefore, (whether it be through Deſign or Negligence) to conceal from them that Skill, which properly belongs to them, and not to let them into that full Knowledge of their Buſineſs, according to the Meaſure of their Underſtanding and Capacity, is a Piece of great Injuſtice, and the Maſter, who does this, not only breaks his *Covenant*, and falſifies his Truſt, but deceives his Servant of what he expected, and defrauds him of the Time and Money, that he pledged in his Hand for that Purpoſe. *Wages* are Things, for which common *Labourers* and *menial* Servants do contract, and for which they pay down their Time and Labour; and therefore a Maſter may as well agree for Goods with any Cuſtomer, receive the Price beforehand, and yet retain the Goods withal, as take his Servant's Time and Labour firſt, and then either deny, or retard, or curtail the Payment of his appointed Wages. 'Tis a wiſe Proviſion therefore, which the *Jewiſh* Law has made; * *Thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired Servant, that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy Brethren, or of thy Strangers, that are in the Land, within thy Gates. At his Day thou ſhalt give him his Hire, neither ſhall the Sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and ſetteth his Heart upon it; leſt he cry againſt thee to the Lord, and it be Sin unto thee:* For [x] *behold*, ſays St *James*, *the Hire of the Labourers, who have reaped down your Fields, which is of you kept back by Fraud, crieth, and their Cries have entered into the Ears of the Lord of Sabbaoth*; who has himſelf expreſſly threatened, that [y] *he will be a ſwift Witneſs againſt thoſe, that* [z] *uſe their Neighbour's Service* for nought, and *oppreſs the Hireling in his Wages*,

Equity.

2. IN *Point of Equity*, every Maſter is obliged to deal fairly, honeſtly, and kindly with his Servants; and to give them that, which is their Due in Reaſon and Conſcience, although they have not *formally* contracted for it: And to this Purpoſe he is to treat them with Humanity and Good-nature, in order to make their Lives as eaſy, as he can conſiſtently with the Performance of their Duty. All arbitrary and tyrannical Power over them he is to diſclaim, and never put them upon any Hardſhips but what are agreeable to the Conditions of their Service. All his Commands muſt be mercifully fitted to their Strength and Capacity; all his Reproofs expreſſed without Rage or Paſſion, without Contumely or Inſult; all his Corrections (if there be Neceſſity for any) inflicted with Tenderneſs and Compaſſion; and tho' he has a Right to their whole Time and Labour, yet muſt not the Taſks he ſets them be ſo immoderate, as to allow them no competent Space for Reſt and Intermiſſion, for Attendance on God's Worſhip, and, at ſome proper Seaſons, for innocent Sports and Recreation; that they may, for that Time, forget the Infelicity of their low Condition, and return to their Labour with more Alacrity.

ADD

[s] 1 Cor. xii. 25. [t] Col. iv. 1. [u] *Fleetwood's* Relative Duties. * Deut. xxiv. 14.
[x] James v. 4. [y] Mal. iii. 5. [z] Jer. xxii. 13.

ADD to this, that he is to give them good Advice; ſet them a good Example; afford them Opportunities of ſerving God; inſtruct them in the Rules of Honeſty and Juſtice, Truth and Faithfulneſs; excite them to Induſtry and Carefulneſs, and encourage their Diligence ſometimes with an *uncovenanted* Reward. Nor muſt this be his Conduct to them in their Health only; but even in their *Sickneſs*, he is to take Care that they want nothing, that is fitting for their Condition, and in their Old-age, that ſome competent *Proviſion* be made for their comfortable Support: [a] For I can hardly think, in Point of Equity, that long and faithful Services, eſpecially in great and opulent Families, ought to be put off with the bare Payment of *ſtipulated* Wages, and not ſome additional Bounty beſtowed, that may contribute to the Eaſe of an aged Servant, and *to bring his grey Hairs* with Quiet *to the Grave.*

THESE are ſome of the chief Duties, which every Maſter owes to his Servants: And, in order to engage the Performance of them, let him conſider, that he is Maſter of a Man of the *ſame Kind* with himſelf, who has thereupon a Right to be treated with *Humanity*, which if he does not, he is no better than a *Tyrant:* That he is Maſter of a Man of the *ſame Civil Society*, and has therefore a Right to Equity and Juſtice, which if he does him not, he is an *Oppreſſor:* That he is Maſter of a Man, who is of the *ſame Religion*, and has thereupon a Right to be treated *religiouſly*, which if he neglects to do, *he hath denied the Faith, and is worſe than an Infidel:* And laſtly, that he is the Maſter of a Man, who is his *Fellow-Servant*; for they have both one common [b] *Maſter in Heaven, with whom there is no Reſpect of Perſons*; [c] to whom the *Bond* and *Free* are both alike; to whom the meaneſt Servant is as dear as the moſt honourable Maſter; by whom all ſhall be judged alike, and with the ſame Impartiality; and by whom the unjuſt and cruel Maſter, no leſs than the falſe and diſobedient Servant, ſhall be puniſhed with the utmoſt Severity. Wherefore remember, that thou haſt *a Maſter in Heaven*, who, while he was on Earth, *took on him the Form of a Servant*, not only to give us an Example of his great Humility and Condeſcenſion, but to ſanctify all Conditions, and to ſhew the World, that God looks not with Man's Eyes; that he regards not Birth and Fortune, Quality and Title; but that the meaneſt People in the World are acceptable to him, if they obey his Laws, and do his Will: That it is Virtue and Religion only, which recommend Men to his Favour, of which the pooreſt Servants in the World are full as capable, as the moſt rich and mighty Maſters: And therefore, as he has made them Partakers of the ſame Grace here, and capable of the ſame Glory hereafter, ſo he commands them to treat them with all the Mercy and Humanity, that their Condition requires; and therefore, [d] *if thy Brother, that dwelleth by thee, be waxen poor, thou ſhalt not rule over him with Rigour, but ſhalt fear thy God.*

Motives and Inducements to them.

II. THE ſame Apoſtle, that acquaints Maſters with their Duty, is very exact and copious, in what, on the other Hand, is required of Servants. [e] *Let as many Servants*, ſays he, *as are under the Yoke, count their own Maſters worthy of all Honour, that the Name of God and his Doctrine be not blaſphemed*; and let them [f] *be obedient to their Maſters, and pleaſe them well in all Things, not anſwering again; neither* [g] *with Eye-ſervice, as Men-pleaſers, but in Singleneſs of Heart, fearing God*, and *as the Servants of Chriſt, doing every Thing heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto Men:* And this they muſt do, [h] *not only for the Good and Gentle*, but *alſo for the Froward; becauſe this is Praiſe-worthy, if a Man, for Conſcience toward God, endure Grief, ſuffering wrongfully.* From whence it appears, that Honour and Reverence to their Maſter's Perſon, expreſſed by all the external Signs of Words and Actions; *Obedience* to all his lawful Commands, without diſputing; *Submiſſion* to his juſt Reproofs and Corrections, without murmuring; *Faithfulneſs* in Truſt, without purloining or embezzeling; *Diligence* in Buſineſs, without loitering or eye-ſerving; a cautious *Fear* of offending; an earneſt *Deſire* of pleaſing; and a general *Conformity* to what they know are the *ſecret*, as well as *declared* Intimations of their Maſter's Will, are the great Lines and Characters of every Servant's Duty: And for their Comfort and Encouragement herein,

The Duty of Servants to their Maſters.

LET

[a] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [b] Eph. vi. 9. [c] *Fleetwood*'s Relative Duties.
[d] Lev. xxv. 39, 43. [e] 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2. [f] Tit. ii. 9. [g] Col. iii. 22.
[h] 1 Pet. ii. 18, 19.

Encouragements to it.

LET it be conſidered, that how mean and miſerable ſoever a State of Servitude may be deemed, yet there are ſome Ingredients in it, that make it eaſy, if not deſirable. [l] Servants, indeed, may have more of the *Labours* of Life, but then they have leſs of the *Cares*, than other People. Their Concern is only in one Matter, *to do the Work, that lies before them*; whereas others have a World of Things to think on. Their Maſters they have only to pleaſe; but their Maſters, perhaps, have all they deal with, to court and humour. Themſelves, for the moſt part, are all they have to provide for; but their Maſters have Wives, Children, and Relations to maintain at a great Expence. Whatever publick Miſchiefs, whatever Changes of Government, whatever Scarcity or Dearneſs happen, they find but little Alteration: They pay no *Rates* or *Taxes*, loſe no gainful Employments, ſuffer nothing by the Malice or Inſolence of *Parties*, and, in a Word, feel leſs Hardſhips and Misfortunes than their very Maſters: And yet they have their ſtately Houſes and Gardens to live and walk in, their fragrant Flowers and rich Furniture to pleaſe their Smell and Sight, without ever conſidering what they coſt.

THESE are Conveniencies that generally attend Servants of the loweſt Condition: But then it muſt be conſidered, that an honeſt and faithful Diſcharge of their Duty will gain them the Favour and Eſteem of all People; will make their Service uſeful and acceptable, and, conſequently, very eaſy and delightful to themſelves; will raiſe them, very probably, above the Condition they were born to, and lay a good Foundation for their own Self-ſubſiſtence, when once an Occaſion ſhall offer. But, however this happen, they are to conſider, that there is an unſpeakable Pleaſure and Satisfaction in having done their Duty, and that the Reflections of a good Conſcience are a continued Feaſt; that *they ſerve not Men only, but God*, who ſees all their Diligence and Induſtry, all their Faithfulneſs and Honeſty, though removed from the Eye of their earthly Maſter, and *will reward them openly*; that the Time is coming, when [k] *of the Lord they ſhall receive the Reward of the Inheritance*; and, from being Servants, ſhall be made happy *in the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God:* And then, whatever Hardſhips or Uneaſineſs they undergo, whatever Want of Neceſſaries and Conveniencies they ſuffer, whatever Severities or cruel Inflictions they endure here, by the undue Rigour of their Maſters or Superiors, they are confident, that there will be an ample Amends made them by that God, who *judgeth righteouſly*, and with *whom there is no Reſpect of Perſons*.

5. *Between Friend and Friend.*

The Neceſſity and Benefit of Friendſhip.

OF all the *Relations*, wherein we ſtand towards one another, there is none more ſtrict and binding, none more neceſſary and beneficial, than that of *Friendſhip*. [l] For human Nature is imperfect; it has not Fund enough to furniſh out a *ſolitary Life*; and the moſt delicious Place, barred from all Commerce and Society, would be inſupportable, and make a Man run mad with his own Happineſs. Beſides, there are ſo many adverſe Accidents attending us, that, without the Communion of Friendſhip, Virtue itſelf is not able to accompliſh its End; becauſe the beſt good Man, on ſeveral Occaſions, often wants an Aſſiſtant to direct his Judgment, and quicken his Induſtry, and fortify his Spirits. [m] *A Brother*, indeed, as the wiſe Man obſerves, *was born for Adverſity, but* [n] *there is a Friend, that ſticketh cloſer than a Brother*; and therefore he that has found this precious Treaſure, has laid up a good Foundation againſt *the Day of Trouble*; [o] becauſe every true and real Friendſhip will be an *Alloy* to his Sorrows, an *Eaſe* to his Paſſions, a *Sanctuary* to his Calamities, a *Relief* of his Oppreſſions, a *Repoſitory* of his Secrets, a *Counſellor* of his Doubts, and an *Advocate* for his Intereſt, both with God and Man. And yet, as neceſſary and beneficial as this Relation is in all Conditions of Life, there is no one Thing, wherein we miſtake ourſelves more. [p] Men uſually call them their Friends, with whom they have an Intimacy, tho' that Intimacy, perhaps, is nothing elſe, but an Union and Combination in Sin. The *Drunkard*, for Inſtance, thinks him his Friend, who will ſwallow *Wine in Bowls*, and keep him Company in his *Debauches*;

A common Miſtake herein.

[l] *Fleetwood's* Relative Duties. [k] Col. iii. 24. [l] *Collier's* Eſſays. [m] Prov. xvii. 17. [n] Ibid. xviii. 24. [o] *Scott's* Chriſtian Life. [p] The Whole Duty of Man.

bauches; the *proud Man*, him his Friend, who will blow up the Bladder, and indulge his Vanity with fulſome Flattery; and the *deceitful Man*, him his Friend, that will aid and aſſiſt him in carrying on his *Schemes* of Fraud and Diſhoneſty: But, alas! this is ſo far from being Friendſhip, that it deſerves a very different Appellation, and is, indeed, too near a Reſemblance of the Practice of the *Prince of Darkneſs*, who is a Worker together with Mens Paſſions, for the Deſtruction of their Souls. A true Friend loves his Friend ſo, that he is very zealous for his Good; and certainly he that is really ſo, will never be the *Inſtrument* of bringing him into the greateſt Evil. How far ſoever then [q] a Reſemblance in Humour or Opinion, a Fancy for the ſame Buſineſs or Diverſion, may, on ſome Occaſions, be a Ground of Affection; yet [r] this is generally allowed, both by *Moraliſts* and *Divines*, that Virtue is the only proper Foundation of Friendſhip, and [s] that none, but good Men, are capable of it: And, among theſe, it may not improperly be defined to be, "An "induſtrious Purſuit of our Friend's real Advantages, or obliging ourſelves to do "unto him all the good Offices, that our Fidelity and Aſſiſtance, our Advice and "Admonition, our Candour and Conſtancy, can effect."

The Offices of it.

1. FRIENDSHIP, both in the *Latin* and *Greek* Languages, takes its Denomination from *Love*: And as Love is every-where the ſame, ſo is there no Principle more *faithful*, and what leſs conſults the Arts of Diſſimulation. A Friend therefore will purſue the Advantages of thoſe he truly loves, as if they were his *own*; becauſe there will be no great Difference between the Power of *Self-love*, and the Love of a Perſon, whom, by the Laws of Friendſhip, he is bound to love as well as himſelf. From this Principle he eſpouſes his Intereſt, whether the Opportunities of doing him Service be known to him, or not: He maintains his Honour and Right, though invaded by the moſt potent Adverſary, or ſtruck at by the moſt clandeſtine Malice. And as he ſuffers none, he can hinder, to injure his Character or Fortune; ſo he is eſpecially careful himſelf, to avoid all indecent *Familiarities* in Company, or mercenary *Incroachments* upon his good Nature, as very well knowing, that [t] Friendſhip, tho' it be not *nice* and *exceptious*, yet muſt not be *coarſely* treated, and [u] that the Neglect of Modeſty and good Manners therein is the Want of its greateſt *Ornament*. Above all, he is continually upon his Guard, to keep the Secrets, which his Friend has repoſed in his Breaſt, with the moſt ſacred *Taciturnity*; becauſe a Diſcovery of theſe, in the Opinion of the wiſe Son of *Syrach*, who well underſtood the Laws and Punctualities of Friendſhip, is an Offence, of all others, the moſt provoking, and the moſt unpardonable. For * *whoſo diſcovereth Secrets, loſeth his Credit, and ſhall never find a Friend to his Mind. Love thy Friend, and be faithful to him; but if thou bewrayeſt his Secrets, follow no more after him: For as one letteth a Bird out of his Hand, ſo haſt thou let thy Friend go, and ſhalt not get him again. Follow after him no more; for he is too far off: He is as a Roe, eſcaped out of the Snare. As for a Wound, it may be bound up, and after reviling there may be a Reconciliation; but he, that bewrayeth Secrets, is without Hope.*

Fidelity.

2. How far the Meaſure of mutual *Aſſiſtance* ought to extend among Friends, is not ſo eaſy a Matter, in each Particular, to determine; but this we may ſay, in general, that, as far as Opportunity, Diſcretion, and former Pre-engagements will give us Leave, we may be allowed to go; and that to break upon the Score of Danger or Expence is narrow-ſpirited; provided the Aſſiſtance may be given, without Ruin to ourſelves, or Prejudice to a *third* Perſon, without Breach of Honour, or Violation of Conſcience. [x] Where the Thing is *unlawful*, we muſt neither aſk, nor comply. All Importunities againſt Juſtice are feveriſh Deſires, and muſt not be gratified. He that would engage another in an unwarrantable Action, takes him for an *ill* Perſon, and, as the Motion is an *Affront*, ought to be renounced for the *Injury* of his Opinion. But where this is not the Caſe, we ought to treat our Friend, as far as Prudence and Juſtice will permit, with all the Frankneſs and Generoſity imaginable; to *counſel* him, when he wants Advice; to *cheer* him, when he wants Comfort; to *give* unto him, when he wants Relief; and, even with ſome Hazard to ourſelves, to *reſcue* him, when he is in Danger: And, in doing of this, [y] we ſhould conſider his Occaſions, and prevent his Deſires, and ſcarce give

Aſſiſtance.

[q] *Collier*'s Eſſays. [r] Nam cum conciliatrix amicitiæ virtutis opinio fuerit, difficile eſt amicitiam manere, ſi à virtute defeceris. *Tull. de Amic.* [s] Ita fit verum iſtud, quod initio dixi, amicitiam niſi inter bonos eſſe non poſſe. *Tull.* ibid. [t] *Collier*, ibid. [u] Maximum ornamentum amicitiæ tollit, qui ex ea tollit verecundiam. *Tull.* ibid. * Ecclus. xxvii. 16, &c. [x] Hæc igitur lex in amicitia ſanciatur, ut neque rogemus res turpes, nec faciamus rogati. *Tull.* ibid. [y] *Collier*, ibid.

him Time to think, that he wanted our Assistance; because a Forwardness to oblige is a great *Grace* upon our Kindness, and that which doubles the intrinsick Worth of it.

Advice. 3. IT is the Observation of the wise King of *Israel*, *Woe to him, that is alone! For if he falleth, he hath not another to help him up*: And this Observation is verified upon none so much, as upon him that is destitute of Friends, [a] who, when he is under a Perplexity of Affairs, where a Determination is dubious, and yet of uncommon Consequence, cannot fetch in Aid from another Person, whose Judgment may be *greater* than his own, and whose Concern he is sure is no *less*. Every Man, in his own Affairs, is found to be less cautious, than a prudent Stander-by: He is generally too eagerly engaged, to make just Remarks upon the Progress and Probability of Things; [a] and, in such a Case, nothing is so proper as a judicious Friend, to temper the Spirits, and moderate the Pursuit; to give the Signal for Action, to press the Advantage, and strike in the *critical* Minute. Foreign Intelligence may have a *Spy* in it; and therefore should be cautiously received; Strangers (I call all such, except Friends) may be *designing* in their Advice, or, if they be sincere, by mistaking the Case, they may give wrong Measures; but, now, an *old* Friend has the whole Scheme in his Head. He knows the Constitution, the Disease, the Strength and the Humour of him, he assists; what he can do, and what he can bear; and therefore none so proper as he to prescribe; to direct the Enterprize, and secure the *main Chance*.

Admonition, 4. BUT, among all the Offices of Friendship, [b] there is none that comes up to our aiding and assisting the Soul of our Friend, and endeavouring to advance his *spiritual* State, by Exhortations and Encouragements to all Virtue, by earnest and vehement Dissuasions from all Sin, and especially by kind and gentle *Reproofs*, where there is Reason to presume an Offence has been committed. This is so peculiarly the Duty of a Friend, that there is none besides so duly qualified for it. The Reproofs of a *Relation* may be thought to proceed from an Affectation of *Superiority*; of an Enemy, from a Spirit of Malice; and of an indifferent Person, from Pride or Impertinence, and so be slighted: But when they come from one, who *loves us as his own Soul*, and come armed with all the tender Concern, that an unfeigned Affection is known to dictate, they must of Course take Effect, and become irresistible. Men, like *false Glasses*, generally represent their Complexion better than Nature has made it: They have no great Inclination to be prying into their own *Deformities*, and have such Unwillingness to hear of their Faults, that whoever undertakes the Work, had Need have a strong Prepossession in his Favour; and therefore the Friend, that alone is qualified for it, acts the Part of a *Flatterer*, and betrays the Offender into Security, when he sees him commit Things worthy of Blame, and yet silently passes them by: [a] *Open Reproof*, says the wise Man, *is better than* such *secret Love*; for *faithful are the Wounds of a Friend, but the Kisses of an Enemy are deceitful.*

must be candid, BUT tho' we are required to admonish our Friend, when we see him do amiss, yet the *Manner*, in which we are to do it, will require our utmost Care, and shew our Skill and Address, as well as our Love and Esteem for him. *A Word fitly spoken*, says *Solomon*, *is like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver: As an Ear-Ring of Gold, and an Ornament of fine Gold, so is a wise Reprover upon an obedient Ear*: [a] What *Gracefulness* there is in Colours judiciously chosen, and rightly put together; what *Agreeableness* there is in the most valuable Metals, so appositely placed, as to add to each other's Lustre; what *Beauty* arises from the richest and choicest Ornaments; such is the Gracefulness, such is the Excellency, such the Beauty of a wise Reproof, fitted to the Occasion of it, to the Person and Character of those, that reprove, and of those, that are reproved: And this, in the Case of Friends, ought certainly to be managed with all Candour and Kindness, with all Meekness and Humility, without any Signs of *Bitterness*, any Words of *Reproach*, or Airs of *Superiority*.

and private. BUT tho' we are allowed, in this Manner, to reprove the Faults of our Friend, yet are we to remember, that this is to be done in *private*: And that no Care must be

[a] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [a] *Collier*'s Essays. [b] The Whole Duty of Man. [c] Prov. xxvii. 5, 6. Molesta veritas, si quidem ex eâ nascitur odium, quod est venenum amicitiæ: Sed obsequium multo molestius, quod peccatis indulgens, præcipitem amicum ferri sinit. *Tull. de Amic.* [a] *Smalridge*'s Sermons.

be wanting, on our Parts, to conceal them from the Knowledge of others. And believe me, it is a great and noble Thing, to cover the Blemiſhes, and excuſe the Failings of a Friend; to draw a Curtain before his Stains, and to diſplay his Perfections; to bury his Weakneſs in Silence, and proclaim his Virtues *upon the Houſe-Top*. This, as [e] one expreſſes it, is an Imitation of the Charities of Heaven, which, when the Creature lies proſtrate in the Weakneſs of Sleep, ſpreads the Covering of Night and Darkneſs over it, to conceal it in that Condition: But as ſoon as our *Spirits* are refreſhed, and Nature returns to its Morning *Vigour*, God then bids the Sun riſe, and the Day ſhine upon us, both to advance and ſhew our *Activity*.

THESE are ſome of the Duties or approved Qualities of Friendſhip, *viz.* to be faithful in our Profeſſions, zealous in our Services, prudent in our Advices, and gentle in our Reproofs to our Friend; to be dumb to his Secrets, ſilent to his Faults, and full of the Commendations of his Virtues: And where theſe are mutually practiſed, there is leſs Danger of the remaining Duty, which is *Conſtancy*, or ſuch a Stability and Firmneſs of Friendſhip, as overlooks and paſſes by all thoſe leſſer Failures of Kindneſs and Reſpect, that, through Frailties incident to human Nature, a Man may be ſometimes guilty of, and yet ſtill retain the ſame habitual Good-will, and prevailing Propenſity of Mind to his Friend, that he had before. Alas! there is no expecting the Temper of *Paradiſe* from *poſt-diluvian* Mortals: The beſt of People cannot be always in the ſame Temper, always awake and entertaining. The Accidents of Life, the Indiſpoſitions of Health, the Imperfections of Reaſon muſt be allowed for, nor muſt every ambiguous Expreſſion, or every little Chagrin, or Start of Paſſion be thought a ſufficient Cauſe of Diſunion. '*Ointment and Perfume*, ſays the wiſe Man, *rejoice the Heart; ſo does the Sweetneſs of a Man's Friend*: Whereupon it follows, *thine own Friend, and thy Father's Friend, forſake not*: To part with a tried Friend, and one that is grown old, as it were, in the Service of the Family, beſides the Injuſtice done him, is both unreaſonable *Levity*, ſuch as argues a Mind governed by Caprice only; and egregious *Folly*, ſuch as prodigally caſts away one of the greateſt Bleſſings of human Life: For *a faithful Friend is a ſtrong Defence; and he, that hath found ſuch an one, hath found a Treaſure*. And as *nothing can countervail a faithful Friend*; ſo, when we have once entered into that Relation, I know of nothing that ſhould diſſolve it, but either downright Malevolence, or incorrigible Vice. Theſe indeed ſtrike at the *Fundamentals*, and make a Correſpondence *impracticable*: But even when the Caſe comes to this unhappy Paſs, there is ſtill a Decency in the Manner of our Diſunion, and Prudence ſeems to direct, that we ſhould *draw off* by Degrees, rather than come to an *open Rupture*.

Conſtancy.

FROM what has been ſaid on this Subject, it ſeems plainly to follow, that every one is not qualified to enter into the Relation of Friendſhip, wherein there is Occaſion for Largeneſs of Mind, and Agreeableneſs of Temper; for Prudence of Behaviour, for Courage and Conſtancy, for Freedom from Paſſion and Self-conceit. A Man, that is fit to make a Friend of, muſt have Conduct to manage the Engagement, and Reſolution to maintain it: He muſt uſe Freedom, without Roughneſs; and oblige, without Deſign. Cowardice will betray Friendſhip, and Covetouſneſs will ſtarve it: Folly will be nauſeous; Paſſion is apt to ruffle; and Pride will fly out into Contumely and Neglect: And therefore to conclude with the Wiſdom of the Son of *Syrach*, in Relation to the Choice of a Friend; *If thou wouldſt get a Friend*, ſays he, *prove him firſt, and be not haſty to credit him; for ſome Man is a Friend for his own Occaſion, and will not abide in the Day of thy Trouble: As again, ſome Friend is a Companion at the Table: In thy Proſperity he will be as thyſelf; but if thou be brought low, he will be againſt thee, and hide himſelf from thy Face*. Wherefore *prove thy Friend firſt, and be not haſty to credit him*.

The Qualifications of a Friend.

[e] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

[f] Prov. xxvii. 9, &c.

6. *Between*

6. Between Superiors in Rank, Parts, Riches, and Beneficence, and their respective Inferiors.

What Superiority these Things give them.

HOWEVER we are born alike, and derived all from the same *Original*, yet, when we come into the World, there are certain Rights and Privileges, either *natural* or *acquired*, that occasion an *Inequality*, and give one Man a Superiority over another. [g] As all Titles of Honour rose originally from the *Field*, and were the *Royal* Rewards of *martial* Adventures and Atchievements, though in After-ages dispensed to such, as had merited for their *civil* Conduct; so the common Consent of Mankind has always accounted them *honourable*, and that the Persons, where they reside, whether by *Descent*, or *Creation*, deserve a Deference and Respect extraordinary. Wisdom, or Knowledge of any Kind, as the wise Man observes, raises Men above the common Level, and abundantly compensates the Obscurity of Birth: [h] *Exalt her* therefore, says he, *and she will promote thee; she will bring thee to Honour; she will give to thine Head an Ornament of Grace; and a Crown of Glory will she deliver to thee.* Riches are so universally courted, that every one sees what Respect they demand, wherever they appear, and how they seem to atone for *personal* Defects, even when fallen into Hands, that make no *laudable* Use of them; but when dispensed in Acts of Beneficence and Generosity, how they attract the Eyes of all, and make the Man shine with a distinguished Lustre.

But they should not make Men proud,

BUT though these Excellencies create a *Superiority*, and set the Possessors of them in an *Elevation* above others; yet will they by no Means countenance *Pride*, or give them a Licence to trample upon those that they thus surmount: For [i] *who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou, that thou didst not receive?* Thy *Descent* from an ancient and honourable Family, thy great *Proficiency* in Arts and Sciences, thy *immense* Increase of Wealth and Riches, nay the very [k] *Power to eat thereof*, and Heart to make use of them, now that thou hast them, are all from the Gift and Ordination of *Providence*, which might have sent thee into the World an *Idiot*, a *Beggar*, or (what is as ill) a *Niggard* of thy Wealth; and therefore since *thou didst receive it* from God, *why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?*

because they are uncertain,

BUT if even all these Accomplishments were our own, yet are they of so *precarious* and uncertain a Texture, of so *imperfect* and limited an Use, that they can, by no Means, be the proper Matter of our boasting. In Relation to Wealth, which is equally applicable to Nobility and Learning, St *Paul* enjoins his Son *Timothy* to [l] *charge them, that are rich in this World, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all Things to enjoy.* The great Strength of the Argument, we may observe, is couched in the Word *uncertain*; for as nothing is more *fluctuating* than Wealth, which every Element can destroy; so the *Infatuation* must needs be great, to place a Trust on that, which is so flitting and unsteady; or (in *Solomon*'s Phrase) to [m] *set one's Eyes on that which is not; for Riches certainly make themselves Wings, and fly away, as an Eagle towards Heaven.*

and of no great Use.

BUT admitting they were more permanent, yet still we may be allowed to ask, *wherein are they to be accounted of?* Since there are so many Miseries incident to human Life, wherein they can give us no Aid or Relief. [n] Is a Man, for Instance, afflicted in his Body with Pain? The *Indies* are not a competent Price for a Minute's Ease, for an Hour's Sleep. Is he persecuted in his Name with Reproach? 'Tis not whole *Ingots* of Gold that can stop the Mouth of Fame: Nay, many Times the Obloquy itself is but the Progeny of Wealth, of Wealth breeding Envy, and Envy Detraction. But if the Sore lies deeper yet, and affects his immortal Part, he is still farther removed from the Possibility of Relief. If he suffer as a *Slave* under the Dominion of Vice, no Treasure can redeem him from that *Vassalage*: If he groans under a Sense of Guilt, and the Terrors of an accusing Conscience; alas! Gold is no *Balm* to a wounded Spirit: The *Luxuries*, which that has supported, may help to pierce, but it has no Power to heal: Or lastly, if the Soul fall finally under the Punishment of Sin,

[g] *Vid. Selden*'s Titles of Honour. [h] Prov. iv. 9. [i] 1 Cor. iv. 7. [k] Eccles. vi. 2.
[l] 1 Tim. vi. 17. [m] Prov. xxiii. 5. [n] The Gentlemen's Calling.

Sin, there is no commuting that Penance, no buying off that Smart: Riches abuſed may indeed ſwell the Account, and multiply the Stripes; but this is *the Day of Wrath*, wherein they will not, wherein they cannot bribe the Remiſſion of one Pain. Since then the Accompliſhments of Birth, Fortune, and Erudition, are not ſufficient to ſecure us in our moſt important Intereſts; [o] *Thus ſaith the Lord, let not the wiſe Man glory in his Wiſdom, neither let the mighty Man glory in his Strength; let not the rich Man glory in his Riches*; neither let the Nobleman glory in his Birth or Titles; *but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he underſtandeth, and knoweth me.*

II. ANOTHER Duty that Perſons of this Eminence owe to their Inferiors, is not to *deſpiſe them*, upon the Account of their Poverty, Ignorance, or obſcure Parentage, ſo long as they are honeſt and harmleſs Men, but to be kind and condeſcenſive, in relieving the Poor, inſtructing the Ignorant, and ſetting them at all Times a good Example. Think we never ſo long, we cannot imagine any Thing, that could poſſibly induce God to create the World, and to ſtock this ſublunary Part of it with Mankind, for either the Manifeſtation of his *Glory*, or the Communication of his *Goodneſs*. His Glory ſeems to come *ſecondary* in View, as *ſubſequent* to the Work, when finiſhed; † the prime *impulſive* Cauſe and Reaſon was certainly his Goodneſs. And if Goodneſs was the great Motive of communicating Exiſtence to Mankind, we cannot but conclude, that the ſame Goodneſs attended the Conſultations of his Wiſdom, when he appointed them their different Stations and Conditions of Life: For with him there is no Reſpect of Perſons; [p] *the Rich he regardeth no more than the Poor, the Prince* than the Peaſant; *for they are all the Work of his Hands.* And if they be the Work of his Hands, we cannot but ſuppoſe, that they are as *excellent* in their Kind, as thoſe that appear in the World in a brighter *Figure*. The Sun, Moon, and all the *Hoſt of Heaven*, are, at the firſt Sight, mighty Demonſtrations of the Creator's Power and Godhead; but thoſe, that look farther into the Works of Nature, can ſhew us the Traces of the ſame Almighty Hand in the Texture of the ſmalleſt *Inſect*, or on the Surface of the meaneſt Plant: They can behold, and admire, I ſay, the Wonders of creating Providence in an *Ant*, as much as an *Elephant*; and in the loweſt *Shrub*, as much as in the talleſt *Cedar* in *Lebanon*: For the ſmaller the Compound is, the more curious the Workmanſhip; and the more curious the Workmanſhip, the greater the Skill, both in contriving and compleating it. And, in like Manner, the Condition, that makes but a mean Appearance in the World, is not without its Excellencies, and the Marks of God's Favour and Benignity abiding upon it.

They ſhould not deſpiſe their Inferiors, becauſe none are contemptible.

THE poor illiterate Man, that riſes up with the Sun, as ſoon as he is riſen, directeth his Prayers and Oriſons to God, his chiefeſt Comfort and Support, to bleſs his little *Family*, to aſſiſt them with his Grace, and protect them with his Providence, and to proſper the Thing, that they ſhall take in Hand; that, having eaten his *Morſel* with Content and Thankfulneſs, goeth out *to his Labour and to his Work*, with the ſweet *Perfumes* of the Morning-Air, and the *warbling Notes* of every Hedge and Wood to attend him; that, in the Courſe of his Labour, preſerves Chearfulneſs and a good Conſcience; *ſings* away one Part of the Heat and Burthen of the Day, *ſanctifies* the other with good Meditation, and, in the Concluſion, performs his Taſk, and gives up his Account with Joy; that, at his Return home, is received with the Smiles of his *little Ones*, and the undiſſembled Love of his Wife; amuſes the Evening with *their* innocent Talk and Play; what *ſhe* has provided, eats with Appetite, and in Communion; calls his *little Branches about his Table*, and is revived himſelf to ſee them proſper and thrive; bleſſes God, in fine, for the Mercies of the Day; implores his Forgiveneſs for the Tranſgreſſions of it; recommends himſelf and his Family to the Protection of his good-appointed Angels; and ſo ſecurely lays him down to Reſt, and, in one continued ſweet Repoſe, repairs Nature, and beguiles the *live-long* Nights: The poor conſcientious Man, I ſay, that, in this Tenor of Life, goes ſmoothly on, makes a Figure enough to raiſe our Envy, and engage our Choice; and, in this humble Sphere, God looks down upon him with more Pleaſure and Delectation, than he did upon *Cæſar* in his triumphal Chariot, or *Solomon*

A Deſcription of the poor Man's State.

[o] Jer. ix. 23, 24. † This is ſo diſcernable by the mere Light of Reaſon, that the Philoſophers, when they are upon the Enquiry, what ſhould be the impulſive Cauſe and Reaſon of God's making the World, without Heſitation, ſolve the *Problem* by *Divine Goodneſs*; for ſo we find *Seneca* arguing, *Quæris quid ſit propoſitum Deo?* BONITAS. *Ita certè* PLATO *ait. Quæ Deo faciendi Mundum Cauſa fuit?* BONUS EST: *Bono nulla cujuſquam boni invidia eſt.* Epiſt. 65. [p] Job xxxiv. 19.

men in all his *Robes of Glory*. Where then are [q] *the Kings of the Earth, and the great Men, and the rich Men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty Men? Where is the Wise? [*] Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this World? God hath chosen the foolish Things of this World to confound the Wise? and God hath chosen the weak Things of the World, to confound the Things which are mighty; and the base Things of the World, and Things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and Things which are not, to bring to nought Things that are, that no Flesh should glory in his Presence.*

'TIS the Observation of the *wise Man*, and a very important one it is, [r] *whoso mocketh the Poor*; the *Poor*, whether in Parts, Pedigree, or Fortune, *reproacheth his Maker*, finds Fault with the Dispensations of Providence: For, since the poor Man could not help his Station in Life, the Reproach falls ultimately upon God; *but he that honoureth* his Maker, *hath Mercy upon the Poor*. The greatest Man living therefore must not disdain to be told, that he *who made him in the Womb, made likewise the Poor*, and *fashioned* them both alike; that human Nature, even the meanest Guise, as being the Image of God, cannot be contemptible; that the Outside and *Trappings* of the Man make no Part of his Species; and that, in the Eyes of God Almighty, no Man is better looked upon for having rich Blood in his Veins, or for *loading himself with thick Clay*: Must not disdain to be told, that the Man of Thousands, and ten Thousand times ten Thousands, is not properly the Owner of one Farthing; at the most, he is but a *Steward* in God's Family; his *Revenues*, consequently, are his *Debts*, and the larger his Estate, the greater his Labour and Charge, [s] *to give every one their Portion of Meat in due Season*; which if he neglects to do, and begins to live luxuriously himself, and to *beat* and oppress his Fellow-Servants, *his Lord will come in a Day, when he looked not for him, and will cut him asunder, and appoint him his Portion with Unbelievers*. Above all, let them not disdain to be reminded of the high, but dangerous Station, wherein Providence has placed them; [t] of the Support of Parentage and Alliances, of the Accomplishment of Parts by a liberal Education, the Advantages of their Wealth and large Fortune, the Power of their Authority, and the Influence of their Example; and, from a Sense and right Estimate of these, as they would do honour to the Families from whence they spring, and improve the Talents committed to their Trust, and make themselves *Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness*; as they would gain the inward Esteem of Mankind, whereof their outward Titles are sometimes false Eccho's, and be looked upon like so many *Gods*, and tutelar Angels in the several Countries where they live, resolve to pursue the Practice of *Job* (a Person of equal Quality with themselves) of [u] *being Eyes to the Blind, and Feet to the Lame; and a Father to the Poor*; of *drawing out their Soul to the Hungry, and satisfying the afflicted Soul*; of [x] *undoing the heavy Burthens, and breaking every Yoke*; and especially of *letting their Light so shine before Men*, that the whole Sphere, wherein they move, may be influenced and directed by the Brightness of their Example. Then [y] *shall their Light break forth as the Morning*, when every [z] *Ear, that hears them, shall bless them*, and every *Eye, that sees them*, shall *give Witness to them*, and *glorify their Father, which is in Heaven*.

THESE are the Duties, wherein Persons of high Birth, Fortune, and other Accomplishments stand indebted to their Inferiors: And what their Inferiors, in Return, owe to them, may be reduced to these two Particulars, *Honour* and *Gratitude*: Honour, where *eminent Qualities* are observ'd; and Gratitude, where *Favours* and *Obligations* have been received.

The Duties of Inferiors to their Superiors.

Honour,

I. AS Honours were at first designed for the Reward of great and laudable Actions, so were they made *successive*, for the farther Encouragement and Promotion of them. Were the Honours, which Men propose to themselves in performing any great Atchievements, to terminate with their Lives, this would discourage their Zeal, and put a Damp upon their Resolutions to undertake them; but when they understand, that the *Renown*, which will accrue to them, will be made *hereditary*, and descend to their latest Posterity; this is such a Spur to illustrious Actions, as he, who has any Sense of Ambition, or Love for his Country, cannot but feel: And for this Reason it is presumed, that Persons of noble Birth, having the *Examples* of their Ancestors, and the Sense of *Shame* (if they should fall short of their Virtues, and incur the Imputation

[q] Rev. vi. 15.
[r] *Barrow's* Works, Vol. III.
[s] Job xxix. 11.
[*] 1 Cor. i. 20, &c.
[t] Job xxix. 15, 16.
[u] Prov. xvii. 5.
[x] Isai. lviii. 6, &c.
[y] Luke xii. 42, &c.
[z] Ibid. *ver.* 8.

putation of Degeneracy) always before their Eyes, ſhould exert themſelves with a more than ordinary Vigour and Reſolution, to avoid that Reproach, and conſequently, to *ſignalize* themſelves in every Thing that is excellent and praiſe-worthy. Upon theſe Accounts it is generally ſuppoſed, that Perſons of high Titles and honourable Parentage are Men of real Worth; and though they chance to be the *Reverſe*, yet, in Compliance to the End of *civil* Inſtitution, they ought to be treated with external Obſervance, leſt, in the Perſon of *Particulars*, the *whole Order* ſhould think itſelf neglected. In like Manner, when any *Honour* is conferred by a *Prince*, though the Perſon ſhould not have all the *Merit* that might be expected, yet an outward Regard is certainly due to him, becauſe the Expreſſions of Royal Favour have the ſame Efficacy in diſtinguiſhing the Objects of it, that the *Royal Stamp* has, to put a Difference between *Coins*, and even ſometimes to give a current and intrinſic Value to that, which has little or none of itſelf. And ſo again, though Riches are ſometimes found in the Hands of Perſons, that have the leaſt Pretence to perſonal *Merit*; though not only *Folly*, (as *Solomon* obſerves) but ſometimes *Vice* and *Injuſtice* are ſet in high Dignity, yet the Reaſons of outward Reſpect are oftener founded on the *relative*, than *real* Characters of Men. So that, as Riches make a Man more conſiderable in the *Commonwealth*, and more capable of ſerving its Intereſt, thoſe that are the Poſſeſſors of them, have a Right at leaſt to ſome Share of our Regard in their *civil Capacity*, how little ſoever they may deſerve it in their *private*. But where, in Conjunction with an ample Fortune, we diſcover any generous and laudable Qualities; where the Perſon, whom the King *delights to honour*, puts on *Righteouſneſs*, as *Job* expreſſes it, for his *Cloathing*, and *Judgment* for his *Robe* and his *Diadem*, there the Degrees of our Honour and Reſpect can hardly tranſcend the Bounds of our Duty.

II. ANOTHER Duty which *Inferiors*, thoſe eſpecially, that have received Favours and Obligations, owe to their *Superiors*, is *Gratitude*; which conſiſts in a Senſibility of Kindneſs received, and an Endeavour either to acknowledge or repay them. *To repay them* perhaps by an equivalent Return may not be in the Perſon's Power, and, conſequently, cannot be his Duty: But Thanks are a Tribute payable by the pooreſt, ſince none is ſo indigent, as not to have a Heart to be ſenſible, and a Tongue to expreſs its Reſentment of a Benefit, when he hath received it. *What ſhall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards me?* Says holy *David*, reflecting upon the Divine Goodneſs to him: And, in like Manner, under a lively Apprehenſion of any human Favours, [a] "What ſhall I do, ſhould the grateful Man ſay to himſelf, for "ſuch a *Friend*, for ſuch a *Patron*, who hath ſo frankly, ſo generouſly, ſo uncon-"ſtrainedly relieved me in my Diſtreſs; ſupported me againſt ſuch an Enemy; ſup-"plied, cheriſhed, and upheld me, when Relations would not know me, or at leaſt "could not help me; and, in a Word, has prevented my Deſire, and out-done my "Neceſſities? I can never return him a Kindneſs any Ways anſwerable, but I may, "as I am in Juſtice bound, expreſs my thankful Remembrance of what he has "done. I can take all fair Occaſions to commemorate his good Offices, and, by the "little Services I am able to do, teſtify my Willingneſs to make him a full Requi-"tal, if I could." [b] For, as in the Matter of *Debt*, he who cannot pay *all*, muſt compound, and pay as far as he is able; ſo, in the Matter of *Beneficence*, when we cannot make a compleat Requital, we are obliged to make ſome ſmall Compoſition; and if we can do no more, to expreſs a grateful Senſe of what we have received, and give *thankful* Words for *beneficial* Actions, which all generous Benefactors eſteem the *nobleſt* Return; except it be to bleſs God for theſe great Inſtruments of his Bounty to us; to offer up our Prayers for their Proſperity, both *ſpiritual* and *temporal*; and to intercede with Heaven, ſince we find ourſelves inſolvent, to make them a full Requital, *at the Retribution of the Juſt.*

and Gratitude.

[a] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

[b] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Of Mercy in General.

Mercy, what.

MERCY, in the general Notion of it, is a *Trouble* or Uneaſineſs of Spirit, conceived at ſome *Evil*, that has befallen another, and attended with an ardent Deſire to help *him* out of it: And from hence we may perceive, that it is a *mixed* Paſſion, compounded of *Sorrow* and *Deſire*; Sorrow, for the Evil of the *Patient*, and Deſire to deliver him from it. But here a Queſtion will ariſe, what Kind of Evil is the proper Object of this Sorrow, or what is it that ſhould recommend a Man to our Pity? [c] Some very conſiderable *Moraliſts* and *Divines* will allow no other Evil to be capable of Pity, but the Evil of *Pain*, and that only, when it is *undeſerved*: But why Sin ſhould not fall under our Pity, as well as any other Evil, ſince an irreclaimable *Sinner* is the moſt miſerable Object we can think of, I cannot conceive: And though I readily grant, that *Affliction*, when joined with *Innocence*, is very apt to excite Compaſſion; yet, upon the whole, I cannot but think, that the *guilty* Sufferer is more to be pitied than the *innocent*; ſince I can pity him for his *Demerit* and his Miſery too; whereas the latter is pitiable only for his *Miſery*. The guilty Patient indeed is not to be pitied ſo much for his direct Miſery, becauſe he deſerves it; but then he is more to be pitied for his Deſert and Miſery *together*, than the other is for his Miſery *only*: And I make no Doubt, but that our compaſſionate Saviour, when he wept over *Jeruſalem*, relented as much for the *Sins*, as for the *Vengeance*, that was hanging over that unhappy City, and that, had theſe two great *tragic* Scenes been at once preſented before him, the Slaughter of the *innocent*, and the Deſtruction of the *guilty* People, he would have found more to be pitied in the *latter*, than in the *former* Tragedy.

Who the Objects of it.

THIS being premiſed, concerning the Extent of Mercy and Compaſſion, that it is converſant about Evils of all Kinds, whether *ſpiritual* or *temporal*, deſerved or undeſerved, we ſhall now proceed to conſider, 1. Some of the *Obligations* and *Reaſons*; and, 2. Some of the *Motives* and *Inducements*, we all lie under to the Practice of this Virtue.

The Uſefulneſs of it.

I. THE *Stoicks* indeed are ſo far from accounting *Mercy* a Virtue, that, according to the Vogue of their *Morality*, it paſſes for a [d] *Sin*, for an Inſtance of Weakneſs and Littleneſs of Soul, and ſuch a Piece of *Softneſs* and Effeminacy, as does not comport with the Character of their *wiſe Man*, who is allowed indeed to relieve, but not to be troubled for the Afflicted; to add, if he can, to the Tranquillity of *their* Minds, but not to ſuffer his *own* to be diſcompoſed at the Sight of any Calamity. This however, inſtead of improving, is debaſing human Nature, and robbing it of that Happineſs and Security, which we may reaſonably promiſe ourſelves from the Protection of Society; for the Protection of Society, without a kind Compaſſion and Inclination to aſſiſt, avails us nothing: 'Tis then only that we reap the Benefit of Society, when there is the ſame Sympathy in the *politick*, that there is in the *natural* Body; when, [e] *if one Member ſuffer, all the Members ſuffer with it, or, if one Member rejoice, all the Members rejoice with it.*

Interwoven in both Mind and Body.

UPON the Account then, that this Paſſion is of ſuch happy Advantage to the preſent Condition of Man, God has been pleaſed to *plant* in our Nature ſo ſtrong a Propenſity to it, that when we read or hear of the Calamities of other Men, our Bowels yearn by a natural *Sympathy*, though they be never ſo far diſtant from us, and are no otherwiſe related to us, than as they partake of the ſame common Nature. Nay, though we know the Calamities which we read and hear, to be nothing but *romantick Fictions*, yet ſtill the very Imagination of them melts us into Tears, in Deſpite of our Will and Reaſon; an evident Inſtance of the general *Sympathy*, which interferes between all Men, ſince we can neither hear, nor ſee, nor imagine other Miſeries, without being touched with a ſenſible Pain and Affliction for them.

NOR

[c] *Norris's* Diſcourſes, Vol. I. [d] *Ægritudo animi ob alienarum miſeriarum ſpeciem eſt miſericordia; ægritudo autem in ſapientem virum non cadit.* Sen. de Clem. c. 4. And according to his Maſter *Seneca*, *Lipſius* defines it to be *vitium puſilli minutique animi ob ſpeciem alieni mali collabentis.* [e] 1 Cor. xii. 26.

NOR has God given this Propenſity to the Soul only, but together with that has diſpoſed the very Make and Figuration of the Body ſo, that the whole Man might ſtand inclined to Acts of Mercy and Commiſeration. How the animal Spirits operate, is hard to determine; but this we know, that whenever we happen to caſt our Eyes upon a Man that is *wounded*, we find a ſudden Tide of them thronging towards thoſe Parts of our own Body, which anſwer to the Parts of the wounded Man, and ſo raiſing a Sentiment of Pity or Compaſſion in us, which we can no more help being affected with, than we can hinder our *animal Spirits* from flowing to, and affecting that Part of our Body, which correſponds to the Object before us.

Agreeable to the Nature of God.

SINCE the God of Nature, therefore, has laid the Ground of this Affection, in the Compoſition both of Soul and Body; ſince he has implanted in us ſuch a mutual *Sympathy*, as makes another's Miſery our Pain, which, without doing Violence to ourſelves, we cannot be eaſed of, without wiſhing, at leaſt, to be able to remove it; this I take to be an eternal and immutable Reaſon, why we ought to be merciful to one another, eſpecially conſidering, that this is farther incumbent upon us, both in Imitation of the *Nature*, and in Conformity to the *Will* of our Great Creator.

THE Doctors of the *Talmud*, ſpeaking of the Employment of God before the Creation of the World, lay it down for a Truth, that he was contriving how to be merciful to Mankind: And *contriving* indeed he was, how to ſhew Mercy to Man, but not by the Way of *Study* and Employment of Mind, as theſe idle *Dreamers* groſſly imagine. His Mercy is eſſential to his Nature, and therefore it is ſaid to be [g] *from everlaſting*, [h] *to endure for ever*, and himſelf is ſtiled [i] *the God of all Grace*, and [k] *the Father of Mercies*, whoſe Compaſſions, and [l] *the Sounding of whoſe Bowels* fail not, and who [m] *keepeth Mercy for Thouſands, forgiving Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion, and Sin.* And, indeed, if we conſider a little the Method of God's Dealing with Mankind, in creating them at firſt, in ſuſtaining them with his *Power*, in protecting them with his *Providence*, in ſanctifying them with his *Grace*, and, above all, in redeeming them from eternal Ruin, by the coſtly Price of his own Son's Blood; we cannot but obſerve a continued Series of Divine Mercy and Compaſſion, running through every Age of the World, and through every Moment of each Man's Life.

Preſcribed in his Word.

NOW, for the ſame Reaſon that God does himſelf continually delight in Acts of Mercy, and takes a peculiar Pleaſure in deſcribing himſelf by that particular Attribute; for the ſame Reaſon, it muſt neceſſarily be his Will, that we ſhould imitate him, in what he himſelf finds ſo great Complacency. [n] *Be ye therefore merciful*, ſays our Bleſſed Saviour, *as your Father, which is in Heaven, is merciful*; [o] *Put on, as the Elect of God, Bowels of Mercy, Kindneſs, Meekneſs, Long-ſuffering*; and [p] *be of the ſame Mind one towards another, weeping with thoſe that weep*, and [q] *bearing one another's Burthens*, in order to *fulfil the Law of Chriſt*.

Exemplified by Chriſt.

AND well might the Law of Chriſt preſcribe us this Duty, when he himſelf, while on Earth, in Commiſeration to Mankind, went about *healing every Sickneſs, and every Diſeaſe; and ſeeing the Multitudes fainting, and ſcattered abroad like Sheep wanting a Shepherd*, ἐσπλαγχνίσθη περὶ αὐτῶν, was *moved with Compaſſion on them*; ſo we render it indeed, but the Expreſſion is too high and pregnant for any verbal Tranſlation: When he himſelf, even now that he is in Heaven, retains ſtill the ſame Tenderneſs of Spirit, though, in other Reſpects, *impaſſible*, and for this Reaſon is called [r] *a merciful High-Prieſt, that cannot but be touched with a Feeling of our Infirmities.*

The Excellency of it.

WELL might the Law of Chriſt preſcribe us this Duty, which, of all others, is moſt appoſite to our preſent State and Circumſtances: For, ſince every Man is liable to become miſerable, nothing is more juſt and equitable, than that we ſhould deal with others, as we would be dealt by. Put the Caſe then, (as you very well may) that you were now as miſerable, as that wretched Creature is, that craves your Succour and Relief, would you not deſire Relief with the ſame Importunity, that he does? Since the Senſe of Miſery and the Deſire of Mercy are inſeparable, doubtleſs you would: And is there not all the Reaſon in the World then, that you ſhould grant him what you would aſk for yourſelf, if you were in his Circumſtances, and

[f] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. I.
[g] Pſal. ciii. 17.
[h] Ibid. cvi. 1.
[i] 1 Pet. v. 10.
[k] 2 Cor. i. 3.
[l] Iſa. lxiii. 15.
[m] Exod. xxxiv. 7.
[n] Luke vi. 36.
[o] Col. iii. 12.
[p] Rom. xii. 15, 16.
[q] Gal. vi. 2.
[r] Matth. ix. 35, 36.
[s] Heb. iv. 15.

he in your's? What therefore the Apoſtle ſays, in relation to Offences, may, with a ſmall Variation, be applied to other Infelicities of Life; "*Brethren, if a Man be overtaken* with Misfortunes, *ye which are* proſperous, relieve *ſuch an one, in the Spirit* of Compaſſion, *conſidering thyſelf, leſt thou alſo be* afflicted.

AND well might our Holy Religion recommend this Affection to us, ſince, of all others, it is one of the moſt noble and excellent Diſpoſitions of the Mind: So *noble*, that the moſt generous and brave Spirits of Antiquity, thoſe whom *Paganiſm* has *deified*, and *Chriſtianity ſainted*, whom Hiſtory *mentions* with Honour, and Malice itſelf is aſhamed to *calumniate*, have all along been famed and remarkable for it: And ſo *excellent*, that no other Paſſion, but Love or Charity, from whence it reſults, is to be compared with it. "Other Paſſions are in their own Natures indifferent, neither Good nor Evil in themſelves, but *equally determinable* to either, and for the moſt part, are actually determined to the *wrong Side*. They are generally irregular, either in the Degree, or in the Object; are either miſgoverned or miſplaced; and, when moſt orderly managed, the higheſt Character they can pretend to, is only to be Inſtruments and Servants to Virtue: But now this Affection of Pity and Compaſſion riſes higher than Indifferency: It is of itſelf a virtuous Diſpoſition, needs only actual Exertion to make it a direct Virtue, and then its own Excellency will place it among the higheſt Orders. For this Reaſon, I ſuppoſe it is, that God himſelf declares, *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice*, i. e. Mercy rather than Sacrifice; for when Matters fall out ſo, that we cannot conveniently attend both, he had rather that we ſhould teſtify our Love to him by Acts of *Kindneſs*, done for his Sake, to our Brethren, whoſe Neceſſities call for immediate Help, than that we ſhould neglect theſe, and employ ourſelves in the moſt ſolemn Acts of Worſhip, which entirely terminate in him, who neither needs them, nor can receive any Advantage by them: And for this Reaſon not improbably it is, that, of all the Affections implanted in Man's Mind, our Bleſſed Saviour thought proper to ſelect and adopt this only in the ſacred Number of his few Beatitudes; * *Bleſſed are the Merciful; for they ſhall obtain Mercy.* Which leads us,

Motives *to it.*

II. To the *Motives* and *Inducements* of our practiſing this Duty. And to this Purpoſe let it be conſidered, that, though Mercy, as well as other Virtues, may be ſometimes abuſed and ill-treated, yet, generally ſpeaking, nothing more naturally recommends us to the Compaſſion of others, than being of a merciful and benign Temper ourſelves. And for this Reaſon it is, that the *wiſe Man* adviſes, "*Give to Seven, and alſo to Eight; for thou knoweſt not what Evil ſhall be upon the Earth*: "As if he had ſaid, "Be careful, whilſt thou art in Proſperity, to lay an "Obligation on as many as thou canſt, by Works of Mercy and Bounty; for "thou knoweſt not how the World may change: *Riches may make themſelves Wings, "and fly away*; and it is not in the Power of all thy Art and Skill to ſtop them in "their Flight, or bring them down to thy Lure, when they are once upon the "Wing. A raging Fire, a violent Storm, unſeaſonable Weather, undutiful Children, the Falſeneſs of Friends, or the Malice of Enemies, may conſume an Eſtate "in a ſhort Time, which thou haſt a long while been gathering: And therefore, "if, whilſt thou haſt it, thou art kind and merciful, thy Kindneſs to others (ſhouldeſt "thou chance to be deprived of it) will be remembered to thy Advantage, and en"gage them to give into thy Cup, as our Saviour expreſſes it, "*good Meaſure, preſſed "down, ſhaken together, and running over.*"

It engages the Mercy of Men,

and of God.

BUT if this ſhould not happen, if even Mankind, whom thou haſt obliged, ſhould fail in Point of Gratitude; yet "*God is not unrighteous, that he ſhould forget thy Work, and Labour of Love, in that thou haſt miniſtered to* the Diſtreſſed. "*For this Thing, he ſhall bleſs thee in all thy Works, and in all that thou putteſt thine Hand unto*; "he *ſhall deliver thee in the Time of Trouble*; he ſhall *preſerve thee from the Hand of thine Enemies, and ſtrengthen thee on thy Bed of Languiſhing.* For this Thing, he will bleſs thee in thy Relations and Poſterity, "*the Seed of the* Merciful *ſhall be mighty on the Earth*, and *the Generation of the Upright ſhall be bleſſed*; and therefore, "*caſt thy Bread upon the Waters*, (as the wiſe Man elegantly expreſſes the Duty of Beneficence) *and thou ſhalt find it after many Days*; for thy Children's Children ſhall find the Advantage of it. For this Thing, he will bleſs thee in (what is more than all) the Salvation

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[a] Gal. vi. 1. [b] *Norris's* Diſcourſes, Vol. I. [c] Matth. v. 7. [d] Eccleſ. xi. 2.
[e] *Blackhall's* Sermons, Vol. I. [f] Luke vi. 38. [g] Heb. vi. 10. [h] Deut. xv. 10.
[i] Pſal. xli. 1, &c. [k] Ibid. cxii. 2. [l] Eccleſ. xi. 1.

Salvation of thine immortal Soul; for as [f] *he shall have Judgment without Mercy on him, who hath shewed no Mercy*; so, in him, that hath shewed it, *Mercy shall rejoice against Judgment*, when, in that *great and terrible Day of the Lord*, he shall meet with a gracious Sentence from his Judge, and a kind Reception *in the Kingdom prepared for him*. And therefore, [g] to sum up all in that *elegant* Discourse of *Lactantius*, concerning Works of Mercy and Charity: "Since human Nature, *says* "*he*, is weaker than that of other Creatures, who came into the World armed with "defensive Powers; therefore our wise Creator has given us a tender and merciful "*Disposition*, that we might place the Safe-guard of our Lives in mutual Assistan-"ces of one another. For being all created by one God, and sprung from one "common Parent, we should reckon ourselves *a-kin*, and conjoined to all Mankind; "and, being ourselves obnoxious to Misery, we may more comfortably hope for "Help, in case we need it, when we are conscious to ourselves, that we gave it to "others. If any be hungry then, let us feed him; is he naked, let us cloath him; "is he wronged by a powerful Oppressor, let us rescue and relieve him. Let our "Doors be open to Strangers, and such as have no Habitation: Let not our Assist-"ance be wanting to Widows and Orphans; and (what is a mighty Instance of "Charity) let us redeem the Captive, deliver the Prisoner, visit the Sick, and, in "case he should die, not suffer him to want the Conveniency of a Grave. These "are the Works and Offices of Mercy: And to prepare us for these, let us not set "our Heart on Money, but transmit it into the heavenly Treasures, where it shall "be kept to our eternal Advantage, under the Custody of God himself."

The Sum of the whole Argument.

SECT. IV.

Of Mercy to Mens Souls.

MERCY, as we said before, has properly *Misery* for its Object; and the Miseries incident to human Life are of two Kinds, either such as affect the *Body*, or such as affect the *Soul* of Man. The Miseries, which affect the Soul, are either *Blindness*, and *Ignorance* in Matters of the greatest Importance; or *Malice*, and *Obstinacy* of Will in wicked and pernicious Courses: To the *former* belongs the Business of *Instruction*; and to the *latter*, the Office of *Reproof*; and our Purpose is to see what Duties are required of us, with Respect to both these.

I. BLINDNESS, and Ignorance in Things of the highest Moment for us to know, is one of the greatest Miseries that can possibly happen to the Soul in this Life: For, as Souls are designed to live happy or miserable for ever, which Happiness depends upon the right Use of their *Liberty*, and that upon their *Knowledge*, how to use and determine it, it will be impossible for them to attain eternal Happiness, or escape eternal Misery, without Knowledge to steer and direct them right. [h] And now, what a miserable Case is this, to have an eternal Interest at Stake, and not to know how to manage it? To be travelling on this narrow Line of Life, which divides the *boundless* Continents of Happiness or Misery, and not see one Step of our Way before us, nor perceive whither we are going, until we are gone beyond all Recovery? Should we behold a *blind* Man, walking upon the Brink of a fatal *Precipice*, without any Guide to direct his Steps, and secure him from the neighbouring Danger, would not our Hearts ake, and our Bowels yearn for him? Should we not call out to him, and warn him of his Danger, and make all the Haste we could to take him by the Hand, and conduct him to a Place of Safety? And is it not a much more deplorable Sight, to see a poor ignorant Wretch, walking blindfold on the *Brink* of Hell, and, for Want of Sight to direct him *Heavenwards*, ready to blunder at every Step into the Pit of Destruction? Certainly, if we duly understood the Worth and Value of Souls, such a woful Spectacle could not but affect us with Commiseration, and excite us to employ all our Faculties, to convince him of the Danger he is incurring, and to instruct him, by what *Means* he may avoid it: For this is the proper Act of Mercy, which such a miserable Case requires, *viz.* to endeavour to dispel that fatal Ignorance which surrounds Mens Minds, and to enlighten them with all the Principles of Religion, that are necessary to conduct them to

The Misery of an ignorant Soul.

Instruction proper for it.

[f] James ii. 13. [g] *Cave's* Primitive Christianity. [h] *Scott's* Christian Life, Part III.

Charity-Schools.

to eternal Happineſs. And this, by the Way, may recommend thoſe liberal Foundations, which are now ſo frequent in this Nation, [l] whereby great Numbers of Perſons, by a virtuous Education, are inſtructed in the Doctrines of Faith, and ſeaſoned with the Principles of pure Religion, that ſo, knowing their Duty, and the manifold Obligations to it, they might not fall blindfold into everlaſting Perdition; and whereby the poorer Sort, that are leaſt of all capable of inſtructing their Children, or making any competent Proviſion for them, have pious Grounds to hope, that their [k] *Sons may grow up as young Plants, and their Daughters be as the poliſhed Corners of the Temple.*

How much we ſtand obliged, not only in *Fidelity* to God, who has committed the Souls of our Children and Dependents to our Charge, and will one Day require an Account of them at our Hands, but in Mercy likewiſe to *them*, that they may not *periſh for Lack of Knowledge*, to inform their Minds in all the Duties and Obligations of Religion, is what we had Occaſion to conſider [l] before; and ſhall only take Notice farther, that, beſides thoſe, who are thus immediately related to us, Mercy requires us to take all fair Opportunities of inſinuating the Knowledge of Divine Truths to any, we know deſtitute of it; or, if we ourſelves cannot do it, without incurring the Imputation of *Impertinence* or *Pedantry*, to recommend them to others; whoſe Authority with them is greater, and from whoſe Hands the kind Office may be better taken; for what St *Paul* ſays to *Timothy*, is applicable to all Chriſtians that have a Capacity for it; [m] *the Servant of the Lord muſt be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, in Meekneſs inſtructing thoſe, that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance, to the Acknowledgment of the Truth; and that they may recover themſelves out of the Snare of the Devil, who are taken Captive by him at his Will.*

Of religious Diſcourſe in common Converſation.

And this gives us too ſad an Occaſion to lament the great Decay of religious Diſcourſe in common Converſation, though certainly the moſt eaſy and effectual Way of Inſtruction. Sermons may do good, and Books may edify; but, being deſigned for general Uſe, they cannot come down to particular Caſes; they cannot ſuit the Condition and Capacities of all Men: They want that Life and Energy, that Addreſs and Inſinuation, which only dwell on the Tongue: [n] They are indeed but *dead* Things, in Compariſon of thoſe *lively Births* of Piety, which come from the Mouth in Converſation, when Hearts, truly touched with the Love of God, communicate their Light and Heat, and blow up one another's dormant Fires into a burning and ſhining Flame. *As Iron ſharpeneth Iron*, ſays *Solomon*, *ſo a Man ſharpeneth the Countenance of his Friend*, i. e. quickens and enlivens him, and ſets a new Edge, both upon his Wit, and upon his Paſſions and Affections. With good Reaſon therefore does our holy Religion direct, that we ſhould [o] *provoke unto Love, and to good Works, by exhorting one another*; that [p] *our Speech ſhould be always with Grace, ſeaſoned with Salt*; and that [q] *no corrupt Communication ſhould proceed out of our Mouths, but that which is good to the Uſe of edifying, that it may miniſter Grace unto the Hearers.*

And indeed, if we conſider the End and Deſign of Speech, we can hardly imagine, but that it was given us for higher and more material Purpoſes, than to drive Bargains upon the *Exchange*, to talk *Politicks* over a *News-Paper*, or to hold an impertinent *Chat* in goſſiping Company about Cloaths, and Faſhions, and the little Affairs and Tranſactions of the Neighbourhood. Among all the Creatures under Heaven, Man is the only one, that has *Religion*, and the only one too, that has *Speech*; which is no obſcure Intimation, that the one was deſigned to be ſubſervient to the other. For what ſhall a Man talk of? What Subject is there worthy his Diſcourſe, if not that, which is at once both the Perfection and Diſtinction of his Nature? If not that, wherein the Glory of God, as well as the Fate of his own and his Brother's Soul, is ſo nearly concerned? And yet, alas! if we look into the World, we ſhall find nothing leſs talked of, than Religion. Wicked Men cannot, and good Men, for Fear of being accounted *ſingular*, will not make it the Subject of their Diſcourſe; ſo that, what through the Indiſpoſition of the one, and the Incapacity of the other, a Man may make Viſit after Viſit, go from Houſe to Houſe, out of one Company into another, for it may be, a *Twelve-Month* together, and not hear one Word of Religion paſs. It is no Wonder indeed, if wicked Men prefer the light Flaſhes of a wanton Mirth,

[l] *Fiddes*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. II. [k] Pſal. cxliv. 12. [l] See the Explanation of the Fifth Commandment.
[m] 2 Tim. ii. 24, &c. [n] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. III. [o] Heb. x. 24, 25. [p] Col. iv. 6. [q] Eph. iv. 29.

Mirth, which, for a while, ſuſpend *Reflection*, and hide the Sinner from himſelf, to ſuch Diſcourſes, as awaken Conſcience, and *propheſy no Good concerning them, but only Evil continually*; or, if Men of Virtue are, at any Time, guilty of ſo much *Weakneſs*, as to appear diſpleaſed with a ſerious and inſtructive Converſation, it cannot proceed from an Averſion to the Argument, becauſe it is impoſſible that they ſhould really be offended with ſuch Subjects, as are the great Entertainment of their Retirement; but it is the Uneaſineſs, they perceive in the Company, and Want of Courage to *oppoſe* ſo corrupt a Cuſtom, that makes them behave in this Manner; whereas, had they Reſolution enough to attempt it, theſe fooliſh Diſcouragements would ſoon be removed. Would good Men, I ſay, with the Liberty of an honeſt *Zeal*, oppoſe and reprove all profane and immodeſt Freedoms in Converſation, and ſtudy to promote and encourage the contrary, Veneration and Reſpect would attend them, and Religion would ſoon improve itſelf into a *Faſhion*. The *Libertine* would retire to the *Stews*, and *Profaneneſs* be confined to the *Brothel*; Joy, and Peace, and Eſteem would bleſs the *Dwellings of the Righteous*, and the Purity and Holineſs of their Converſation here would fit and prepare them for that *Aſſembly of the Firſt-born*, where, (inſtead of the preſent Impertinencies of Society) the Excellency of the Divine *Being* and Perfections, the Order and Wiſdom, the Juſtice and Goodneſs of his *Government*, the Reaſonableneſs and Equity of his *Laws*, the Pleaſantneſs and Freedom of his *Service*, and the great Inſtances of his *Love*, eſpecially that amazing one, in the *Redemption* of the World by the Paſſion of his Son, ſhall be the eternal *Theme*, whereof we ſhall then diſcourſe with all mutual Freedom and Endearments, without Reſerve, without Paſſion, without Affectation, or any of thoſe little Deſigns and Artifices, which now both diſguiſe and diſreliſh Converſation *.

The Miſery of a wicked Soul.

II. THE other ſore *Miſery*, which affects the Soul, is Obſtinacy of *Will*, in wicked and pernicious Courſes. For what a deplorable Sight is this, to ſee a wretched Soul, madly purſuing its own Deſtruction, and forcing, as it were, its Way into Hell, through all the Reſiſtances of its Religion, its Reaſon and Conſcience together? ' Were we to ſee a Madman break looſe from his *Chain*, and run his Head againſt a Wall; or catching up a *Dagger*, thruſt it into his own Breaſt, and repeat Stab after Stab, in Deſpite of all our Counſels and Diſſuaſives, ſhould we not pity and lament his Caſe, and endeavour to reſtrain him from ſuch violent Outrages againſt himſelf? And is it not a much more lamentable *Spectacle*, to ſee a wild and deſperate Soul break looſe from thoſe *Ties* of Religion and Conſcience, which bind it to its Duty and Happineſs, and, in a deaf and obſtinate Rage, ſeize on the *Weapons* of Perdition, (for ſuch all Wickedneſs is) plunge them into its own Bowels, and, with repeated Acts of Iniquity, imbrue its Hands in its own Blood; whilſt the bleſſed Spirit, together with its own natural Senſe of God, is ſtruggling with it, and endeavouring in vain to diſarm its deſperate Fury? What merciful Heart would not be tempted to interpoſe, in order to reſtrain it by Reproof, and bind it down with good Counſel and Admonition? Now this is the proper Act of Mercy in the Caſe before us: When we ſee an obſtinate Sinner reſolutely purſuing his own Deſtruction, we ſhould endeavour, by prudent and ſeaſonable Reproofs, and by pious and compaſſionate Admonitions, to reclaim him *from the Error of his Way*.

The Mercy to be extended to it, is Reproof, *which is conſonant to Reaſon.*

THERE are ſome Offices of Humanity, which thoſe, who had no other Light, but that of natural Reaſon, to guide their Actions, thought themſelves obliged to perform, not only to their *Familiars*, but *Strangers*, not only to their Friends, but to their Enemies. ' To ſhew the Way to Travellers, who had loſt it; to warn Perſons in Danger of a Rock, or of a Precipice; to permit others to light their *Lamp* by ours, are particularly ſpecified as Benefits, which, being uſeful to thoſe, that receive them, and no Ways prejudicial to thoſe, that give them, are to be denied to none. Now can we think ourſelves bound by the Laws of Humanity to thoſe common Inſtances of Kindneſs, and can we pretend to be exempt from others of much more Importance? Does common *Humanity* oblige us to put miſguided Travellers into their right Way; and will not *Chriſtianity* prevail with us to call back thoſe wandering Souls, which have ſtrayed from the *narrow Paths, which lead unto Life*, into the more wide and beaten Way, which *leads to Deſtruction?* Are we ſo careful to reſcue an unwary *Voyager* from the Danger of ſtriking on a Rock, and

* *Rogers*'s Sermons, Vol. I. ' *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Part III. ' Biſhop *Smalridge*'s Sermons.

have we no Compaſſion on thoſe, who, without our Interpoſal, are in immediate Hazard of *making Shipwreck of a good Conſcience?* Do we cry out, when a Stranger is running upon a Precipice, and are we ſilent, when our Brother is falling into the bottomleſs Pit? Should we think it an Inſtance of Surlineſs and Barbarity, to deny another to borrow Light from our Light, and is there no Cruelty in with-holding from them, [t] *who ſit in Darkneſs, and in the Shadow of Death*, that Light, which would not ſhine with leſs Luſtre to us, *by guiding their Feet* likewiſe *in the Way of Peace?*

and Scripture. THE Law of *Moſes* gives us this Injunction; [u] *Thou ſhalt not ſee thy Brother's Ox or his Aſs go aſtray, and hide thyſelf from them: Thou ſhalt in any Caſe bring them again to thy Brother. Thou ſhalt not ſee thy Brother's Aſs or his Ox fall down by the Way, and hide thyſelf from them; thou ſhalt ſurely help him to lift them up again.* And may we not apply to this Caſe what St *Paul* ſaith in another? * *Doth God take Care for Oxen? Or ſaith he it altogether for our Sakes? For our Sakes no Doubt it is written*, that thoſe, who, by the Laws of Charity, are obliged to bring back a ſtrayed Sheep, and to lift up a fallen Ox that belongs to *their* Brother, ſhould think themſelves much more obliged by the ſame Law, to bring back their Brother himſelf, when gone aſtray; and to lift him up, when fallen into the Pit of Deſtruction. But it is not only in Parables that this Duty is delivered to us; the Scripture ſays expreſſly, [x] *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thine Heart, thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy Neighbour, and not ſuffer Sin upon him*; where, in the Eye of the *Moſaic* Law, not to rebuke our Brother, is to hate him, and [y] *he that hateth his Brother*, in the Eye of the Chriſtian Law, *is in Darkneſs, and knoweth not whither he goeth, becauſe that Darkneſs hath blinded his Eyes.* If therefore the not rebuking our Brother is Hatred of him, as *Moſes* affirms; and if the Hatred of our Brother is a Sign of Infidelity, as St *John* aſſerts; then does the Duty of reproving our Brethren ſtand upon as firm Ground as any other in the Word of God. *The Law, which was given by Moſes*, required it of thoſe that lived under that Diſpenſation; and *the Grace and Truth, which came by Jeſus Chriſt*, has enforced it upon all Chriſtians, directing us, that we ſhould [z] *exhort one another daily while it is called To-day, leſt any of us ſhould be hardened thro' the Deceitfulneſs of Sin*: And to prevail with us to ſet about ſo good and charitable a Work, this is the great and bleſſed Encouragement which St *James* has left us; [a] *Brethren, if any of you err from the Truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he, who converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Way, ſhall ſave a Soul from Death, and ſhall hide a Multitude of Sins.* But whoſe Sins they are, that by this Means are hid, is a Point, wherein Expoſitors are not ſo well agreed.

The Words of St James *explained.* *GROTIUS*, indeed, is of Opinion, that they are the Sins of the *converted* Perſon, which, upon his Repentance and Reformation, (wherein his Brother's Zeal for his Soul was, under God, a great Inſtrument) are all pardoned and forgiven, be they never ſo numerous and many; but the more obvious and eaſy Senſe of the Words, as well as the plain Deſign of the Apoſtle, ſeems to refer to the Perſon *converting*. [b] The Apoſtle's Deſign was, to ſhut up his Epiſtle with recommending to all Chriſtians one of the moſt *important* and uſeful Duties, that of endeavouring the Converſion and Reformation of Men; and he intended likewiſe to ſtir them up to the Practice of this Virtue, by the moſt powerful Motives, that he could propoſe: And what are theſe? Why *firſt*, that *he, who converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Ways*, ſhould *firſt* conſider, that he *ſaved a Soul from Death*; and then *ſecondly*, and chiefly, *that he ſhall* alſo *cover a Multitude of Sins*: But whoſe Sins? Thoſe of the converted Perſon? No. That was already ſaid, and much more than that, in the foregoing Motive, *he ſhall ſave a Soul from Death*; for ſurely the ſaving a Soul from Death neceſſarily includes and preſuppoſes the Remiſſion of its Sins. So that the Paſſage muſt be meant of *his Sins*, who *makes*, and not of *his*, who *becomes* the Convert; and thus, indeed, the laſt Clauſe carries a new Motive in it, diſtinct from that of the former, and ſuch an one, as riſes higher, and more ſenſibly touches thoſe, to whom it is addreſſed. "Let ſuch an one know, (for this may be a proper *Pa-*
"*raphraſe* upon the Apoſtle's Words) that he ſhall, by this Means, not only ſave
"a Soul from Death, though this itſelf be a very great and deſirable Thing, but
"what more nearly concerns him, ſhall alſo ſecure to himſelf, on this Account,
"the

[t] Luke i. 79. [u] Deut. xxii. 1, 4. * 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10. [x] Lev. xix. 17.
[y] 1 John ii. 11. [z] Heb. iii. 13. [a] James v. 19, 20. [b] Biſhop *Atterbury's*
Sermons, Vol. I. 3

"the Pardon of many Sins;" not groſs and heinous Sins (the Words of the Apoſtle do not imply that, neither can a Chriſtian, zealous for the Converſion of others, be ſuppoſed to be guilty of ſuch) but only many *leſſer* Neglects and Failings in his Duty; many Sins of *Infirmity*, *Surprize*, and daily *Incurſion*, which, God knows, in the beſt of Men are too frequent, and therefore properly enough ſtiled *a Multitude of Sins*.

Motives to engage us in the Converſion of others.

AFTER this, I need not urge the Practice of our Saviour and his Apoſtles, and what mighty Pains and Hazards the primitive *Chriſtians* underwent, that they might bring Mankind to the *Knowledge of the Truth*, and reſcue their Souls *from the Snares of the Devil*. If [c] *there be Joy in Heaven, over one Sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine juſt Perſons, which need no Repentance*; think, O think, with what Joy and holy Triumph muſt that Man appear, at the Day of Judgment, when, in the full Aſſembly of Saints and Angels, it ſhall be reported and proclaimed aloud, that his Teaching and Inſtruction, his Counſel and Advice, his Admonition and Reproofs gave the firſt Turn to ſuch an one's Converſion and Amendment, and was, under God, inſtrumental to the Salvation of his Soul, and the Joy and Rejoicing, which thereupon appeared in Heaven! How muſt his Countenance ſhine, and his Heart chear him, when, after ſuch Commendation, the Eyes of Men and Angels ſhall be turned upon him in full Applauſe and Admiration!

THIS one Conſideration, I think, is enough to excite us all, by every proper Means, to endeavour the Inſtruction and Reformation of the moſt Ignorant and Miſtaken, the moſt Profligate and Perverſe. [d] But if, after all, as it too often happens, the one will not receive our Inſtruction, nor the other endure our Reproof; yet, even then, pitying and praying for them becomes our Duty, and the worſe we find their Condition, and the more intractable their Diſpoſitions, the more vehemently muſt we ſtrive with God in their Behalf, that he would ſoften their Hearts, and ſhew them their Errors, and bring them, firſt, to a teachable Temper, and, then, into the *Ways of Holineſs and Truth*.

SECT. V.

Of Mercy to Mens Bodies.

THE Miſeries, which affect Mens Bodies, are either *natural* Blemiſhes and Defects, accidental Sickneſs and Diſeaſes, outward Force and Violence, or Want and Scarcity of the common Neceſſaries of Life, about which the Offices of Mercy and Compaſſion are differently converſant.

How we are to be affected towards Men under natural Blemiſhes.

1. ALL natural *Blemiſhes* and *Defects*, ſuch as Lameneſs, Crookedneſs, Want of Senſes, or Diſproportion of Parts, are real Infelicities, that render our Bodies either leſs uſeful to ourſelves, or leſs graceful and amiable to others: And, therefore, in this Caſe, [e] the Law of Mercy requires us, not to contemn or undervalue Men, not to upbraid or reproach them upon that Score; but to overlook theſe Blemiſhes, as inconſiderable Flaws, which they could not prevent, and which they cannot rectify: To remember, that the Body is not the Man, but the *immortal* Mind, that inhabits it; that the richeſt Diamonds wear, many Times, the rougheſt Coats; and that, ſince it was nor in their Power to order Nature in their own Compoſition, to deride or expoſe them for any Miſhap or Deformity therein, is like flinging Salt into their Wounds, and turning that into a Triumph of Mirth and Drollery, which is properly an Object of Pity and Compaſſion.

Under Sickneſs or Diſeaſes.

2. SICKNESS and *Diſeaſes* are ſore Miſeries, ſuch as waſte the Strength of Nature, rebate the Vigour of the Spirits, and make the whole Body, through inceſſant Pains and Weakneſs, not only uſeleſs, but burthenſome to the Soul: In which Caſe the Laws of Mercy require us (provided our Company will be acceptable) to viſit the Afflicted very frequently, in order to chear their drooping Spirits with the Livelineſs of our Converſation, and to adminiſter to their wearied Thoughts the Supports and Comforts of Religion: To contribute what we can to their bodily Eaſe and Refreſhment; to be ready to ſerve them in all their Neceſſities; to compaſſionate their Griefs; to bear with their Peeviſhneſſes; and, if they are poor and indigent, to ſupply

[c] Luke xv. 7. [d] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. I. [e] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Part III.

ſupply them with all ſuch Remedies, as are neceſſary to their Health and Recovery. But, above all, to take all fair Opportunities to awaken in their Minds ſerious Thoughts and Purpoſes; to prepare their Souls for an happy Death, and a glorious Eternity; and, to this End, to become their Advocates at the Throne of Grace, that the God of all Power and Goodneſs, *in whoſe Hands are the Iſſues of Life and Death*, would commiſerate their Sorrows, and refreſh their Wearineſs, and either remove their Sickneſs, or ſanctify it to their eternal Health.

Under outward Force and Violence.

3. OUTWARD Force and Violence, ſuch as *Captivity* and *Impriſonment*, are great and comprehenſive Miſeries, which draw a long and heavy Chain of Calamities after them. When Mens Perſons are expoſed to the Will and Tyranny of their Enemies, and eſpecially, when they are exaſperated againſt them upon the Account of Religion, what can be expected but cruel and barbarous Uſage; but to be worn out with Stripes, and Hunger, and intolerable Labour; and to be forced to pine away their wretched Lives in unpitied Anguiſh and Vexation of Soul? In which Caſe Mercy obliges us, when any fair Opportunity is propoſed to us, to contribute to their Ranſom proportionably to our Ability, and to ſollicit their Cauſe both with God and Men; to beſeech him to ſupport and preſerve them, and to perſuade all thoſe, with whom we have an Intereſt, to extend their Liberality towards their *Redemption*. And ſo, in the Caſe of *Impriſonment*, which, indeed, is but another Sort of Captivity, if they are our Friends and Acquaintance, Mercy requires us to viſit them in their ſad Solitude and Confinement, in order to divert their Sorrows, and raiſe and ſtrengthen their Hopes by our Converſation; to endeavour to mollify their Adverſaries; if they are inſolvent, to compound their Debts; and, if it be juſt and feaſible, to contribute, according to our Power, to their Releaſe and Enlargement; for this is fulfilling the Chriſtian Precept, of '*remembering them, that are in Bonds, as being bound with them, and thoſe which ſuffer Adverſity, as being ourſelves alſo in the Body.*

Under Poverty and Want.

4. WANT of the outward Neceſſaries of Life is a very ſore Miſery, and what Mercy requires us, not only to commiſerate, but to relieve; and relieve in Proportion to our Abilities, and the Neceſſities of the Perſons that are in Want. But becauſe Mercy and Bounty to the Poor is a Duty of great Moment, and general Concern, we ſhall conſider it a little more diſtinctly: 1. As to the Reaſonableneſs and Excellence: 2. The Manner and Meaſure: And, 3. The Motives and Inducements of our performing it.

Bounty to the Poor, ſhewn from the Ties of Nature.

I. THAT God has *implanted* in our Nature, and woven, as it were, into the very Frame of our Being, an *Inclination* to Acts of Tenderneſs and Compaſſion, inſomuch, that a Man muſt diveſt himſelf of Humanity, before he can reſiſt ſuch Calls and Importunities, is what we were led to obſerve in our general Conſideration of the Duty of Mercy. [g] Now the true Reaſon, why this Paſſion of Pity was born with us, and made a Part of our Conſtitution, is, that thereby we might be excited and ſtirred up to help and ſuccour all, that are in Neceſſity and Diſtreſs. Our Bowels do therefore naturally yearn at all miſerable Objects, and we cannot help, unleſs we would deface the firſt and moſt genuine Impreſſions of God upon our Souls; we cannot help, I ſay, *feeling within*, ſomewhat anſwerable, and *a-kin* to all the Miſery, that we feel *without*, and, conſequently, we eaſe our own Bowels, when we compaſſionate the Miſeries, and relieve ourſelves, when we remove the Afflictions of a Brother. [h] Thus God and Nature within us ſollicit the poor Man's Cauſe: Our own Eaſe and Satisfaction demand from us Pity and Compaſſion; and the tender Relentings and Stirrings of Humanity, which ariſe in every Man's Breaſt, do even *mechanically* incline us to Acts of Mercy and Benevolence, if we will but ſtand *neuter*, and leave Nature to her own Workings.

From our Relation to each other.

BUT, beſides the Propenſity of Nature, there is a farther Obligation to this Duty ariſing from the near *Relation*, which every Man has to the very meaneſt and moſt abject, the pooreſt and moſt miſerable of his own Kind. We are all the Workmanſhip of the ſame Hands, made of the ſame Matter, moulded in the ſame Form, and copied from the ſame Image, even that of God himſelf: For, [i] *did not he, that made me*, ſays holy *Job, make him? And did not one faſhion us in the Womb?* And as one Hand made us both, ſo has it made us ſo very near the *ſame*, that, in the main eſſential Ingredients of our Nature, we are all *one*; and therefore, in uſing him well, I am kind to

[f] Heb. xiii. 3. [g] *Duke's* Sermons. [h] *Norris's* Diſcourſes. [i] Job xxxi. 15.

to myſelf, and in feeding and ſupporting him, I ſuſtain and cheriſh a Member of my own Body: Whereas, to deny Bread to the Hungry, Lodging to the Outcaſt, and Covering to the Naked, *&c.* (in the ſtrong and elegant Expreſſion of the Prophet) is [l] *hiding a Man's Self from his own Fleſh*; nay, in the Phraſe of the *wiſe Man*, 'tis ſomething more unnatural; for while [m] *the merciful Man does Good to his own Soul*, ſaith he, *he that is cruel, troubleth his own Fleſh.*

BUT how ſtrictly ſoever we are obliged to this Duty by the Ties of Nature, yet there is ſtill a more forcible Obligation upon us from our *ſpiritual* Relation and Conſanguinity, as we are the Children of the ſame Father, born to the ſame Hopes, and *Co-heirs* of the ſame Inheritance in Light. For is it not fit, that they ſhould partake of the Bowels of Man's Compaſſion, who communicate with us in the everlaſting Mercies of God? Who are endued with the gracious Influences of the ſame Spirit, and have the Image of the ſame God, not only by *Nature* ſtamped upon them, but by *Grace* renewed within them? [n] Who are Partakers of the ſame high Calling, the ſame honourable Privileges, the ſame glorious Promiſes, and, in ſhort, have been purchaſed and purified by the precious Blood of the ſame common Saviour? Since in theſe great and ineſtimable Benefits we all communicate alike, why ſhould the ſecular Trifles of Wealth and Riches be made ſo private and particular? Eſpecially conſidering, that, as we are deſigned for a better and celeſtial Country, we are but *Pilgrims* upon Earth, and all Travellers upon the ſame Road; where, though the greateſt may appear with a coſtlier *Equipage*, and more ſplendid *Retinue*, yet ſtill he is but a *Paſſenger*, taking a Journey to the ſame Country, where the meaneſt Perſon, that ſets out with him, may perhaps be as great as he. [o] And is it not then extremely fooliſh and ridiculous, as well as barbarous and inhuman, for one in an opulent Condition to deny ſo poor a Sum, as would *defray* the neceſſary Expences of a *Fellow-Traveller*, who at his Journey's End, and in his own Country, (which from any of us is not far diſtant) has as great, perhaps a greater Eſtate; as good, perhaps better Friend and Ally, than himſelf? *and preſent Condition.*

THUS it appears from the ſeveral *Relations* we bear to each other, whether as Men or Chriſtians, that this great Act of Religion, the relieving the Poor, is a moſt reaſonable Service: And therefore we need leſs wonder, that we find *Moſes* and the Prophets, in the *Old*, and in the *New* Teſtament, our bleſſed Lord and his Apoſtles, inculcating nothing ſo often, urging nothing ſo preſſingly, recommending nothing ſo affectionately, as this. The Law was a Diſpenſation of Servility and Fear, and had no great Power to excite and improve the tender Reſentments of Nature; and yet we find God inſerting this Precept in the very Body of it: [p] *If there be among you a poor Man, thou ſhalt not harden thy Heart, nor ſhut thine Hand from thy poor Brother; thou ſhalt ſurely give him, becauſe that for this Thing the Lord thy God will bleſs thee in all thy Works.* *Job* in his own Practice and Example has ſhewn us, that Perſons of large Fortunes ſhould *not hold the Poor from their Deſire*, nor *cauſe the Eyes of the Widow to fail*; ſhould not *eat their Morſels alone, and the Fatherleſs not eat thereof*; ſhould not *ſee any periſh without Cloathing, or the Poor without a Covering*; but order their Bounty ſo, that being *warmed with the Fleece of their Sheep, his Loins ſhould bleſs him.* The Royal Pſalmiſt calls upon us [q] *to conſider the Poor*, and [r] *to diſperſe* our Riches *abroad, that the Lord may deliver us in the Time of Trouble.* The Royal Preacher exhorteth us [s] *to caſt our Bread upon the Waters*, in order to *find it after many Days*; and for this, in another Place, he gives us this Encouragement, [t] *he that hath Pity on the Poor, lendeth to the Lord; and that which he hath given him, will he pay him again:* And to mention no more, the Prophet *Micah* hath made it one of the three great Articles in the Syſtem of Religion, [u] *to love Mercy*; or as another Prophet hath explained it, [x] *that thou deal thy Bread to the Hungry, and bring the Poor, that are caſt out, to thine Houſe; when thou ſeeſt the Naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyſelf from thine own Fleſh.* *From the Word of God, both in the* Old, *and* New *Teſtament.*

WELL therefore may we expect, that in a Religion, deſigned to cultivate the tender Sentiments of human Nature, our Inſtructions ſhould be, [y] *not to lay up to ourſelves Treaſures upon Earth*, but [z] *to be rich in good Works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate*; [a] *to abound in the Grace* of Liberality; [b] *to give to every one*

[l] Iſa. lviii. 7. [m] *Barrow's* Works, Vol. I. [n] *Duke's* Sermons. [o] Deut. xv. 7, 10. [p] Pſal. xli. 1. [q] Pſal. cxii. 9. [r] Eccleſ. xi. 1. [s] Prov. xix. 17. [t] Micah. vi. 8. [u] Iſa. lviii. 7. [x] Matt. vi. 19. [y] 1 Tim. vi. 18. [z] 2 Cor. viii. 7. [a] Luke vi. 30.

that asketh; and [a] *if we would be perfect, to sell all that we have, and give to the Poor, that so we may have Treasure in Heaven.* This is that [b] *pure Religion, and undefiled before God*; this that [c] *Sacrifice, wherewith he is well pleased*; this is the Method of expressing our Love to our gracious Lord, and making him our Debtor; [d] *for verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.* What a surprisingly gracious Sentence is this? *Can a Man be profitable to God?* As *Job* asks the Question: And as *Elihu*; *if thou be righteous, what dost thou give him? Or, what does he receive at thy Hands?* Alas! *my Goodness extendeth not to thee*, is the Confession of the *Man after God's own Heart*: Yet see here the infinite Condescension of our Saviour! He has found out a Way, how we may give somewhat even to him, that is already Lord of all; be merciful to the Fountain of all Mercy, and do good even to Goodness itself; in that he places to his own Account, and graciously accepts, as done to himself, whatever we do to his afflicted Members for his Sake: And for this Reason he hath ordained, that since himself was to return to his heavenly Father, we should [e] *have the Poor always with us, that, whenever we will, we may do them good.* Them he hath left his *Representatives*, that we might never want whereupon to exercise our Love to him, even to the End of the World: And it is by Means of their Poverty, that we may make our Riches truly Blessings, as they afford us an Opportunity of employing them to the best of Purposes, and of setting forth the Honour and Love, which we always owe, and ought always to be paying to our Lord.

Why the Poor are ordained to be among us.

[f] 'Tis from no Defect then, or Failing of the inexhaustible Stores of God's Goodness, that there is such a Thing as *Poverty* among the Sons of Men. Had it been as agreeable to his infinite Wisdom, as it was easy to his Almighty Power, he might have made the same Abundance and Plenty common to all Mankind, and left no Room for the foolish Cavils against Providence, from the present unequal Distribution of the good Things of this World: Or, since it had pleased God to make the World consist, as it does, of rich and poor, he, who, through the whole Scripture declares such a tender Regard for the Poor, might supply their Necessities with his own Hand. He, that *fed* the *Israelites* in a barren Wilderness *with Angel's Food*, and Bread sent from Heaven, and preserved their Garments from wearing out, or waxing old; he, that fed his Prophet by *Ravens*, and blessed the poor Widow's Handful of Meal and Cruise of Oil, so that neither wasted nor failed, could still, (if he saw it good) without calling in the Help of the Rich, relieve all the Wants of his Creatures himself, but therefore he chuses to wave his Almighty Power, and to send Man to Man for Relief and Support, not only that he might make Trial of our Faith and Affection to him, but that he might endear us likewise to each other, and diffuse continually through the whole *intelligent* Creation a divine Principle of mutual Love. As then the Poor are the Representatives of Christ in his weak and suffering *Humanity*, so the charitable Rich, who feed and sustain them, may be said to represent him in his powerful and all-sufficient *Divinity*. They supply the Place of an extraordinary Providence: They are instead of *God* to their indigent Brethren; and, if they take Care to give every one *his Portion of Meat in due Season*, their Reward shall be commensurate to their Talents. And so we proceed to the Consideration,

The Manner wherein we are to give our Alms.

II. Of some of the Methods and Measures of performing this Duty. [g] *When thou dost thine Alms*, says our blessed Lord, *do not sound a Trumpet before thee, as the Hypocrites do in the Synagogues, and in the Streets, that they may have Glory of Men; but, when thou dost Alms, let not thy Left-Hand know what thy Right-Hand doth, that thine Alms may be in Secret.* And, indeed, he that relieves the Necessities of others out of a virtuous Principle, out of Gratitude to God, and a tender Compassion for human Nature in Distress, as he will esteem the divine Approbation more than all the Applauses of Men, so will he be very tender of making his Bounty a *Reproach*, or exposing the Poverty he relieves, by divulging his Charity; and will therefore give it *secretly* and *privately*. He will consider, that, as God has made him a *Steward* and Dispenser of his Bounty to the Poor, after his own Conveniencies, and those that depend on him are served, the Remainder belongs to them; and, in stating this Account, [h] he will not extend his Conveniencies beyond their just Dimensions, but abate what he decently can of his superfluous Expences, and of that needless Pomp and Ceremony,

[a] Matt. xix. 21. [b] James i. 27. [c] Heb. xiii. 16. [d] Matt. xxv. 40. [e] Mark xiv. 7.
[f] *Duke*'s Sermons. [g] Matt. vi. 2, &c. [h] *Scott*'s Christian Life, Part III.

Ceremony, which his Station and Character require not, and will thereupon give *liberally* and *bountifully*, He will be thankful to God for the kind Diſtinction of his Providence, for having made *his Cup to overflow*, and *given him Lands, which he laboured not, and Vine-yards and Olive-yards, which he planted not*, whilſt others remain in Poverty and Want. He ſees their Wants preſs them hard, and that the longer he delays their Relief, the longer he continues their Griefs and Miſeries upon them, and therefore he gives *readily* and *chearfully*. He conſiders his own Mortality, and the Uncertainty of human Affairs, whereby he may be deprived of the Opportunity of doing the Good he deſigns, and being not ſo well ſatisfied, that *poſthumous* Deeds of this Kind will pleaſe the *living* God, he watches all Occaſions, ſuch as Times of Sickneſs, Scarceneſs of Work, Dearneſs of Proviſion, *&c.* when Mens Wants and Neceſſities call loudeſt for Relief; and thus he gives *timely* and *ſeaſonably*. And, laſtly, becauſe the Number of miſerable People is too great for one to relieve, he conſiders where the greateſt Neceſſities, and the greateſt Obligations are, and, conſequently, gives the Preference to Chriſtians before Heathens; to thoſe of his own, before thoſe of a different Family and Communion; to good Men, before the Wicked; and to *God's Poor*, (whom the Divine Providence, by Sickneſs or Loſſes, has made Objects of Charity) to the *Poor of their own making*, whom Idleneſs, and Luxury, and Vice has reduced to Want and Miſery; and thus he gives *diſcreetly* and *prudently*.

THESE are the *Conditions*, that make the *Sacrifice* of Alms both grateful to the Receiver, and acceptable to God. But, beſides the Duty of *Almſgiving*, there are ſeveral others, ſuch as aſſiſting the Oppreſſed, releaſing the Inſolvent, and lending freely, and without Uſury, upon ſome Occaſions, that are included in our *Mercy to the Poor*, and are very proper and ſignificant Expreſſions of it. Our *aſſiſting the Oppreſſed* is enjoined by *Solomon*, in theſe Words: [k] *If thou forbear to deliver them, who are drawn unto Death, and thoſe that are ready to be ſlain*; and ſo of any other Injury or Oppreſſion, occaſioned by the Violence of lawleſs Men, *if thou ſayeſt, behold, we know it not*, excuſing an uncompaſſionate Careleſſneſs by a pretended Ignorance, *doth not he, that pondereth the Heart, conſider it? And he, that keepeth thy Soul, doth not he know it? And ſhall not he render to every Man according to his Works?* Our *releaſing the Inſolvent* from their Debt or Confinement, is what our Bleſſed Saviour has ſufficiently intimated, in the Parable of the *unmerciful Servant*, who, when his Lord had frankly remitted him a Debt, which he was by no Means capable of paying, laid hold on his poor *Fellow-Servant* for a trifling Sum; and, notwithſtanding his Submiſſions and Intreaties, hurried him to Priſon, for which he is reproached by his Lord; [l] *O thou wicked Servant, I forgave thee all that Debt, becauſe thou deſiredſt me; ſhouldſt thou not alſo have had Compaſſion on thy Fellow-Servant, even as I had Pity on thee?* Our *lending freely, and without Uſury*, is an Injunction likewiſe of our Saviour's; for, [m] *love your Enemies*, ſays he, *and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again, and your Reward ſhall be great*. But, becauſe ſome Diſputes have riſen among Divines, concerning the Matter of *Uſury*, it may not be amiſs, in this Place, to determine the Point, and ſettle its proper Limitations.

Other Inſtances of Mercy to the Poor.

THAT the *Jews* were forbidden to lend to the Poor upon *Uſury*, is manifeſt from this one Paſſage, among many others; [n] *If thy Brother be waxen poor, and fallen to decay with thee, take no Uſury of him, nor Increaſe, but fear God, that thy Brother may live well with thee*. Nay, that the ſame Prohibition was extended to the Rich, as well as the Poor, ſo long as they were *Iſraelites*, is evident from that remarkable Paſſage in *Deuteronomy*: [o] *Thou ſhalt not lend upon Uſury to thy Brother; Uſury of Money, Uſury of Victuals, Uſury of any Thing that is lent upon Uſury. Unto a Stranger thou mayeſt lend upon Uſury, but unto thy Brother thou ſhalt not lend upon Uſury, that the Lord thy God may bleſs thee in all that thou ſetteſt thine Hand unto*. We may obſerve, however, that there can be no *moral* and intrinſick Evil in Uſury, becauſe God allows them to require it of Strangers, though they were not to do it in any immoderate or exceſſive Manner, in which Senſe we may underſtand that Prohibition ſo frequently repeated, [p] *Thou ſhalt not vex a Stranger, nor oppreſs him; for ye were Strangers in the Land of* Egypt.

Uſury forbid among the Jews, *and why; but, in itſelf, not unlawful.*

* NOW the true Reaſon, why the *Jews* were permitted to take Uſury of *Strangers*, and not of their Brethren, is this, that their *Heathen* Neighbours, as [q] is plain of

[l] *Gardiner's* Sermons. [k] Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. [l] Matth. xviii. 32. [m] Luke vi. 35.
[n] Lev. xxv. 35, *&c.* [o] Deut. xxiii. 19, 20. [p] Exod. xxii. 21. [q] *Sherlock's* Sermons, Vol. I.
[q] Iſai. xxiii. 2.

of *Tyre* and *Zidon*, were *Merchants*, that improved their Money by Trade, and therefore it was fit that they ſhould pay a moderate Intereſt for it; but the *Jews*, maintaining no foreign Commerce with other Nations, had no Occaſion to borrow Money, but to ſupply their preſent Wants; and to take Advantage of the Neceſſities of the Poor, to increaſe their own Fortunes by increaſing their Neighbour's Poverty, was againſt all the Laws of Goodneſs and Charity; and therefore this Uſury, which was the only Uſury known in thoſe Days, is ſtrictly forbidden. All other Kinds of Uſury are introduced by Trade and Commerce: And though it is againſt Charity to lend upon Uſury to Men, who borrow to ſupply their Wants; yet, if Men borrow to increaſe their Trade and Fortunes, there is Juſtice and Equity in it, that the *Lender* ſhould make ſome Increaſe of his Money, as well as the *Borrower*: And, accordingly, our Bleſſed Saviour, in the Anſwer he gives to the Servant, who hid his Talent in a Napkin, ſeems to juſtify this Procedure: [x] *Thou oughteſt to have put my Money to the Exchangers, and then, at my Coming, I ſhould have received mine own with Uſury.*

THE Sum of our Enquiry is this,——That though Uſury is expreſſly prohibited under the *Jewiſh* Law, and comes ſometimes in Company with many groſs Enormities; yet having no *moral* Turpitude in it, and being not forbidden by the Goſpel, being accounted *expedient* in Matters of Trade, and to many, that have no other Way of ſubſiſting, abſolutely *neceſſary* (whatever the *Jews*, who had no Opportunities of Trafficking with Money, might be required to do) in Countries, whoſe whole Wealth and Support depend upon Commerce, and the Produce of their Money, it can never juſtly be deemed an Iniquity to make a moderate Gain thereby, provided always, that ſuch as are in Poverty and Neceſſity be not concerned. To theſe we muſt lend without Uſury, nay, to theſe we muſt lend, *hoping for nothing again:* The plain Senſe of which Precept is this, that [y] where a Perſon, under the Preſſure of great Neceſſity, ſhall come to us, and deſire to borrow ſuch a Sum of Money, as his preſſing Circumſtances require, provided we can ſpare it, and, if the Providence of God render the Perſon unable to repay us, we can diſpenſe with the Loſs of it, we ought not to refuſe ſuch a reaſonable Charity as this, or be afraid of lending, becauſe we run probably a Hazard of never being paid again; but, on the contrary, ſhould freely and chearfully ſupply him, with a Reſolution to loſe it, if God never enables him to repay us. This is the Duty; and we come now,

Except to the Poor.

Motives and Encouragements to our Bounty to the Poor. As the Pleaſure,

III. To ſome of the Motives and Encouragements to it. And, to this Purpoſe, let it be conſidered, that, of all the good Things we do, there is none that gives that true Comfort and Delectation to the Mind, as a reaſonable Refreſhment to the Wretched and Neceſſitous. For, when I ſee a Man ſtruggling with Want, and groaning under a heavy Burthen of Poverty, if I relieve him, I eaſe and refreſh my own yearning Bowels; and the human Nature within me, which is common to us both, by a Kind of *Sympathetick* Motion, exalts and raiſes up itſelf, and ſwells with a generous Pleaſure: I find an Eaſe of Mind, a Complacency of Spirit, and a ſecret irreſiſtible Joy ſpringing up in my Breaſt. All the Good, which I deſigned to ſhed abroad, and part with to my poor Brother, recoils back upon myſelf, and the Comfort I feel within, confirms me in the Truth of this Poſition of our Bleſſed Saviour, that *it is more bleſſed to give, than to receive.*

the Security;

MEN may pretend a Danger of exhauſting their Subſtance by too liberal Contributions, but let us a little conſult Experience. * Who ever knew an Eſtate impaired by Charity? By Love of our Brethren? But by Love of ourſelves, how many? By Luxury, by Prodigality, by the Love of the World, by the very Deſire of increaſing and multiplying, how many? Theſe are the *Wings*, that *Riches* moſt uſually *take to themſelves*, when they *fly away*; and then, as the wiſe Man ſpeaks, [z] *what Profit hath he, that laboureth for the Wind?* The beſt and ſecureſt Way then, to fix theſe uncertain and fleeting Things, is to lay them up where it is impoſſible they ſhould be loſt. [x] They may be loſt, while they are at Home; for while they are *at Home*, in Truth, they are *Abroad*, and at Adventures; ſailing among perilous Storms, and Rocks, and Pirates, and can never be ſafe, until they be brought to this Port, and *inſured* this Way: For the poor Man's Belly is a *Grainary* for our Corn, which can never be *exhauſted*; the poor Man's Back is a *Wardrobe* for our Cloaths, which can never be *pillaged*; and the poor Man's Pocket is a *Bank* for our Money, which can never *break* or deceive us.

WHAT

[x] Matth. xxv. 27. [y] *See* Jer. xv. 10, &c. Ezek. xviii. 7, &c. Pſal. xv. 5, &c. [z] *Gardiner's* Sermons. * *Duke's* Sermons. [z] Eccleſ. v. 16. [x] *Barrow's* Works, Vol. I.

WHAT we give to the Poor is laid up in Heaven, whither no *Thief* can climb, and where no *Moth* or *Rust* doth abide; and, therefore, in Despite of all the Fortune, all the Might, all the Malice of the World, the liberal Man will ever be rich, who has God's Providence for his *Estate*, God's Power for his *Defence*, God's Favour for his Reward, and God's Promise for his Assurance, that [y] *he who giveth to the Poor, shall not lack*; that [z] *the liberal Soul shall be made fat*; and [a] that *he who deviseth liberal Things, by liberal Things shall he stand.* [b] *Lay up thy Treasure* therefore, says the wise Son of *Syrach*, *according to the Commandments of the Most High, and it shall bring thee more Profit than Gold. Riches, that are kept, profit not in the Day of Wrath; but shut up Alms in thy Store-Houses, and they shall deliver thee from all Affliction*: Especially in the great and momentous Times of *Death* and *Judgment*, when, as the Royal Psalmist says, [c] *Blessed is he that considereth the Poor, the Lord shall deliver him in Time of Trouble; the Lord shall preserve him, and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon Earth; the Lord shall strengthen him upon the Bed of Languishing, and make all his Bed in his Sickness*: And when, as our gracious Saviour says, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Beginning of the World; for I was an hungry, and ye gave me Meat; thirsty, and ye gave me Drink; naked, and ye cloathed me; sick, and ye visited me; in Prison, and ye came unto me*: Or, at least, *in as much as ye did it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye did it unto me*; and therefore *come unto me, ye blessed of my Father.* *And Profit of it.*

[y] Prov. xxviii. 27. [z] Ibid. xi. 25. [a] Isa. xxxii. 8. [b] Ecclus. xxix. 11. [c] Psal. xli. 1.

CHAP. III.

Our Duty towards Ourselves; and,

1. *Of the Government of our Thoughts.*

THE Duty, which we owe to ourselves, seems chiefly to consist in the right Ordering and Management of the two constituent Parts of our Nature, *Soul* and *Body*, i. e. in the Direction of our *Thoughts*, [a] in the Submission of our *Wills*, in the Regulation of our *Passions*, in the Government of our *Tongues*, in the Subjection of our *Bodies*, and in the Renewal and Sanctification of our *whole Nature*. *Our Duty to Ourselves.*

I. KEEP *thy Heart with all Diligence*, is the Advice of the wise Man, [b] who, according to the current Opinion of the ancient Philosophy, taking *the Heart* for the chief Seat of the Soul, and the Instrument of its most noble Operations, sets it to signify our inward *Thoughts* and *Affections*, which we are to *keep*, or attend to *with all Diligence*, because out of them *are the Issues*, i. e. the Fruits and Effects, which appear in our Lives and Conversations. Since the Goodness or Badness of our Lives then does altogether depend upon the good or bad Government of our Thoughts and Inclinations, it may not be improper, 1. To consider what Power God has given us over these inward Motions of our Minds; and, 2. Wherein the Art of governing them does consist.

THAT God has given us some Power over the Thoughts and Affections of our Minds, cannot be disputed: But then, because some People, by the very Principles of their Make and Constitution, as others, by long Usage and frequent Trials, are better qualified for this Government than others, and, according to several Contingencies of outward Things, have, at some times, a greater Command over their Passions, than *What Power we have over our Thoughts.*

[a] The Submission of our Will we have treated of in our Duty towards God, *page* 872. [b] *Barrow's* Works, Vol. II.

at others; it cannot be expected, that any particular Reſolution ſhould be anſwerable to all theſe Caſes: And therefore all that we can do, muſt be to lay down ſome ſuch general *Propoſition*, as may comprehend moſt of them: And, to this Purpoſe, it ſeems very manifeſt,

Little or none over the firſt Motions of our Minds.

1. THAT the firſt Motions of our Minds are very little, if at all, under our Power and Dominion. [c] By the firſt Motions of our Minds, we mean thoſe ſudden Thoughts or Apprehenſions, thoſe involuntary Paſſions and Deſires, which are excited in our Minds by any *Object*, that is, at that Time, preſented to our Imaginations: And theſe we are not ſo much Maſters of ourſelves, as to be able to ſtop, even though they ſhould chance to be irregular, becauſe they are produced ſo very *quick*; they take Poſſeſſion of the Mind, before the Mind is apprehenſive of them, before the Judgment is awakened, and Reaſon alarmed to make a timely Interpoſure. Thus, upon a great Provocation, a Man of a *paſſionate* Temper cannot avoid feeling a ſudden Reſentment of Anger; upon hearing himſelf commended, a Man, that deſires to be well thought of, cannot but entertain ſome Vanity of Imagination; and, when all the Temptations are ſet before him, a Man, addicted to his Pleaſures, can hardly prevent ſome ſecret irregular Inclinations towards them. He may indeed (as he ought to do) ſuppreſs theſe Irregularities, when he perceives them riſing in his Breaſt; and by long Conſideration, and a ſerious Exerciſe of himſelf in the Ways of Godlineſs, make thoſe, that were formerly Temptations to him, in Time become none at all: But, as for the firſt Motions and Workings of his Mind, theſe he can no more prevent, than he can alter his Temper, or evade the Circumſtances that do ſurround him; and therefore the *Art* of ruling his Thoughts does not lie here.

2. AND as the firſt Motions of our Minds are excepted from our Power and Juriſdiction, ſo, from the Preſence of ſome *outward* Object, the Violence of ſome *inward* Paſſion, or the Temper and Indiſpoſition of a Man's Body, it very frequently happens, that he loſes the free *Command* of his Thoughts, and *Fancies* and Imaginations are forced upon him, whether he will or no. When a Man, for Inſtance, is under a ſharp tormenting Pain, as he cannot avoid feeling, ſo neither can he forbear thinking of it: When he is full of Grief for the Loſs of ſome dear Relation, or tranſported with Paſſion for ſome unworthy Treatment; until his Paſſions cool, and the Impreſſions, that cauſed them, are abated, it is in vain to bid him forget theſe Grievances; for the Nature of Man is ſuch, that, when it is once engaged in warm Thoughts about any Matter, it is very hard, if not impoſſible for it, to diſengage itſelf on a ſudden. The like is to be ſaid, not only in all Sorts of Diſtempers, where the Brain is viſibly diſturbed, but even in the Caſe of ſome deeply *hypochondriac* Perſons, who are often known to be haunted with a Set of Imaginations and Fancies, that deſtroy their inward Peace and Tranquillity of Mind, and yet ſuch as they can, by no Means, get quit of, tho' they deſire it never ſo impatiently; and therefore the *Art* of governing their Thoughts does not lie here neither.

WELL: But if a Man be ſuch a *Slave* to his Thoughts; if, from the Complexion of his Body, outward Objects, and inward Paſſions, Fancies and Imaginations are ſo obtruded upon him, that he cannot controul them, would he never ſo fain, the great Queſtion is, wherein does this boaſted Liberty of Thinking conſiſt? And to this we anſwer,

Wherein it properly conſiſts.

3. THAT, excepting the Caſes already mentioned, we have a Liberty of Thinking; which Liberty conſiſts in bending our Thoughts, and applying our Minds more vigorouſly to one Kind of Object, than another. Thus, of the Multitude of Objects that occur to our Minds, it is in our Power to determine which of them we will dwell upon; and, when we have pitched upon any one, it is farther in our Power to determine how long, and in what Degree we will attend to it; whether we will purſue it with the utmoſt Vigour of our Minds, or with ſome Indifference and Remiſſneſs. In this, as we conceive it, conſiſts the very Nature of our Freedom of Thinking; but then,

And wherein the Morality of our Thoughts.

4. THERE is a farther Power we have over our Minds, more eſpecially to be conſidered, becauſe, in the good or ill Uſe of it, the very Foundation of all our Virtue or Vice is laid. We cannot, indeed, in many Caſes, think always of what we would; nay, we cannot oftentimes hinder Abundance of Thoughts from taking Poſſeſſion of our Minds, whether we will or no; but this we certainly can do: We can aſſent to our Thoughts, or deny our Aſſent to them; when any Suggeſtion ariſes in our

[c] *Sharpe's* Sermons, Vol. I.

our Minds, we can observe its Nature and Tendency, and accordingly cherish, or reject it. And here it is, that the *Morality* of our Thoughts begins; according as we assent or dissent to the Motion that is made in our Minds, so will our Thoughts put on the Nature of *Virtue* or *Vice*.

WHEN any Temptations are presented to us from without, we cannot perhaps, on such Occasions, but feel an *irregular* Passion, or Inclination stirring within us; but yet, at that very Time, it is in our Power, whether we will comply with these Passions and Inclinations or not; whether we will consent to them or not; whether we will pursue them any farther or not. Now, if we do not consent to them, but endeavour to stop, and stifle, and resist them, as soon as we are aware of them, there is no Harm done. Our Thoughts, how indecent and irregular soever they were, are rather to be accounted the *Infirmities* of our Nature; the *Bruises* we contracted by our *Fall*, than any Sins of ours, properly so called. But then, on the other Side, if we consent to any wicked Motion or Inclination, that we feel in ourselves, (let it come in how it will, never so suddenly, never so unexpectedly) if we close with any Thought, that prompts us to Evil, so as to be pleased with it, to delight in it, and to think of pursuing it, 'till it be brought into Action; in that Case, we are no longer to plead our *original Corruption*; for, in that very Instant, we become *actual Sinners*, actual Transgressors of the Law of God, whose Obligation extends to our Hearts and Thoughts, as well as our outward Actions; though it must be allowed, we are not so great Transgressors, while our Sin continues in the Thought and Intention only, as when it proceeds to outward Action; for this is the Gradation wherein the Apostle has described it; [d] *Every Man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own Lust, and enticed; then, when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin, and Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth Death.*

II. THIS I take to be the true Measure of that Power and Authority, which God has given us over our Thoughts: And from hence we may, 1. In the first Place, lay it down for a certain Rule, that the Way to secure the Government of them, is to be always upon our *Watch*, and attending to the first Motions and Workings of our Minds, that whenever we find them tending to any Thing that is forbidden, we may stop and restrain them as soon as we can. We cannot indeed (as we said before) prevent irregular Passions and Desires from arising in our Minds upon sundry Occasions, but this we can do; as soon as we are aware of them, we can refuse our Consent to them, (and in that Case, it is to be hoped, they will not be imputed to us as Sins) nay, not only so, but we can restrain them from breaking out, or shewing themselves in our Words and Actions; for the Motions of our outward *Members* are all at our Command, though the first Motions of our *Minds* be not. Here therefore will lie a great Point in the Art of governing our Thoughts. [e] We cannot perhaps, for Instance, prevent a sudden Passion of Anger from rising in our Minds, upon sundry Occasions; but, as soon as we feel this Passion, we can seal up our Mouths, so that it shall not vent itself in unseemly Words; and if we withdraw the Fewel from the new-kindled Fire, it will extinguish of itself; whereas, if we suffer it to break out into bitter Speeches and Expressions, it will flame beyond Measure. The like is to be said of any impure Fancies or Desires, which may be excited in us occasionally. It was not perhaps in our Power to keep them from coming into our Minds, but it is in our Power to withdraw from the Temptation, that occasioned them, and to endeavour to direct our Thoughts to some other *Object*, or at least, not to proceed one Step in any outward Action towards the Accomplishment of them; and if we take this Course, the Disturbance of our Minds will soon abate, and we return to our *ordinary* Tempers again.

The Method of governing them.

1. By attending to them at first.

2. IF ever we desire to keep our Thoughts under due Regulation, there are two Things that we must have an especial Care to avoid, *Idleness* and *loose Company*; for both of these do strangely unhinge a Man's Mind, disarm it of that *Severity*, which is its best Defence against evil Thoughts, and expose it, as an easy Prey, to every Temptation that will attack it. Whatever therefore Mens Circumstances and Quality may be, some useful Way or other should be found out, whereby those many Hours, which, for Want of a settled Business, might otherwise be lost or miss-spent, may be expended *innocently* at least, if not *advantageously*. And, believe me, what vast Improvements in divers Parts of Knowledge might those Men make, who have Time

2. By avoiding Idleness and bad Company.

[d] James i. 14, 15.

[e] *Sharp*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

Time at their Command, and may enjoy Privacy and Solitude, when, and as long as they please! This however would be the immediate Conſequence: That by keeping the Mind continually exerciſed and employed, it would not be at leiſure to admit unlawful Thoughts into its Preſence; whereas *Idleneſs*, and having nothing to do, is the Mother of thoſe vain, unprofitable, and ſinful Fancies, wherein ſome Men ſpend their Days. Temptations, alas! too frequently come in our Way, whether we will or no, but the *idle Man* is forced to *ſeek* out Temptations for the *Shipwreck* of his Virtue; and therefore no Wonder, if, in a World ſtored with Variety of ſuch, as are ſuited to every one's Diſpoſition, the Man, that ſeeks for them, finds Abundance; and as he finds Abundance, ſo he is left naked and defenceleſs to every one that comes in his Way. *I went*, ſays *Solomon*, *by the Field of the Slothful, and by the Vineyard of the Man void of Underſtanding; and lo! it was all grown over with Thorns, and Nettles had covered the Face thereof:* For though the Words may be explained in a *literal* Senſe, yet, as it is uſual for the inſpired Penmen to deſcribe *heavenly* and *ſpiritual* Things by ſenſible Repreſentations; ſo is there no Queſtion, but that *Solomon* had a farther and more noble Deſign in theſe Words: Namely, to ſhew us, that there is nothing more apt to choak and deſtroy the *good Seed* of Religion, or to contribute to the Growth of all Manner of Sin and Impiety, than an Habit of Idleneſs.

AND truly *looſe and impertinent Converſation*, which was the other Thing we mentioned, though it looks ſomething with a better Grace, yet it is not of ſo much better Conſequence: For wherever it is much uſed, it will ſo *emaſculate* a Man's Mind, and take off the Edge and Vigour of it, as to all ſerious Concerns, that he will not eaſily get it into a good Frame again. *Evil Communications*, ſaith St *Paul*, *corrupt good Manners:* And therefore thoſe People, who ſpend a great Part of their Time in gadding up and down, in Play, in Merry-meetings, in telling and hearing idle Stories, and the like, muſt neceſſarily have their Thoughts and Inclinations of the ſame Piece, *i. e.* very frothy, very light and fooliſh, not to ſay prophane, and wicked, and *atheiſtical* too, if the Company they converſe with be of that Complexion.

3. By making Religion our chief Concern.

3. IF ever we intend to order our Thoughts to good Purpoſes, above all Things we muſt be mindful to make that the Buſineſs of our Lives, which is indeed our greateſt *Concern*, and ought therefore to be our *principal* Deſign. What that is, we need no Detail of Arguments to prove, ſince it is evident to every one, who believes he has an immortal Soul to ſave, that the great Concern of all is to approve himſelf to that God who made him, who diſpoſes of all his Affairs, and who, accordingly as he endeavours, or not endeavours to ſerve him, will make him inconceivably happy, or miſerable to all Eternity. Now, if we be ſo wiſe as really to propoſe the Service of God, and the Salvation of our Souls, as our main End, and reſolve to mind and follow it accordingly, we have made a very conſiderable Step towards the obtaining a Security to ourſelves, that the greateſt Part of our Thoughts and Affections will be *ſuch*, as are acceptable to God, and ought to be ſatisfactory to ourſelves. For ſince our Natures are ſo contrived, that they muſt always be thinking on ſomething or other, and yet are ſo contrived withal, that we think moſt on that, which is moſt in our Eſteem and Purſuit; whatever it is that we make our *main Buſineſs*, or place our chief Delight in, upon That will our Thoughts run, upon That will our Deſires, our Inclinations, our Affections be fixed. The Man, for Inſtance, that has ſet his Heart on Money, and makes it the great Buſineſs of Life to become rich, finds it ſo far from being difficult to keep his Mind ſteady to his *main Intereſt*, as he calls it, that the Difficulty lies in thinking of any other Matter. The Man, that is given up to Pleaſure and Debauch, puts no Force or Violence upon himſelf, in thinking and contriving, all the Day long, how he may bring to paſs the Gratifications of his Luſts and Appetites. Did we but then make the Service of God, and the Attainment of Heaven and Happineſs, as much our Buſineſs, our End, our Deſign, as theſe Men make Wealth and Pleaſures to be theirs, we ſhould certainly be thus affected: The common Courſe of our Thoughts would naturally and eaſily, without the leaſt Conſtraint or Violence, run upon theſe Objects. For I cannot, for my Life, apprehend what *Charms* there can be in worldly and ſenſual Things, to attract a Man's Mind; what *Fetters* there can be in them, to *bind down the Thoughts*, and tie them to themſelves, but that there are the ſame, or much greater in Virtue and Goodneſs; in the Love and Favour of

[f] Prov. xxiv, 30, 31.

of God; in a pure Conscience here, and eternal Happiness hereafter; always provided, that they are as much made the Objects of our Choice and Pursuit, as the other.

4. ANOTHER excellent Rule for the good Government of our Thoughts is, that we should live under a constant Sense of God's Presence and Inspection over us. It is impossible to enumerate the several ridiculous Fancies, wherewith the Imagination amuses itself; yet we please ourselves, that whatever the inward State and Disorder of our Minds may be, those, we converse with, know nothing of the Matter. And indeed it is wisely designed by Providence, that we cannot see one another's Thoughts; for if, notwithstanding all the Arts of *Hypocrisy* and *Dissimulation*, Men cannot, on several Occasions, forbear to render themselves distasteful and offensive; how intolerable would they appear to one another, if all their vain and aspiring, all their envious and revengeful, all their covetous and carnal Thoughts laid open without Disguise? But in the mean time, that we are so careful, not only to hide our secret criminal Inclinations, but to put on the false Colours of Virtue, *he that made the Eye, shall not he see? And, if he do see, shall not he punish?* [h] *Hell and Destruction are before the Lord, how much more then the Hearts of the Children of Men?* *4 By living under a Sense of God's Presence.*

THESE are some of the Rules, that are generally prescribed for the good Government of our Thoughts: And to give them a greater Power and Efficacy, there are some particular Exercises, proper to be recommended on this Occasion; such as reading the Holy Scriptures, and other good Books; frequent Meditation on religious Subjects; and above all, devout and constant Prayer to God, that he would be pleased to send his Holy Spirit into our Souls, in order to illuminate our Understandings, and sanctify our Wills: [i] *to search us, and know our Hearts; to try us, and know our Thoughts; to see if there be any wicked Way in us, and to lead us into the Way everlasting.*

Of Religious Meditation.

UNDER the Government of our Thoughts, may very well be reduced the particular Act or Exercise of *Meditation*, which consists in a serious Consideration of Matters relating to Religion, that are discovered and set before us, to the End, that we may receive Advantage, by fixing our Thoughts upon them, and thereby becoming more pious and holy: And, in order to explain this Duty, we shall, 1. Observe what are the proper Objects of it; and then, 2. Endeavour to recommend it to Practice, by the Consideration of its Excellence and Usefulness. *Meditation, what.*

I. MEDITATION is called by the Antients, *the Soul's conversing with itself*; its contemplating its own Nature, and reflecting upon its own Actions; and therefore the first Work, that it puts us upon, is to consider the inestimable Worth and Value of our immortal Spirits; and what the great Business, for which they were sent into this World, is: To remember, that the State we are now in, is but a State of *Trial*, in order to another World, and that therefore it nearly concerns us to know, how we are provided for it: To weigh and consider, how frail, how uncertain our Life is, *a Vapour, that appears but a little*, and then is gone; but that, after Death, most certainly comes Judgment: To represent to our Imaginations the dismal Scene of the last Day; how impartial the Judge is, before whom we must appear; and how severe the Inquisition will be into all our Actions: To ponder it in our Minds, that we shall then be consigned, either to that perfect Bliss and Happiness, which are in the *Mansions* of Glory, or to that unspeakable Woe and Misery, which is the just Reward of the Impenitent, in the *Regions* of Darkness: And because the Eternity of those two States is That, which makes the one so desirable, and the other so terrible, it will nearly concern us to be very frequent and serious in our Consideration of what it is to live for ever in the Presence of God, what *to live with everlasting Burnings.* *The proper Objects of it. Ourselves.*

THUS our own Nature and Concerns afford us Matter worthy our Meditation, and much more then may we find it in the Nature and Attributes of God: In his *God's Nature.*

[h] Prov. xv. 11. [i] Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24.

Omnipotence, whereby he created the World at firſt, and continues to maintain it in its Being: In his *Omniſcience*, whereby he not only takes Notice of all Events, but has a perfect Knowledge of them, before they come to paſs: In his *Wiſdom*, whereby he ſo governs and diſpoſes of all Things, that they ultimately redound to his Glory, and the Good of Mankind: In his *Goodneſs*, whereby he ſhews himſelf kind to his Creatures: In his *Juſtice*, whereby he ſeverely animadverts on thoſe that tranſgreſs his Laws: In his *Immenſity*, whereby he fills all Places, but is contained in none; and, in his *Immutability*, whereby he is always the ſame, without any *Variableneſs*, or *Shadow of Change*.

His Works of Creation.

THUS the *Nature* of God gives Scope for our ſublimeſt Thoughts, and moſt exalted Contemplations; and, in like Manner, his *Works*, whether of *Creation*, *Providence*, or *Redemption*, are the deſerved Objects of our Meditation. "Look up to the "Heavens, (was [k] the Advice of ſome ancient Philoſophers) and obſerve the Or- "der, and conſtant Courſe of the bright Luminaries, placed there, becauſe thoſe "illuſtrious Spectacles are viſible Arguments, and ſhining Demonſtrations of the "greater Glory of him, that made them." Look down upon the Air, the Earth, the Sea, and all the Things contained in them; obſerve their admirable Frame and Compoſition, and the excellent Ends and Uſes for which they were deſigned; nay, obſerve the Make and Contexture of the leaſt and meaneſt Animals, that vaſt Variety of their Kinds, and the wonderful Inſtinct of their Natures; [l] *how the Stork knoweth her appointed Time, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow obſerve the Time of their Coming*; and [m] *by theſe Things, that are made* and viſible, *the inviſible Things of God*, i. e. his eternal Power, and Wiſdom, and Goodneſs will be *clearly ſeen and underſtood*.

Providence.

FROM the Works of the *Creation*, we may proceed to thoſe of *Providence*, and, for ſome Time, dwell upon this comfortable Thought and Reflection, that, notwithſtanding the ſtrange Viciſſitudes, and ſurpriſing Changes, that we may obſerve, God *rules among the Children of Men*; that [n] *the Eyes of all wait upon him, and he giveth them their Meat in due Seaſon*; that *he openeth his Hand, and ſatisfieth the Deſire of every living Thing*, [o] *filling their Hearts with Food and Gladneſs*: For certainly this common and large Proviſion, which is made for Mankind, may juſtly entertain our Thoughts; and a pleaſant Meditation it needs muſt be to obſerve, how this great Family of the World is, every Day, taken Care of, and ſupplied.

Redemption.

FROM the Works of *Providence*, we may ſtill advance to a nobler *Theme*, the Work of our *Redemption*; and here we ſhall find Occaſion to cry out, with the Apoſtle, *O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wiſdom and Knowledge of God!* When we conſider, how, by the wilful Apoſtacy of our firſt Parents, we are all defiled with Sin, and thereby made liable to the Divine Wrath; how our bleſſed Saviour undertook to appeaſe this Wrath, by removing our Pollution and Defilement firſt, then our Guilt and Obnoxiouſneſs to Puniſhment, and ſo putting us in a State of Salvation and Happineſs; how, to effect this, though being the eternal Son of God, he vouchſafed to *cloath* himſelf with Fleſh, and to aſſume our human Nature; to live a poor obſcure Life, and ſuffer a painful and ignominious Death for our Sake, and in our Stead; how, by his infinite and irreſiſtible Power, he roſe from the Dead in a ſhort Time, after that, aſcended into Heaven, and thence ſent down his holy Spirit, to furniſh his Church with all Gifts and Graces; and, laſtly, how the Aſſiſtance of this Spirit, the Acceptance of our Prayers, the Favour of God, our Adoption, our Juſtification, and eternal Glory in the Manſions above, are all the bleſſed Fruits of this Redemption. Theſe are the great and aſtoniſhing Things, which even the glorious *Angels deſire to look into*; and much more then is it our Buſineſs and Employment to be thoroughly acquainted with them. And to this Purpoſe another Object of our Meditation is the *Word*, as well as the Works of God; for *there* we are entertained with thoſe ſublime *Doctrines*, thoſe divine and heavenly Truths, which are not to be found in the Volumes of other Authors. There is *Hiſtory*, the moſt ancient in the World, and on whoſe Authority we may entirely depend: There are *Precepts*, and Commands, and Rules of Life, ſuch as none of the Maſters of *Ethicks* could ever preſcribe: There are *Promiſes*, to ſolace and refreſh our Minds; there are *Menaces*, to curb our Appetites, and alarm our Fears;

The Word of God.

[k] This, as *Antoninus* tells us, (Lib. XI.) was the Advice of the *Pythagoreans*, [l] Jer. viii. 7. [m] Rom. i. 20. [n] Pſal. cxlv. 15. [o] Acts xiv. 17.

Fears; and there, in short, is every Thing, that deserves our Care and Contemplation.

THUS we have chalked out a Path for our religious Meditation, and come now to consider the great Excellency and Usefulness of this Exercise; 1. As it is a Preservative against Evil; and, 2. An Incitement to all Manner of Good.

II. IT is a severe Reflection upon human Nature, that, which the Prophet delivers from the Mouth of God, [p] *the Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib, but Israel does not know me*; does not take Notice of God, does not observe his Laws, does not obey his Precepts: All his boasted Knowledge and Prerogative of Reason does him no Good; does not make him so observant of his heavenly Master, as the *Ox* or the *Ass* are of their Feeders; and the Reason of all follows, *my People will not consider*: [q] For it is the Want of Consideration, more than Want of Knowledge, that is the great *Spring* of Men's Disorders. Few are so ignorant, as not to know, that Excess and Drunkenness are great and enormous Crimes, and yet they customarily run into these, because they will not entertain any deliberate Thoughts about the Matter. The common Swearer cannot but have heard, *that God will not hold* that Person *guiltless, who taketh his Name in vain*; and yet what he has heard proves of no Use, for Want of a serious Consideration. The *unclean* Person has frequently been told, that *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*; and yet he continues in his Lewdness, because he gives himself no Time to ponder his Actions: Whereas, did but these several Sinners consider seriously, that [r] *at the Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God, he will pour out Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, upon every Soul of Man, that doth Evil*; they durst no more stop a Thunderbolt, as it comes roaring from the Clouds, than run into these Perpetrations deliberately, and in cold Blood.

The Excellency of Meditation.

To preserve us against Sin.

[s] THE Reasons of Sin are not so strong, as to carry us to the Commission of it, with a free and voluntary Consent; but the Temptations to it are usually so *sudden*, that they hurry away our *Passions*, before *Understanding* can bethink herself to lay hold on her Reins, and interpose her Authority. Our Souls, in this Case, are like a *Ship* blown away by a sudden *Gust* of Wind, while she lies loose from her *Anchor*; whereas, had her Anchor been cast, she could have stood the Wind, and continued safe in the Harbour. Now *Meditation* is likewise casting the Anchor: It composes the Passions, and keeps the Soul steady, while she debates the Nature of the Action, that is before her, and, accordingly, as she perceives its Quality is, takes the Resolution either of pursuing, or declining it.

BUT besides the Precipitancy of our Passions, the Devil, we are told, is a great Instrument in prompting us to Wickedness: He is represented in the Parable, as [t] *the Enemy*, that sows *Tares*, the Seeds of Evil in our Minds; but then his *Seed-Time*, we may observe, is, *while Men sleep*, i. e. while they neglect the Cultivation of their Souls, and are *thoughtless*: For let Men once enter into sober Thoughts, and take *the Shield of Faith*, which is no more than the Contemplation of God's Threats and Promises in Hand, and then they have wherewithal to *quench the fiery Darts of the Devil*. He that thinks *ill*, prevents the Tempter, and does the Devil's Business for him; he that thinks *nothing*, *tempts* the Tempter, and offers him the Possession of an empty Room; but he that thinks *religiously*, *defeats* the Tempter, and is proof and secure against all his Assaults.

THE Eagerness of Passion, heightened by the Instigations of Satan, (as we find in the Case of *David*) will sometimes betray a Man, that, for the main, lives under this Guard, into the Commission of very heinous Offences; but then, his After-Reflections, and looking back seriously on what he has done, with the Help of divine Grace, will as certainly recover him: For to this the *Royal* Penitent imputes his Restoration; [u] *I thought on my Ways, I turned my Feet into thy Testimonies*; * I considered well what I had done, and how I had behaved: I made a strict Enquiry into my past Life, and then I began to chide myself for my Folly, and to bewail my Forgetfulness of God and Heaven; and thus I immediately abandoned my former Sins, and, as fast as I could, betook myself to an holy and religious Life; *I made Haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments*. And indeed, considering that Religion

To recover us from it.

[p] Isa. i. 3. [q] *Edwards*'s Body of Divinity, Vol. III. [r] Rom. ii. 5, 8, 9. [s] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [t] Matth. xiii. 25. [u] Psal. cxix. 59. * *Edwards*, ibid.

Religion has *Pleaſantneſs* in its *Ways*, as well as Glory in its End, whereas the Paths of the Wicked, beſet with Briars and Thorns as they are, lead certainly at laſt *to the Pit of Deſtruction*: It can hardly be preſumed, that Men of any competent Underſtanding ſhould fly from the one, and purſue the other with the Vehemence we find they do, would they but now and then ſtop a little in their Career, breathe a while, and take Time to reflect on their Conduct, and what *will be the End thereof*.

As therefore we deſire to ſtop up the Sources and Fountains of Sin, to reſtrain our immoderate Paſſions, and defeat the Temptations of our Enemy; to prevent the Acceſſion and Allurements of Vice, or to recover ourſelves to a State of Godlineſs, after we have unhappily fallen from it; we muſt learn the great Act of *communing with ourſelves*; and, retiring from the Hurry and Buſineſs of the World, be every now and then putting ſuch Queſtions as theſe to our Souls. *Dic anima, quo tendis, & in quod dirigis arcum?* "Tell me, Soul, what art thou doing? At "what Rate liveſt thou? And whither tends the Level of thy Actions? Haſt "thou the Glory of God, and thy own Salvation in Proſpect? Or elſe ſhooteſt "thou at Rovers, and only *beateſt the Air?* Life and Death are ſet before thee, "which then of the two deſigneſt thou to chuſe? Wilt thou purſue thy Sins any "longer, or wilt thou betake thyſelf to a Courſe of Religion? On the Side of *Religion*, there are Troubles indeed, that muſt be undergone; every complexional "Sin, as dear as a *Right-Hand* or a *Right-Eye*, muſt be parted with, and ſome Rules "of uneaſy Preſcription muſt be ſubmitted to: But then, in Balance of theſe, "there is the Favour of God, the Joy of the Holy Ghoſt, Peace of Conſcience, "Satisfaction of Mind *here*, and an exceeding great Reward in Heaven, for all "thy Labour. On the Side of *Vice*, there are Pleaſures indeed, that the World "much admires and runs into; but then they are attended with the Anger of God, "the Senſe of Guilt, Uneaſineſs of Conſcience *here*, and terminate at laſt in a "Puniſhment, not to be thought on without Horror. Here is the Option that is "ſet before thee; and therefore, if thou haſt any Reflection left, any Deſire of "Happineſs, any Averſion to Damnation, *think on thy Ways, and turn thy Feet unto "God's Teſtimonies.*"

To excite us to Virtue *and* Piety.

2. THE other Commendation of religious Meditation is, its great Tendency to the Promotion of good Actions, ſuch as relate to the Practice of *Virtue*, as well as the Offices of *Devotion*. Virtue, we are ſure, wants not its Beauty and Attractions, [x] but then its Amiableneſs is not Matter of Senſe: Its chief Benefits are diſtant and future, and the Advantages, whereby it endeavours to engage us, are ſuch, as exiſt only in Contemplation. If therefore we neglect to bring Things diſtant home to us by Thinking; if we neglect to confirm our Minds by the frequent Proſpect of Eternity, and to ſweeten the Uneaſineſs of preſent Things with the Expectation of thoſe that are to ſucceed; it is impoſſible but that Virtue ſhould loſe its Power and Attraction over us, and our Souls run looſe to the Entertainment of any Pleaſures, that more nearly beſet us: It is impoſſible but that either Deſign, or Glory, or Unwillingneſs, or Uneaſineſs, or Regret ſhould creep in, and ſully the very Offices of our Devotion. Offices of this Kind, we know, are not acceptable to God for the *outward* Work, but only for the *Spirit* and Affection, with which they are performed; for that warm Love and ardent Deſire, whereof the Fire, that was *never to go out* upon the Altar of *Burnt-Sacrifice*, in the *Jewiſh* Temple, was a very ſignificant Emblem. But now, where ſhall we get this Fire, or from whence ſhall we maintain it? There is ſurely no ſuch *Principle* to be found in our *natural* Temper, and it is Folly to expect it from mere *Infuſion*: The freeſt Irradiations of Divine Grace will never kindle it in us, without the Uſe of proper Means, and theſe Means conſiſt in entertaining good Thoughts and holy Meditations. While *I was muſing*, ſays the Pſalmiſt, *the Fire kindled*; for it is Muſing, Thinking, Meditation, that, like a Burning-Glaſs, will gather together, and amaſs the ſcattered *Beams* of Divine Bounty, which are always round about us, and, darting them into our Soul, will warm our Affections, and kindle the Fire there; which *Beams*, ſo long as they only lie ſcattered about us, as they always do to the *Unthinking*, loſe their Influence, and can never adminiſter ſo much Heat, as will make our *Altar burn*, or our *Sacrifice* ſend forth a Savour of Acceptance.

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[x] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. 3

THE Uſe and Deſign of what has been ſaid on this Subject, is to recommend the Duty of holy Contemplation, and to engage us to allow ſtated Seaſons to meditate on ſacred and religious Matters; to enter into ſerious Conſiderations concerning our future State, and the great and momentous Events of Eternity; often to aſk ourſelves, whether we are in the right Way to Heaven, or purſuing the Paths that lead to Perdition; often to demand of ourſelves, to what Purpoſe we live in the World, what we were deſigned for, why we were made; and then ſee whether we have anſwered theſe Ends in our Lives, whether we have behaved according to the excellent Rules of the Goſpel, and the holy Pattern, which *the Author and Finiſher of our Faith* hath ſet us. This ſhould be ſome Portion of our religious Exerciſe every Day: And to excite the Performance of it, let it be remembered, that, unleſs we betake ourſelves to ſerious *Meditation* now, that which *at preſent* would be a great Bleſſing to us, will *hereafter* be our Plague and Torment; when Conſcience ſhall awake out of the Sleep, in which we now detain it, and force upon us, whether we will or no, the Conſideration of what we now induſtriouſly labour to forget, our Conduct, and Proceedings in this State of Trial: When the horrid Scene of our ſad Impieties ſhall ſtart up before us at once; [y] when, being ſcourged with the Remembrance of paſt Enjoyments, and terrified with our preſent Paſſions, and groaning under the Conviction of Folly, we ſhall have our Shame and Anguiſh conſummated by Deſpair. [z] *Whoſo is wiſe will ponder theſe Things*, that, inſtead of knowing the Terrors, *they may underſtand the Loving-kindneſs of the Lord.* Motives *to it.*

Of Humility.

UNDER the Government of our Thoughts, may very properly be comprized that *Humility of Mind*, which conſiſts in a modeſt and lowly Opinion of ourſelves, our Endowments, and Acquiſitions; or in not valuing ourſelves beyond what is *due* and *juſt*, upon the Account of any Good we are poſſeſſed of, whether it be *internal* or *external*; but, contrariwiſe, in being content, that any one ſhould think meanly and diſparagingly of us; ready to ſubmit our Judgment to the Judgment of others; careful to decline all Fame and Popularity; and ſtudious to conceal our own Praiſes and Excellencies, except when either the Glory of God, or Good of our Brother, are concerned in the Publication. *Humility, what.*

UNDER this Conſideration the Grace of *Humility* is oppoſed to Pride and Vainglory; which, however indulged in the Heathen *Morals*, and accounted a Principle fitted for great Undertakings, in the Revelation of the Divine Will, is utterly exploded, and repreſented as a deteſtable Thing, both in the Sight of God and Man. [a] *Every one that is proud in Heart*, ſays *Solomon*, *is an Abomination to the Lord*; and therefore it might well follow, that *though Hand join in Hand, he ſhall not be unpuniſhed*: Whereas, [b] *to this Man will I look, ſaith the Lord, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word.* Well therefore might our bleſſed Saviour, who came to correct the wrong Notions of *Heathen Moraliſts*, as well as fulfil and improve what was contained in the *Law* and the *Prophets*, lay the Foundation of his Religion in *Humility*, and place, in the very Front of his Beatitudes, [c] *Bleſſed are the poor in Spirit*: Well might he require of his Followers, [d] *to walk in Lowlineſs and Meekneſs*; [e] *to be cloathed with Humility*; and [f] *in Lowlineſs of Mind, to eſteem others better than themſelves*; when though he was a perfect Example of all *moral* and *divine* Perfections, yet he commends himſelf chiefly to their Imitation, upon the Account of this excellent Grace of Humility: [g] *Learn of me; for I am meek, and lowly of Heart, and ye ſhall find Reſt unto your Souls.* *A* Chriſtian *Duty.*

AND indeed, [h] whether we conſider him in the Myſtery of his Incarnation, in the mean Circumſtances of his Birth, or in the obſcure Method of his Life; whether we conſider him as *emptying* himſelf of his eternal Glories, and drawing, as it were, a Cloud over his inherent Brightneſs; as forbidding the Devils, to publiſh his Divinity; Men, to declare his Miracles; and his Diſciples, to ſpeak of his *Tranſfiguration*; or as waſhing his Diſciples Feet, converſing among Sinners, and, at laſt, chuſing to die between Thieves: Theſe, and many other Inſtances of Condeſcenſion,

[y] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [z] Pſal. cvii. 43. [a] Prov. xvi. 5. [b] Iſa. lxvi. 2. [c] Matth. v. 3. [d] Eph. iv. 1, 2. [e] 1 Pet. v. 5. [f] Phil. ii. 3. [g] Matth. xi. 29. [h] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. I.

argue the moſt profound Humility, that can be imagined, and ſhew us withal the great Care, our Lord took to exemplify it upon all Occaſions. For though, of all the Virtues and Excellencies in the World, this of *Humility*, one would think, was leaſt capable of being practiſed by the Son of God; yet we may here diſcern, what rare Arts and Myſteries God has found out, to teach us this Leſſon; and may thence be led to conclude how much it concerns us to know, 1. The Reaſonableneſs and Benefits, as well as, 2. The Means of attaining a Duty, that the Divine Wiſdom has been ſo particularly ſollicitous to teach.

The Reaſonableneſs of it.

I. We uſually think it a very humbling Conſideration, to remind a Perſon of the Meanneſs of his *Original:* but what Original can be ſo mean, as to be ſprung from *nothing?* It is enough to take down the Spirit of the brighteſt *Intelligence* to conſider, that nothing was his Original, a State more vile and diſhonourable, than the *Chaos* itſelf. Now this is the Condition of Man: He had his Riſe from nothing, and derives his Pedigree, by his Mother's Side, from Darkneſs and Emptineſs; and though, by Omnipotence, he is now become *ſomething*, yet ſtill he holds his Being as *precariouſly*, as he firſt received it, and depends as much upon the Will of his Creator for his Exiſtence, as Light does upon the Sun, or the Image in the Glaſs upon the Preſence of the Body: For, if God does but turn his Face from him, and ceaſe to behold him, he immediately, and without any other Influx, relapſes into nothing. And ſhall that Being then be proud, which was once nothing, and has ſtill ſuch a natural Propenſity towards *Annihilation*, as to need only a bare *negative*, to make him nothing again? He certainly muſt forget his firſt Extraction, that can give the leaſt Admittance to Pride; and, together with that, muſt forget likewiſe the Method of his Preſervation, if he has not a moſt *feeling* Senſe of his Dependence and Inſignificancy.

The Folly and Unreaſonableneſs of Pride,

It is a ſtrong Sarcaſm upon human Pride, [k] That which we meet with in the *Royal Preacher*, where it is ſaid, '*that Pride was not made for Man, nor furious Anger for them, that are born of a Woman*; for fancy Pride where we will, it is no where ſo improper, no where ſo incongruouſly placed, as in Man: Not becauſe his *Make* is only of the common Clay, neither tempered, nor figured, nor tinged more elegantly, than that of other Creatures; as infirm, and putrid, and contemptible, as any of theirs; for this is the leaſt Part of his Abaſement: It is a ſmaller Diſgrace to his Pedigree, that [l] *Corruption is his Father, and the Worm his Mother and Siſter*, than that Sin is his *Off-ſpring*. His *Make* is but *common*, but his Depravation wholly *ſingular*: And therefore let the *Sea* be proud, whoſe Waves know their Bounds; let the *Beaſts* be proud, who live agreeable to the Laws of their Nature; the *Locuſts* and *Caterpillars*, *who are God's Armies*; the *Wind and Storm*, *that fulfil his Word*; but let not Man, the only Rebel in Nature, that ſtands diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the Creation, not ſo much by his Reaſon, as by his Guilt, the only Heir of Wrath, and Shame, and Miſery, let him not be proud; *Pride was not made for him.*

even on Account of our greateſt Accompliſhments.

"But though this Proſpect of Man be thus abaſing, yet is there not another Light "to conſider him in? Are not the Accompliſhments of Art, and Aids of Fortune, "and much more the Endowments of Wiſdom and Virtue, valuable Things, and "Matters of our juſt Eſteem? And may not the Itch of our Imagination pleaſe "and delight itſelf with theſe?" Theſe Things we allow, indeed, are juſtly eſtimable, but then we aſſert farther, that no Man ought to value himſelf for them; and the Reaſon is, becauſe they are not *his*, but God's, intruſted only to him, and for which he ſtands accountable; Treaſures and *Talents* they are, *committed to the earthen Veſſel*, but yet the Veſſel itſelf is no more than *earthen* ſtill. It is from a Prejudice of vulgar Miſtake then, that we call any Advantages, ſupervenient to our Nature, by the Name of *Acquiſitions*, as if the getting of them were imputable to the Glory of our own Counſels and Endeavours. St *Paul* plainly confutes this Notion, when he directs this Queſtion to the Boaſter; [m] *what haſt thou, that thou haſt not received?* It is God, that, to the Attainment of all *outward* good Things, gives both the *Means*, the *Uſe*, and the *Iſſue*; that, to the Attainment of all *inward* Accompliſhments, gives both the *Capacity*, the *Application*, and the *Succeſs*; that, to the Attainment of all *moral* Perfections, gives both the *Power*, the *Will*, and the

[i] *Norris's* Diſcourſes, Vol. I. [k] *Young's* Sermons, Vol. I. [l] Eccluſ. x. 18. [m] Job xvii. 14. [n] 1 Cor. iv. 7.

the *Deed*. Nothing is more frequently taught us in Scripture, than that *every good and every perfect Gift cometh from above*; that *of ourselves we can do nothing*; that *all our Sufficiency is from God*. Passages to this Purpose are very numerous, as if the Holy Spirit were more than ordinary jealous of our Incredulity in this Point. But now, if it be asked, why God chuses to *dispense* good Things to us, rather than suffer us to *acquire* them; why all our Perfections are *Gifts*, and why we are so often, and so instantly put in Mind that they are so? The Reason is given in the foregoing Place of the Apostle, *Why than dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received?* To receive, and to glory, to be obliged, and yet to be proud, is pure *Absurdity*; as absurd as it were for a Man to think himself rich, merely because he has borrowed a large Sum.

THUS, whether we consider the Original, or Corruption, the Defects, or Accomplishments of our Nature, the greatest possible Humility and Self-annihilation become our reasonable Duty; but this is not all: Our blessed Saviour, who laid the Foundation of his Religion in this spiritual Grace, has told us expressly, that [o] *except we be converted, and become as little Children, we shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; but that *he, who shall humble himself as a little Child, the same shall be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven*. By the Kingdom of Heaven, in this Place, may be intended, both the Kingdom of *Grace*, and the Kingdom of *Glory*. [p] *The Kingdom of Grace* is that sweet and gentle Government, which Christ, the Son of God, and King of Saints, does, by his Spirit, exercise over his Followers, and such as have given themselves up to his Conduct: *The Kingdom of Glory* is the future Reward and Recompence, which God intends to bestow in the celestial Mansions of Bliss, upon all those, that have persevered in their Obedience to his Commands: And so the Words import, that Humility of Mind is highly conducive to make us both truly religious here, and eternally happy hereafter. *The Benefits of Humility.*

THE Declaration, which God makes by the Mouth of his holy Prophet, is this, —— [q] *Thus saith the high and mighty One, that inhabiteth Eternity, whose Name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy Place, and with him also, that is of a contrite Spirit*: And, if we would enquire for the Reason, why the Majesty of Heaven vouchsafes this Honour to Spirits of this Complexion, we shall find, that Humility indeed is the true Foundation of Union and Commerce between God and the Soul. [r] For as it implies in its Notion a due Sense of our Want and Insufficiency; so it carries in it the whole Reason of *Prayer*, and Application, and Dependence upon God: As it implies in it a just Sense of the Divine Bounty, from whence come all our Supplies; so it carries in it the Reason of *Praise* and Thanksgiving: As it implies a Sense of our own Unworthiness, it is in Effect the same with the *Fear* of God; a Sense of our Distance, the same with the *Honour* of God; and a Sense of our Obligation, the same with our *Love* of God: Of so large an Extent is the Power and Influence of this single Virtue, that, let a Man but take Care to encourage and cultivate it, it will naturally and easily lead him through all the Offices of a religious Life. Nor will it only lead him through these, but fit him likewise for Heaven, and prepare him for the Mansions of the Blessed, where his Poverty of Spirit shall be recompensed with a Kingdom, and his Humility with a Crown; with a Crown *incorruptible*, that fadeth not away, and whose Glory and Lustre will be equal to the Measure of his Humility and Self-abasement: [s] *Humble yourselves* therefore, says the Apostle, *under the mighty Hand of God, that he may exalt you in due Time*; for [t] *whosoever shall humble himself, as a little Child, the same shall be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven*. And therefore,

II. TO come to the Means of attaining this heavenly Grace, let us frequently call to Remembrance the Words of our gracious Lord and Saviour; *Blessed are the poor in Spirit*: Blessed are they *in themselves*, as being free from Ambition and Envy, from Anger and Revenge, and all such boisterous and troublesome Passions, as make the arrogant and self-conceited Mind uneasy, and unhappy in the midst of all the good Things that this World can afford: Blessed are they *in the Sight of God*, who sees their Heart, and sees there the lovely, the amiable, the charming Virtue, he is most enamoured with; a Virtue very resemblant and agreeable to his Divine Nature, *who dwelleth on high, and yet humbleth himself to behold the Things in Heaven and* Means *of attaining it.* *To consider its Blessedness.*

[o] Matth. xviii. 4. [p] *Hornick's* Sermons, Vol. I. [q] Isa. lvij. 15. [r] *Young's* Sermons, Vol. I. [s] 1 Pet. v. 6. [t] Matth. xviii. 4.

and Earth; and, ſeeing his own Image there, he cannot but [u] *have Reſpect unto the Lowly*: Bleſſed *in the Eyes of Men*, who naturally reverence thoſe, that have mean Opinions of themſelves; and therefore the Apoſtle calls this Virtue *the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which* not only *in the Sight of God is of great Price*, but, through its own inward Excellency, commands likewiſe the Love and Reſpect of all, that behold it: Bleſſed *amidſt all the Changes and Chances of Life*; for while this Grace reigns in his Soul, however deſpiſed or abuſed by wicked Men, God's Spirit hovers over him, Angels viſit and attend him, his own Conſcience juſtifies him, and the Lord Jeſus, that Pattern of all Humility, loves him: But much more bleſſed *in the Concluſion of it*, when being tranſlated to *the City of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem*, he ſhall enter upon his glorious Inheritance, and there, together [x] *with an innumerable Company of Angels*, with *the general Aſſembly and Church of the Firſt-born, which are written in Heaven*, with *God, the Judge of all, and with Jeſus, the Mediator of the new Covenant*, live in chaſte and pure Delights for ever.

The Miſchiefs of Pride.

2. * To the ſame Purpoſe, let us frequently conſider the ſad and miſchievous Effects of Pride; that this Vice firſt brought Rebellion and Strife into Heaven, and caſt down the *Apoſtate* Angels thence; that every proud Man robs God of the Honour due to his Providence, erects new *Altars* to ſtrange *Deities*, and, by the wildeſt of all *Idolatry*, burns Incenſe to himſelf; that Pride makes Men haughty and aſſuming in their Carriage, peeviſh and perverſe in their Humour, troubleſome and contentious in Buſineſs, cavilling and captious in Converſation; and is therefore far from gaining the Love and Eſteem of others: But above all, that this is a Vice deſtructive to our Souls, as it covers our lurking Faults, and draws a Veil before our Weakneſſes and Wants; as it prevents all Repentance, and proves a certain Bar to all Improvements: For it ſhuts the Door againſt Admonition and Reproof, forbids the Advice of Friends, and ſilences the Checks of Conſcience. The moſt *ſlender* Appearances of Virtue it brings near and magnifies, the moſt *deformed* Blemiſhes it throws off, and leſſens to the Eye, ſo that Deluſion only reigns, and Truth is never received, till ſome awakening Diſpenſation does at laſt, perhaps too late, diſcover the Man to himſelf.

The Humility of others.

3. To the ſame Purpoſe, let us frequently meditate on the Saints of God, thoſe great Exemplars of Humility, that are recorded in the Holy Scriptures: How *Abraham*, who had the Honour to be ſtiled *God's Friend*, made no Difficulty to humble himſelf with the Name of [y] *Duſt and Aſhes*; how *Jacob* confeſſes himſelf *leſs, than the leaſt of God's Mercies*; how *David* acknowledges himſelf [z] *a Worm, and no Man*; how [a] the great Teacher of the *Gentiles*, who was taken up into the *third Heaven*, and had Revelations imparted to him, too glorious for human Tongue to utter, deſcends ſo low as to term himſelf [b] *the leaſt of the Apoſtles, not meet to be called an Apoſtle*, and what is more, not only *leſs than the leaſt of all Saints*, but *even the chief of Sinners*. But above all, let us ſet before us the meek and lowly Jeſus, who, [c] *though he was in the Form of God, and thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, yet humbled himſelf to the Form of a Servant, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Croſs*. And ſhall not we, for whoſe Sakes all this was done and ſuffered, give Proof of an humble and ſubmiſſive Spirit? Shall not *the ſame Mind be in us*, which was in our gracious Saviour? Yes, this is our Duty, this our Intereſt; and therefore we will ſet this Pattern always before our Eyes, and, in the conſtant Courſe of our Actions, bear it always in Mind, that Pride in him, who calls himſelf a *Chriſtian*, is perfectly abſurd, and more intolerable, than in any other Sort of Men, becauſe the Author of the Chriſtian Religion was ſo *humble*.

Of Chriſt himſelf.

[u] Pſal. cxxxviii. 6. [x] Heb. xii. 23, 24. * *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III.
[y] Gen. xviii. 27. [z] Pſal. xxii. 6. [a] 1 Cor. xv. 9. [b] Phil. ii. 6.

SECT.

SECT. I.

Of the Government of our Passions and Affections.

BY the Word [c] *Passion* we understand, either a strong *Tendency* of our Souls towards something, that we look upon as very *good*, and conducive to our Happiness; or a strong *Aversion*, and Resolution to fly from what we apprehend to be *evil* and pernicious to us: And this, on both Sides, attended with such a sensible Commotion of the Blood and Spirits, as keeps the Mind much employed upon the present Affair, to the Exclusion of every Thing else, and the Prevention, many Times, of all deliberate Reasoning concerning our Conduct. Passion, *what.*

IN this Respect therefore it differs from *Affection*, properly so called; for *Affection* is the *Desire* or *Aversion* we have to any Object, that we conceive to be *good* or *evil*, but without any bodily Disorder, and is therefore a simple *Modification* of the Mind: Whereas *Passion* is always attended with a violent Motion, in which we feel a Kind of Pain and Uneasiness, whether the Object, that causes it, be *good* or *bad*. For we find by Experience, that, in this imperfect State of our Nature, the most agreeable Passion, even that of *Joy*, has something in it, that overcomes and presses us too close; that causes an *Uneasiness* in the Midst of Delight, and is sometimes so violent, as to sink us under the Weight of more Happiness, than we can bear. *How it differs from* Affection.

FOR this Reason I presume it is, that the *Stoicks* of old looked upon all Passions and Affections (for we take them in a promiscuous Sense) as sinful *Perturbations*, destructive to the Mind's Tranquillity, and incompatible with the Character of their *wise Man*. Whereas it is plain, that the God of Nature has given us these Impressions to our great Benefit and Advantage. They are like so many Wings, whereby we are enabled to pursue, and overtake what is our Good, and conducive to our Happiness; and to fly from, and escape what is hurtful, and would tend to our Uneasiness; and are then only culpable, when they are either *misplaced* upon unworthy Objects, or excessive *in Degree*, when placed right. *Passions not sinful.*

THAT Health of Body, Competence of Fortune, the Succour of Relations, Friendships, and the like, are necessary Conveniencies of Life, cannot be denied; and therefore so much *Desire* of these Things is consistent with Reason and Religion, as is necessary to procure them; so much *Joy* in the Possession of them, as is necessary to retain them by all honest Methods; so much *Anger* at those, that invade them, as is necessary to guard them; and so much *Sorrow* at the Loss of them, as will put us upon all fit Endeavours to recover them: For, without being moved and affected with these Accommodations of Life, it is plain enough, that we should take no Manner of Care of them. Reason indeed is the proper *Arbitrator* of what is good and evil, but, when Reason has once given its Determination, the Passions are ready to lend us their Assistance. They fix all the natural Spirits, and Thoughts of the Mind strongly upon those Objects, which they excite; and, with a sudden Call, awaken all the Powers of Nature to act agreeably to their Propensions. [d] If the Object be *uncommon*, and has any Thing in it rare and wonderful, the Passion of *Admiration* fixes the Mind to consider it with strong Attention; if the Object appears to be *good*, the Passion of *Love* determines the Mind to pursue it with Vigour; if it be represented as *evil*, the Passion of *Hatred* excites us to use our utmost Skill and Force to avoid it: Amidst the Number of Dangers that do surround us, *Fear* is a very necessary Principle to keep us always upon our Guard: In a malicious and ill-natured World, *Anger* is of great Use to protect us from Injury, and make Oppressors fearful to assault us: And, while we are so apt to expose ourselves to many Grievances and Distresses, by our own Folly, it was wisely done in God, to ordain *Sorrow* to attend all these Distresses, and *Shame*, some of them, that thereby we might be awakened to renounce our Follies, from the shameful and painful Sense of them. And, in like Manner, the more pleasing Affections of Nature, such as *Hope*, and *Love*, and *Joy*, make Life more comfortable, and the Troubles of it more tolerable, *Useful.*

[c] *Bragge*, on the Passions. [d] *Clagget's* Sermons, Vol. II. [e] *Watts*, on the Passions.

as well as give a grateful Reliſh and Delight to all the difficult Duties of Virtue and Godlineſs, by their being mixed up in our Conſtitution.

Were inherent in Chriſt,

OF ſuch ſingular Uſe to the Purpoſes of Life are the Paſſions and Affections, both *pleaſant* and *painful*, which God has implanted in our Nature; and therefore we need leſs wonder, that we find our bleſſed Saviour, in whom the Perfection of it was conſpicuous, expreſſing, upon all Occaſions, the ſame Love and Deſire, the ſame Anger and Averſion, the ſame Fear and Hope, and the ſame Sorrow and Joy, which we find in ourſelves; with this only Difference, that what in us is ſo often exorbitant, in him was always free from any irregular Perturbation: For [f] *it behoved him*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *to be made in all Things, like unto his Brethren*; [g] *to be touched with the Feeling of our Infirmities, and, in all Points, to be tempted like as we are, yet without Sin, that he might be a merciful, as well as a faithful High-Prieſt, in Things pertaining to God.*

and ſhall abide with us in our glorified State.

IT is vain and abſurd Advice therefore, which ſome *Sages* have given us, to endeavour to ſuppreſs our Paſſions, by ſetting one to depoſe and deſtroy another: For, beſides the perpetual Tumults, that this Method would occaſion, our Paſſions cannot be deſtroyed: They are inherent in our Nature; they are indelible and inſeparable from it; inſomuch [h], that even in the World of Spirits, when our Souls ſhall be in a State of Separation, (much more, when our Bodies ſhall be re-united to them at the Reſurrection) we ſhall have ſuch joyous or dolorous Perceptions, as are ſuitable to the State and Condition we are in, whether happy or miſerable; and theſe Perceptions will be continually increaſing to all Eternity, as the Cauſes and Objects of them make new and ſtronger Impreſſions. In one reſpect indeed, theſe Impreſſions cannot ſtrictly be called *Paſſions*, becauſe there can be no extraordinary Commotion of the Blood and Spirits, in a State, wherein even our Bodies ſhall be *ſpiritualized*; yet there is no Doubt, but that we ſhall be infinitely more affected with the Objects of the *other* World, whether good or evil, and thereby feel either ſuch Confuſion and Diſorder, or ſuch Joy and Delight in our Souls, as will make us, beyond Compariſon, more happy, or more miſerable, than it is poſſible for us to be in *this*. It is not our Paſſions then that we are to deſtroy; for that we cannot: They will laſt, the chief of them at leaſt, will laſt as long as we have our Being, and be inſtrumental to our future, as well as preſent, happy or unhappy Condition; but it is the Extravagancy of them, that we are to reduce to good Order, and bring under the Government of Reaſon and Religion: And to this Purpoſe we ſhall obſerve, 1. What it is to regulate our Paſſions and Affections; 2. The great Benefits and Advantages of doing this; and 3. What Rules and Conſiderations may be conducive hereunto.

To regulate our Paſſions is to place them upon proper Objects.

I. THOUGH our Paſſions and Affections, eſpecially in the Riſe and firſt Workings of them, are very little ſubject to the Command of our Will; yet they depend, in ſome Meaſure, upon the Perceptions of our Minds. [i] We are ſo conſtituted by Nature, that, as ſoon as we form the Idea of certain Objects or Events, our *Deſire* or *Averſion* will immediately take the Alarm; and, conſequently, our Affections muſt very much depend upon the Opinions we form concerning any Thing that occurs to our Minds, its *Qualities*, *Tendencies*, and *Effects*. Thus *Love* is occaſioned by the Conception of *good* Qualities, *Hatred* by the Apprehenſion of the contrary in any Object; *Fear* ariſes from the Opinion of Power and Inclination to hurt us; *Pity*, from the Senſe of another's undeſerved Miſery; and *Shame*, from the Suppoſition of another's Contempt of us. A great Part therefore of the Government of our Paſſions will conſiſt, in forming right Notions of what we call *Good* and *Evil*: For, if we are miſtaken herein, and look upon that as a great Good, which is in Reality a deſtructive Evil, or that as a formidable Evil, which is, in Truth, a very valuable Good; it is plain, that our Paſſions will be moſt wretchedly miſplaced, and as we ſhall love, and deſire what we ſhould by all Means avoid, ſo ſhall we hate, and fly from what deſerves our Love and Purſuit; and, in Conſequence of this, we ſhall inevitably and ſpeedily bring Ruin upon ourſelves, by thoſe very Methods, which we thought would have made us happy.

To reſtrain them from being exceſſive.

THE only Way then to prevent all this Miſchief is, to begin upon a new Bottom, to go upon new Principles of Action; to rectify our Notions of Good and Evil, to engage our Affections upon their proper Objects, and, even where they are laudably placed, there to reſtrain them from being *exceſſive*. To this Purpoſe, we muſt not rejoice at Paſſages,

[f] Heb. ii. 17. [g] Ibid. iv. 15. [h] *Bragge*, on the Paſſions. [i] An Eſſay, on the Nature and Conduct of the Paſſions and Affections.

Passages, that should be resented with Grief; nor delight in Things, which we are bound to detest; nor be angry at Things, wherewith we should be pleased; nor be too eager and hot in the Pursuit of any worldly Advantage, too much transported, when we have attained it, or too much concerned, when we are disappointed of it. *The Kingdom of God and his Righteousness* are what we must *first of all* seek; God we must above all Things love; *publick* we must prefer before *private* Good; never be *angry* without a just Cause; never *resent* an Affliction beyond its Weight: In Matters of worldly Joy, never be greatly *transported*; and, on Occasions of worldly Grief, never be *dejected* beyond Measure.

To govern them all.

THUS to place our Affections upon proper and deserving Objects, and to make them commensurate to the Value of the Objects, upon which they are engaged, is a great Step towards our Regulation of them: [l] But then we must remember, that *all* our Affections, the *merry* and *chearful*, as well as the *painful* and *angry* ones, are to be kept under this Controul, that the Mind may not be too much depressed with *the latter*, nor foolishly elated and transported with the *former*. For he only is the Man, that may be truly said *to rule his own Spirit*, who neither sinks under Affliction, nor is puffed up with Prosperity; who is not only secure from being fretted with grievous Anger, and torn with Revenge and Envy; but is moreover not enslaved with Lust, nor lifted up with Pride, nor estranged from God by the *Idolatry* of Covetousness, and the bewitching Love of the sensual Pleasures: Who, in short, has all his Passions under an *habitual* Governance, being at all Times provided against *desiring* insatiably, and *grieving* immoderately, and *being angry* unreasonably; at all Times prepared against all Accidents, and armed against all Temptations, by long Consideration, much Resolution, and great Experience of himself. And so we proceed,

The Mischiefs of not ruling our Passions, &c.

II. To consider some of the Benefits and Advantages of ruling our Passions in this Manner. The wise Man has a very remarkable Proverb; [m] *He that has no Rule over his own Spirit, is like a City that is broken down, and without Walls*; a City in this Condition will be liable, at all Times, to be entered by any Army, that beleaguers it; and what Havock an Enemy, with this Advantage, may be enabled to make, is no great Difficulty to imagine: And, [n] in like Manner, as long as we live in this World, there will be Provocations, Temptations to Lust, and Revenge, and Envy; there will be Crosses and Disappointments; there will be doubtful and suspected Sayings; there will be Fewel for our Passions administered in great Abundance, wherever we converse, or have any Business to transact: And therefore for a Man to have *no Rule over his Spirit*, is to be exposed to the perpetual Torment either of furious Wrath, or gnawing Envy, or bitter Sorrow, or miserable Fear, or impatient Desire, *&c.* which, besides the Uneasiness, they give to the Mind, do seldom fail to shake the Constitution of the Body; to waste the Flesh, and sour the Blood, and poison the Spirits; and by that Means impair the Health, bring on Diseases, and shorten the Compass of Man's Life. But well were it for us, if the Consequence of unruly Passions were only felt in this Life: The sad Consideration of all is, that, by the Influence of these, we contract a vast Heap of Guilt, and are liable to the angry Justice of God, whose Authority we all the while contemn, and whose just and holy Precepts we break: For every Excess of Passion, and every wrong Use of our Affections are so many Violations of the Laws of God, which, without a sincere and timely Repentance, will make all, that are guilty of them, endlessly miserable in the World to come.

The Benefits of doing it, as to Peace of Mind.

ON the contrary, he, who has got the Rule and Dominion over his Passions and Affections, is like *a City, whose Walls* are compleat, and so regularly fortified, that they despise the rudest Assaults of the most desperate and enraged Enemy; or rather is like the Steddiness of a Rock, which holds its Place, and is immoveable, though never so violent and boisterous Waves beat furiously against it. The Blandishments of Sense are no Allurements to him, because he has learnt [o] that external Pleasures are short and transitory, leave no agreeable Reflection, and are no Manner of Advantage to us, when they are past. The Disappointments of Life make no uneasy Impression upon him, because he remembers, that all Things of this Nature are under the Appointment of wise Providence, which in other Respects has been abundantly bountiful to him, and [p] *shall we receive Good at the Hand of God, and not*

[l] *Clagget*'s Sermons, Vol. II. Nature and Conduct of the Passions.
[m] Prov. xxv. 28.
[n] *Clagget*, ibid.
[o] An Essay, on the
[p] Job ii. 10.

not receive Evil? The Apprehenſion of Pains ſits light upon him, becauſe he conſiders, that, if they be violent, they will probably be ſhort; if not, they are mixed with long Intervals of Eaſe, and that, when they are quite paſt, they leave no unpleaſant Reflection: Nay, the very Proſpect of Death, of a violent and unnatural Death, for the Sake of Righteouſneſs, loſes its Terror, upon Thoughts of the Honour and Approbation to be expected from God, and good Men, as well as their own Conſciences, if they continue firm; and, on the contrary, the Remorſe, Shame, and Fear of future Puniſhment, if their Hearts ſhould fail them, when they come to the Conflict, and have not Courage enough *to reſiſt unto Blood*.

And the Offices of Religion.

THUS is the Man, who, by Reaſon and Reflection, has taught himſelf the Art of ruling his Paſſions, to all the Temptations, both of Pleaſure or Pain, that do everywhere ſurround him, inacceſſible. And, if we proceed to the more immediate Offices of Religion, we ſhall find that the Thing, which occaſions the Practice of Virtue and Piety, to be ſo uneaſy and irkſome to us, is not ſo much their Contrariety to the Temper of our Minds, as the ill Uſe we have made of our natural Powers, and their Pre-engagment to Vice: Becauſe, when we are once come to ourſelves, and have reduced our Affections to their natural Order, Religion then will become agreeable to us, and the Service of God our *perfect Freedom*. For [q] how plain and ſmooth will our Way then lie before us, and what inconceivable Delight ſhall we take in *walking in it*, when, by the Grace of God, and the Aſſiſtance of his good Spirit, we are come to that happy Paſs, as to have no Errors or Extravagancies in our Paſſions and Affections, but find all their Motions regular and right: When we ſhall *admire* and *love*, *deſire* and *hope* for nothing with great Earneſtneſs, but to be like God, and his Divine Son, our bleſſed Redeemer, in Purity and Holineſs *here*, that ſo we may become capable of the bliſsful Enjoyment of them *hereafter*: And, in the mean Time, *rejoice* in nothing ſo much, as in the Teſtimony of a good Conſcience; *hate* nothing ſo much as Sin, which indeed is the greateſt and moſt deſtructive Evil; *dread* nothing ſo much, as to be ſurprized and overcome by it in any Inſtance; and find ourſelves never ſo deeply affected with *Sorrow* and Compunction of Spirit, as when we have been ſo unhappy, as to be betrayed into it; When our Paſſions, I ſay, are brought into this Courſe and Channel, they will flow ſilently and ſmoothly on, and ſerve, like Oars and Sails, to bring us to the Enjoyment of our *ſupreme Good*; which we ſhall then purſue with Vigour, but without Perturbation; and with a *ſwift* and *even* Motion, without the extravagant Excurſions, and violent Agitations and Dangers, that attend *Hurricanes* and *Storms*. And therefore,

Rules to this Purpoſe.

III. To lay down ſome Rules for the Acquiſition of this good Government of our Paſſions, one of our principal Cares muſt be, to reſiſt them in the Beginning, before they become inordinate; to check and rebuke all malicious and revengeful, all unclean and laſcivious, all covetous and repining Thoughts, at their firſt ſtarting up in our Minds; becauſe there is no dallying with corrupt and impure Imaginations, nor any knowing how *great* a Fire, *a ſmall Spark* of this Nature, when let alone, *may be able to kindle*. To the ſame Purpoſe, it may be adviſeable, [r] to inure ourſelves to croſs our Paſſions, when there is no Danger, and to reſtrain our Appetites ſometimes from ordinary and lawful Enjoyments, that we may do it with more Eaſe, when dangerous Temptations ſhall aſſault us: And withal it will be neceſſary to fly all Occaſions, that may incenſe the Paſſion, whereunto we are naturally inclined: For *can a Man take Fire in his Boſom, and his Cloaths not be burnt?* Or, if he willingly goes into the Company of infected Perſons, can he blame any but himſelf, if he falls into their Diſeaſes? Our more particular Vigilance muſt therefore be employed againſt *that Sin, which does ſo eaſily beſet us*; againſt that Paſſion, which we muſt have leaſt in our Power, becauſe it ariſes moſt from our Complexion; always remembering to make it our ardent Supplication to God, that he, *who giveth Wiſdom liberally, and upbraideth not*, would teach us the Wiſdom of governing our Paſſions, and, by the Strength and Aſſiſtance of his bleſſed Spirit, give us the Victory over them; that, paſſing our Lives in all Peace and Quietneſs, we may, in the Concluſion of them, be found * *meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, and to be conducted into that happy Place, where the

[q] *Bragge*, on the Paſſions. [r] *Medi's* Works, Book I. * Col. i. 12.

the *War between the Law in our Minds*, and *the Law in our Members*, between the Dictates of our Reaſon, and the Propenſities of our Paſſions, will expire in an everlaſting Peace.

Of Meekneſs.

OF all the Paſſions that God has implanted in our Nature, that, which occaſions the greateſt *Perturbation*, and is therefore more peculiarly called *Paſſion*, is *Anger*. Anger however, as [t] we had Occaſion to obſerve before, is not always culpable: It is only ſo indeed, when it either ariſes from an unwarrantable Cauſe, or proceeds to an exceſſive Degree; and this the Evangelical Grace of *Meekneſs* is deſigned to reſtrain: For Meekneſs is that Temper or Diſpoſition of Mind, whereby a Man ſo moderates and commands the Paſſion of Anger, as not to be carried to any ſuch Exceſs of it, as may either diſcompoſe himſelf, or injure his Neighbour. After therefore we have, 1. Shewn the Nature and Unreaſonableneſs of this Duty; we ſhall, 2. Suggeſt ſome Conſiderations, that may be of Uſe to enforce the Practice of it. *Meekneſs, what.*

I. [t] AMONG all our natural Paſſions, there is none, wherein both our own and our Neighbour's Happineſs is ſo often, and ſo much concerned, as in That of Anger; *So often*, becauſe it is a Thing of daily Incurſion; and *ſo much*, becauſe it endangers the Strength and Stability both of *private* and *publick* Peace, and, conſequently, ſuch a due Moderation of this Paſſion, as may ſecure both, is a very conſiderable Inſtance of that *Charity*, which the Apoſtle tells us is the *fulfilling of the Law*. The *Jewiſh* Law indeed, which admitted of a *Retaliation* of Injuries, made little or no Proviſion for this Virtue, which was equally excluded from the Syſtem of *Heathen Morals*; but our bleſſed Saviour, who came to advance human Nature to its utmoſt Perfection, makes Humility and Meekneſs the two great *Fundamentals* of his Religion. *Come unto me*, ſays he, *and learn of me*; but what are we to learn? Not to make Worlds, not to cure the Sick, not to reſtore Sight to the Blind, or Life to the Dead; but learn of me; for *I am meek, and lowly in Heart*. But why did our Lord propoſe theſe Virtues only to our Imitation? Was it becauſe he had no other, or becauſe he excelled in theſe above the reſt? In him dwelt the Fulneſs of the Godhead, which is not conſiſtent with the Abſence of any one Virtue; and though, as to the *outward* Exerciſe, he might be more remarkable for one, than another, according as Opportunities or Circumſtances might require; yet, as to the *inward* Habits and Diſpoſitions themſelves, he was equally perfect in them all; and therefore the Reaſon, why he recommends only theſe two to his Followers, muſt be partly becauſe he was the only Maſter, that could teach them, and partly becauſe there was ſome ſpecial Excellency in the Virtues themſelves, above any other of the Chriſtian Law; and therefore we find him comprizing the whole under theſe two Articles, [u] *Take my Yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek, and lowly in Heart.* *A* Chriſtian *Virtue.*

AND indeed, if we attend a little to the Story and Proceſs of his Life, we ſhall ſoon ſee, that never was any Man's *Meekneſs* ſo tried, as was his. For as the real Excellence and Dignity of his Perſon heightened every *Affront*, and rude Treatment of him, to an incomparable Degree; ſo did the outward Lowneſs and Meanneſs of his Condition expoſe him to an infinite Number of them, and yet, notwithſtanding the Number and Heinouſneſs of his Provocations, we do not find, that he was ever in the leaſt diſcompoſed, or put into a Paſſion by them. *Moſes* indeed was a Man ſo very eminent for this Virtue, that the Scripture gives us this Character of him, [*] *that he was very meek, above all the Men, which were upon the Face of the Earth*; and yet we find, that, with all his Meekneſs, he could not bear with the Perverſeneſs of that untractable People, the *Jews*, who, as the Pſalmiſt's Obſervation is, [x] *ſo provoked his Spirit, that he ſpake unadviſedly with his Lips.* Now our bleſſed Lord had to deal with the ſame Generation of Men, but under infinitely greater Prejudices and Diſaffections: From them he ſuffered more Indignities, than ever could be offered to *Moſes*; and yet none of their ill Uſage raiſed any angry Re- *The Example of Chriſt herein.*

 ſentment

[t] *See* Page 422. [u] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. I. [u] Matth. xi. 29. [*] Numb. xii. 3. [x] Pſalm cvi. 33.

ſentment in him, though they did it in thoſe, that ſtood by, and beheld his Abuſes. Thus the Unkindneſs of the rude *Samaritans* could not ſo much as ſtrike a *Spark* into his Divine Breaſt, when, at the ſame Time, it made his two zealous Diſciples, *James* and *John*, kindle to that Degree, as to deſire [y] *Fire from Heaven*, to conſume them: And, in like Manner, the rough Seizure of his ſacred Perſon by the Soldiers could not extort from him ſo much as an angry Look, when yet the very Sight of it [z] made his warm Diſciple draw his Sword. *If I have ſpoken Evil, bear Witneſs of the Evil; but if well, why ſmiteſt thou me?* is all the Anſwer, that he returned to the inſulting *Officer*, who ſtruck him. What could be ſaid more mild or diſpaſſionate? What could argue a more ſedate and well-governed Spirit? His greateſt Apoſtle, when under a leſs Provocation, had not this Command over himſelf; for, being not actually ſmitten, but only ordered by the High-Prieſt to be ſo treated, he returns him this ſharp and ſevere Anſwer, *God ſhall ſmite thee, thou whited Wall; for ſitteſt thou to judge me after the Law, and commandeſt me to be ſmiten contrary to the Law?* There is not indeed any Thing in this Anſwer, but what may be juſtified by the Oddneſs of the Provocation; but yet we cannot but perceive a great Difference between the Behaviour of the Maſter and the Diſciple, though this is far from being the higheſt Inſtance of his Meekneſs. To have a due Eſtimate of that, we muſt look upon him under the Shame, and Diſhonour, and Torments of the Croſs, encountering at once with the Pains and Agonies of Death, the Contradictions of Sinners, and the Vengeance of Almighty God, and all this, without any the leaſt Shew of Impatience or Diſcompoſure; and then we ſhall find the Prediction of the Prophet verified to the full; [a] *He was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his Mouth; he was brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearers is dumb, ſo he opened not his Mouth.*

The Excellency of this Virtue.

AND it was fit indeed that our bleſſed Saviour, both by his Precept and Example, ſhould recommend a Virtue to us, which proceeds from a Greatneſs and Generoſity of Mind, and is itſelf a noble Atchievement; for [b] *he that is ſlow to Anger, is better than he that is mighty, and he that ruleth his Spirit, than he that taketh a City:* A Virtue, [c] which is an Enemy to Pride and Arrogance, to Contention and Turbulency, to Moroſity and Peeviſhneſs, to Reviling and Cenſuring, and whatever is the Product of a bitter and cholerick Spirit: A Virtue, which is fitted to all the Purpoſes of our Lives, and requiſite in all Degrees and Conditions of Men; in *Superiors*, that they may rule with Affection; in *Inferiors*, that they may behave with Submiſſion; in *Parents*, that they *provoke not their Children to Wrath*; and in *Children*, that they *obey their Parents in all Things*; in the *Rich*, that they be not puffed up with Pride; in the *Poor*, that they do not ſwell with Envy; in thoſe of *mature* Age, that they be not moroſe and froward; in thoſe that are *young*, that they ſhew Reverence to their Elders; and, in ſhort, in all, that they bring Honour to their Religion and Holy Profeſſion. This is a Virtue, which, *in the Sight of God, is an Ornament of great Price*; which gains us the Good-will and Favour of Men; which conquers the Malice and Prejudice of Enemies; which allays all Storms and Tempeſts in our Breaſts; which gives us the quiet Enjoyment of ourſelves, and a true Reliſh of what we poſſeſs; and in this Senſe we may properly enough underſtand the Words of our Saviour, [d] *Bleſſed are the Meek, for they ſhall inherit the Earth.*

THE *Meek* indeed, we may generally obſerve, are far from having the largeſt Share of this World's Plenty: It is to the bold and daring, the furious and boiſterous, that Things of this Nature are uſually allotted: *Theſe are they, that proſper in the World, and have Riches in Poſſeſſion*; nor can it be imagined, that our bleſſed Lord, who himſelf made Choice of a State of Poverty, who recommends ſo earneſtly a Contempt of the World, warns us of the Danger of Riches, and diſſuades us from laying up Treaſures on Earth, ſhould ever pronounce a meek Man bleſſed, merely for having Abundance of Wealth. The Senſe of the Words therefore muſt relate to the *Manner* of poſſeſſing, rather than the *Greatneſs* of the Poſſeſſions, and ſo muſt import,——that the meek Man ſhall enjoy what he has, be it little, or be it much, with Comfort and Satisfaction of Mind, being prepared to acquieſce in every Diſpenſation of Providence, and to confine his Wants and Deſires to his preſent Circumſtances; whereas thoſe of a contrary Diſpoſition, though they may *poſſeſs* a great deal, may yet

[y] Luke ix. 54. [z] Matth. xxvi. 51. [a] Iſa. liii. 7. [b] Prov. xvi. 32, [c] *Edwards's Body of Divinity, Vol. III.* [d] Matth. v. 5.

yet be truly said to *enjoy* little or nothing: And this seems to be the Sense of the *Psalmist*, when, in Words directly parallel to these of our Lord, he tells us, that [e] *the Meek-spirited shall possess the Earth, and be refreshed in the Multitude of Peace*, *i. e.* they have Pleasure and Content in whatever they have; for, as he immediately subjoins, *a small Thing, that the Righteous has, is better than great Riches of the Ungodly*. Which leads us to observe,

II. WHAT may be of Use to engage the Practice of this Duty. And to this Purpose, it will be requisite for us frequently to consider, *where* we are, *whom* we converse with, and *what* is our main Concern. We live in a troublesome and tempestuous World; we converse with Men of corrupt Natures, and evil Dispositions; our main Business and Concern lies in a distant and heavenly Country; and therefore we must not affect Ease and Tranquillity here, we must not expect *to gather Grapes from Thorns, or Figs from Thistles. It is impossible but that Offences should come*; but then, when they come, we have wherewith to rebate their Sting, by considering, that this is the common Fate of human Life; that every Thing is sent upon us by the Providence of God; and that by his wise Appointment it is, that thro' *many* Trials *and Tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. *Means of attaining it.*

To the same Purpose, it may be proper frequently to reflect on the horrid Deformity, and mischievous Consequences of immoderate *Anger*; [f] what Agonies of Mind, what Disorder of Spirits, what desperate Absurdities of Behaviour, what Fury and Phrenzy it hurries Men into; what rash Oaths, what horrible Imprecations, what blasphemous, nay, what senseless Profanation of God's most holy Name; what Virulence of Expression, what base divulging of Secrets, what Injuries and Violations of intimate Confidences, which are sure to be contemned ever after, but, perhaps, can never be repaired again. These Things are so notorious, and so incident to the Passion of Anger, that I verily believe, no Man ever saw another violently transported with it, who did not either pity or despise him; and that none was ever so transported himself, who did not commit something, whereof he did not find sufficient Cause, upon second Reflection, both to repent and be ashamed of. But, on the other Hand, [g] how calm is the Mind, how serene the Countenance, how mild the Language, how engaging the Behaviour, how sweet the Sleep, how grateful the Repast, how prosperous the spiritual Estate, how happy and delightful the whole Life of him, that has brought his angry Passions under Subjection; that is at Peace with himself, and at Peace with the whole World; that is neither devising Mischief against others, nor suspecting any to be contrived against himself! So true is the Observation of the wise Man, that [h] *he, who is slow to Anger, is of great Understanding, but he, that is hasty of Spirit, exalteth Folly.*

BUT, above all, the Folly or Wisdom of these different Tempers will then appear, when this short Scene of Things shall be shifted; when we shall be removed into an immortal World of Spirits, and have, each of us, our Souls sorted into their proper Place and Company; when the Proud and Arrogant, the Peevish and Quarrelsome, shall be consigned to the sad Abode of Spirits of their own Complexion, there to wrangle out a long Eternity in perpetual Feuds and Contentions, in perpetual vexing and tormenting one another; while the Meek and Gentle, the Quiet and Peaceable, shall be received into the Society of heavenly Lovers, into the Regions of Peace and Tranquillity, and into the Bosom of that blessed Jesus, who, in our own Nature, set us the Example of this most excellent Virtue, *that we might follow his Steps*.

To this Purpose therefore let it finally be considered, that, how mean and despicable a Figure soever the Man of a meek and *pacifick* Temper may seem to make in this World of Tumult and Confusion; yet [i] the Time will come, when Persons, that have raised the greatest Noise and Bustle, those Sons of *Thunder* and restless Intrigue, that have laid the World waste, and *turned it upside down*, to gratify their boundless Ambition, and ungoverned Appetites, shall take up the Sentiment of the wise Son of *Syrach*, and say, *This is he, whom we had sometimes in Derision, and for a Proverb of Reproach, i. e.* looked upon him as an easy and good-natured Fool: *We Fools*, then it shall be, *accounted his Life Madness, and his End to be without Honour; but how is he now numbered among the Children of God, and his Lot is among the Saints!*

Of

[e] Psal. xxxvii. 11, 16. [f] *Stanhope*, on the Epistles and Gospels, Vol. III. [g] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. I. [h] Prov. xiv. 29. [i] *Blackhall*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

Of Contentment.

Contentment, what.

UNDER the Regulation of our Paſſions and Affections, we may not improperly place the *Art of Contentment*, [k] which conſiſts in ſuch an Acquieſcence and good Pleaſure in that Condition of Life, wherein the Providence of God has placed us, as will not ſuffer the Deſire of Change to trouble our Spirit, and diſcompoſe our Duty; as will engage us to entertain all Occurrences of Life, and even the ſevereſt Diſpenſations of Heaven, not only with Patience and Submiſſion, which was a Point inſiſted on [l] before, not only with Calmneſs and Compoſedneſs, which may proceed ſometimes from a Stupidity of Temper, but with a real Complacency and Chearfulneſs of Mind; [m] *counting it all Joy*, as the Apoſtle terms it, *when we fall into divers Temptations*; becauſe we *know the trying of our Faith worketh Patience*, and, if *Patience have her perfect Work*, ſhe will make us *perfect and entire, wanting nothing*.

To diſcover the *Reaſonableneſs* then of being habitually well-pleaſed with our State and Condition, of what Kind ſoever it be, let us,

The Reaſonableneſs of it.

From the Conſideration of God's Bounty.

I. LOOK *up to God, in whom we live, move, and have our Being*; and in him conſider the ample Proviſion he has made for our Neceſſities. Our Neceſſities indeed, if we conſult Nature, are not many; [n] *the chief Things for Life*, as the Son of *Syrach* computes them, *are Water, and Bread, and Cloathing, and an Houſe to cover Shame*; and of theſe the Generality of Mankind are not deſtitute: [o] For tho' they may not have them poured into their Laps by Birth-right and Inheritance, yet they have them by their daily Induſtry and Acquiſition, which, perhaps, is as good a Tenure. The great Apoſtle St *Paul*, tho' he might have exacted a Maintenance of the Church, in Behalf of his *Miniſtry*, yet thought himſelf rich enough, while he was able to work for his Living. He rejoices, indeed, in the Love of the *Philippians*, who had been ſo kind, as to make a *Contribution* for him; but he takes Care to inform them, that he did not rejoice ſo much, becauſe they had *made him rich*, as becauſe they had done their Duty, and were *rich in good Works*: [p] *Not that I ſpeak in Reſpect of Want*, ſays he, *for I have learned, in whatſoever State I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound; every-where, and in all Things, I am inſtructed, both to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound, and to ſuffer Need: Nevertheleſs, ye have well done, in that ye did communicate with my Affliction.*

THE moſt diſconſolate State is that of Sickneſs or Old-Age, in Conjunction with Poverty; [q] but even here God has made a competent Proviſion, by aſſigning all ſuch, as have this double Load upon them, to the Care and Relief of the *Rich*. Theſe he has made his Proxies and Repreſentatives upon ſuch Occaſions; and tho' many of them ſcandalouſly falſify their Truſt in this Regard, yet, in all Parts, there are ſome ſcattered here and there, like *Cities of Refuge* in the Land, whereunto thoſe, that are in Want and Diſtreſs, may ſeaſonably fly for Succour; inſomuch, that, what with the *legal* Proviſions that are made in this Caſe, and what with the voluntary Contributions of the Charitable, few, very few, I hope, want the Things that are abſolutely neceſſary; which [r] the Apoſtle comprizes in the ſmall Compaſs of *Food and Raiment*, and propoſes them as Materials ſufficient for Content: For as it is an eaſier Thing to ſatisfy the *Cravings* of an *hungry*, than to cure the *Squeamiſhneſs* of a *ſurfeited* Stomach; ſo certainly the Diſcontents of the Poor are much eaſier allayed, than thoſe of the Rich. The Indigence of the one has contracted his Deſires, and taught him to look no farther, than a little beyond bare Neceſſaries; ſo that a *moderate* Alms ſatisfies, and a *liberal* one tranſports him: But he, who, by perpetual *Repletion*, has his Deſires ſtretched and extended, is capable of no ſuch Satisfaction. In ſhort, [s] he, who can put an End to his *Wiſhes*, (as the contented Man always does) with the ſame Labour puts an End to his *Uneaſineſs* too; for Uneaſineſs is the natural Motive of Deſire, and, reciprocally, he, whoſe Deſires are ſatisfied, has all the Happineſs, that

[k] *Patrick*, on Contentment. [l] *Vid.* Page 868. [m] James i. 2. [n] Ecclus. xxix. 21. [o] *Patrick*, ibid. [p] Phil. iv. 11, &c. [q] The Art of Contentment, by the Author of the Whole Duty of Man. [r] 1 Tim. vi. 8. [s] *Rogers's* Sermons, Vol. III.

that is attainable in this Life. It is to be obſerved farther of the Bleſſings of God, that the greater and more ſubſtantial they are, the more they are in Number, and of common Uſe. The four Elements, of Fire, Water, Air, and Earth, are appointed to ſupply every Man's Occaſions and Needs. The whole Hoſt of Heaven, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, [t] *are by God divided to all Nations.* The Sun ſhines as bright on the the poor *Cottage*, as on the moſt magnificent *Palace*; and the Stars have their *benign* Aſpects, as well for him, that [u] *is behind the Mill*, as for *him, that ſitteth on the Throne.* All our Senſes, all the Members of our Bodies, all the Powers and Faculties of our Souls, which, by the Bleſſing of God, moſt of us enjoy perfect and entire, are not only more in Number, but of far greater Value, than what we fancy we want, in order to our Happineſs. [*] *For, is not the Life more than Meat*, ſays our Saviour, *and the Body than Raiment? Take no Heed therefore for your Life, what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink; nor yet for your Body, what ye ſhall put on:* [x] "Hath not God "beſtowed upon you that which is infinitely better than all thoſe Things, about "which you are wont to be ſo ſollicitous? And will he deny you the leſs, who has "granted you the greater Boon? *Doth not your Heavenly Father know that ye have "Need of theſe Things?* And would he have made you with theſe Needs of Meat, "Drink, and Raiment, had he not likewiſe taken Care to ſupply them? What is "Houſe or Cloathing, if you look upon the curious Fabrick of your Body, which "he hath reared? Or, what is Food, in Compariſon of that noble Life, which you "feel yourſelves inſpired with? Without all Controverſy, he will never ſuffer you to "want ſuch ſmall Things, who already has been ſo liberal in beſtowing greater Bene-"fits; eſpecially ſince theſe greater Benefits cannot be ſupported without the other. "*Conſider*, as he adds, *the Fowls of the Air*: Becauſe God has given them a Body, "therefore he gives them Food, though *they neither ſow, nor reap, nor gather into "Barns*, to lay up Proviſion for themſelves: *Are ye not much better than they?* De-"ſpair not then of his Providence: He will be ſo much the more careful of you, as "you are better than Birds, and other ſuch-like Creatures, who, without any Thought "of their own, find every Thing, that is needful for them, ready at hand."

God's Providence.

LET us look up to God again as the *Ruler*, as well as *Benefactor*, the great *Diſpoſer*, as well as *Provider*, for Mankind, and, under this View, we ſhall perceive equal Reaſon to be eaſy and contented, in that our Affairs are lodged in the Hand of his *Providence*, which is much better and ſafer, than to have the Management of them in our own Power. [y] We are apt to imagine, that, if God would give us Leave to carve out our own Condition, we could make a moſt admirable Proviſion for ourſelves; that if we could gain ſuch a Point, and compaſs ſuch a Deſign, we ſhould be made for ever; when alas! we never conſider how many Inconveniencies would follow upon ſuch a Suppoſition. The fair Appearances of Things invite us, and we are hurried on by a blind and eager Deſire; but whether we are able to manage our Choice, we are wholly ignorant. We never conſider what *Dangers* and Difficulties we ſhall meet with, what *Snares* and Temptations lie in our Way; how our Humours and Paſſions are apt to vary with enlarged Circumſtances, and what a great deal of *Circumſpection* and Steadineſs is neceſſary to ſecure our Virtue. So that, next to the Providence of God, we often owe our Safety to our *Impotence*, and are only happy, becauſe wehave it not in our Power, by changing our Fortune, to make ourſelves *miſerable*. One Man fancies, that, if he could but raiſe his Fortune to ſuch a Pitch, no one could be happier than himſelf: But he does not ſeem to be aware, that many are Maſters of much more than he deſires, and yet are viſibly uneaſy and diſcontented. He never conſiders, that the Care of keeping, and the Deſire of increaſing Riches, does often ſo buſy and perplex Mens Minds, that they have no Leiſure to enjoy them. He never thinks how many falſe and *fantaſtical* Appetites they are apt to excite in us, and to create more Wants than they are able to ſatisfy; otherwiſe he would perceive, that the Happineſs of [z] *a Man's Life conſiſteth not in the Abundance of the Things which he poſſeſſeth.* Another imagines, that there is a ſtrange Felicity lodged in *Authority*, and is mightily troubled to ſee himſelf ſhut out. "If "he was once in Power, if he had a publick Stage to act upon, he would make an "illuſtrious *Figure*, and rectify many of thoſe Diſorders which diſturb Society: But "he is ſo unfortunate as to be confined to a *private* Station; he is buried in an ob-"ſcure Retreat; he has not room enough to diſplay his Parts and Sufficiency; not

[t] Deut. iv. 19. [u] Exod. xi. 5. [*] Matth. vi. 25, &c. [x] *Patrick*, on Contentment.
[y] *Collier*'s Sermons. [z] Luke xii. 15.

" Opportunities to ſhew the Greatneſs and Generoſity of his Mind." But were he ſenſible how dangerous a Thing it is to be great, how ſteep and ſlippery an elevated Station is, and how much it lies expoſed to Malice and Envy, he would rather dread the *Precipice*, than be eager to climb the *Aſcent*: [a] He would plainly perceive, that a Man had need have his Head very ſteady and well-poiſed, otherwiſe his Height will make him turn giddy; and when this happens, a falſe Step, or a malicious Puſh, is enough to ſet him going, and then it is an eaſy Thing to gueſs, what a Bruiſe he is like to get by the Fall, and how contemptibly he will look at the Bottom.

SINCE then the moſt tempting Conditions, that Men can propoſe to themſelves, are ſo likely to make them unfortunate, is it not more prudent, as well as more pious, to reſign up our Choice to the Providence of God; to acquieſce in his Diſpoſal, and to think thoſe Circumſtances moſt proper, which he has placed us in? For ſhould God yield to the Importunity of our Complaints, his Favours might undo us, and, as [b] the Heathen Poet obſerves, the Succeſs and Grant of our Requeſts would prove our Ruin. 'Tis a very diſcreet Form of Prayer therefore, which [c] one of the greateſt of the Heathen Sages teaches us; " That God would give us ſuch " Things as were convenient for us, tho' we did not aſk them; and deny us ſuch, " as were not, tho' we did." God has a perfect Knowledge of the Capacities and Inclinations of his Creatures, and what Effects every Condition will have upon them; he foreſees what Miſeries we ſhall be plunged into, if we are truſted to chuſe for ourſelves, what Rocks we ſhould run upon, if he allowed us to *ſteer* to our own Point; and therefore, in pure Mercy, reſtrains us from ſo dangerous a Freedom, denies us our fatal Wiſhes, and makes us happy againſt our Wills. Since then we are much more ſecure in God's Hands, than we are in our own, how unreaſonable, how ungrateful muſt it be, to murmur at his *Allotment*, and be diſſatisfied with the Reſults of his Wiſdom, merely by adhering to our own vain Imaginations! Nay, how vain and ridiculous is it, to oppoſe our Wiſhes to the Divine Counſels, and to fret and fume at That, which we can by no Means help; [d] *For behold, God taketh away*, ſays holy *Job*, *and who can hinder him? Who will ſay unto him, what doſt thou? If he will not withdraw his Anger, the proud Helpers do ſtoop under him: How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him, and chuſe out my Words to reaſon with him? Whom, tho' I were righteous, I would not anſwer, but would make my Supplication to my Judge.* And this will lead us,

From the Conſideration of ourſelves.

II. To caſt our Eyes *upon ourſelves*, and to reflect a little on our own particular Condition, in order to eſtabliſh our Content. And, to this Purpoſe, let us, in the firſt Place, aſk ourſelves, *what are we?* [e] *Creatures*, that are naturally indigent and impotent, that have no juſt Claim to any Thing, nor any Poſſeſſion maintainable by our Power: All we have, or can have, comes from pure Courteſy and Bounty; and therefore, how little ſoever is allotted us, we have no Wrong done us, or any juſt Cauſe to complain. Nay, if we rightly ſurvey ourſelves, and take into our Account the Depravities of our Nature, as well as the Enormities of our Lives, we ſhall think any Thing good enough for us; and with all Humility confeſs, that [f] *it is of the Lord's Mercies that we are not conſumed, becauſe his Compaſſions fail not.* For ſhall we, who are conſcious to ourſelves of ſo many great Sins againſt our God, who, by wilful Tranſgreſſions, and ſlothful Neglects, have ſo much abuſed and affronted him; ſhall we, I ſay, affect to live in Eaſe, and ſwim in Plenty, and flouriſh in a brave and ſplendid Condition, when it is a Favour granted us, that we are permitted to ſubſiſt? It is not, ſurely, for ſuch Perſons to be diſſatisfied with any Thing in this Life, but to bleſs God's exceeding Mercy, that they are ſtill on this Side of the bottomleſs Pit. [h] *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord*, (ſays the Church, by the Mouth of the Prophet) *becauſe I have ſinned againſt him*; and much more then ſhould we acknowledge the Righteouſneſs of God in all his Diſpenſations, and account our Condition, though much more deplorable than it is, ten thouſand times better [i] *than our Iniquities deſerve.*

FOR, indeed, what Condition can we figure to ourſelves ſo wretched and deplorable, as not to have ſome Comforts to alleviate its Griefs, ſome Advantages to place in the contrary Scale againſt its Inconveniencies. Poverty indeed may, at firſt Sight, ſeem a very ſore Evil; but, if we conſider it a little more attentively, what is it, [k] but the

[a] *Collier's* Sermons. [b] *Juvenal*, Sat. 10. [c] *Socrates in Plat. Alcib.* [d] Job ix. 12, 13.
[e] *Barrow's* Sermons, Vol. III. [f] Lam. iii. 22. [h] Micah vii. 9. [i] Ezra ix. 13.
[k] *Barrow*, ibid.

the Abſence of a few ſuperfluous Things, which if we did not affect, we ſhould not want; but, at the ſame Time, the Abſence likewiſe of many Cares and Diſtractions, many Dangers, many Temptations, many Diſtempers both of Body and Soul, to which a plentiful and large Fortune is known to be expoſed? 'Tis a State, which many have borne with great Chearfulneſs, which wiſe Men have voluntarily embraced, which the beſt Men have been known to endure, which God has expreſſed his Regard to, and which the Son of God has dignified by his Choice, and ſanctified by his Participation; and can ſuch a State countenance our Murmurings and Complaints? We have but a ſcanty Allowance perhaps of the Neceſſaries of Life, but then we eat the homely Morſel we have with a good Appetite, and ſleep, when we are weary, without Diſturbance; for [l] *the Sleep of a labouring Man is ſweet, eat he little, or eat he much.* Together with our Poverty we have Health; and [m] *Health, and a good Eſtate of Body*, ſays the wiſe *Hebrew, is above all Gold*; we have a quiet Mind, which all the Riches in the World are not to be compared with; a free Uſe of our Time, which the greateſt *Miniſter of State* would be glad to taſte of; and an unſullied Reputation, which is more than can be obtained by the moſt ſplendid Fortune. Add to this, that our Conſcience is eaſy, our Appetites within Rule, and our Faculties in their Vigour; that we have none of the Burthens, the Diſeaſes, the Vices of Sloth and Luxury, and, if our Condition be really calamitous, ſeldom fail of the Compaſſion of Men, which is certainly much better, than that Envy, Ill-will, and Obloquy, which uſually attend on Wealth and Proſperity.

THESE are ſome of the Things, that God has made the Bleſſings of a low Eſtate, and we do manifeſt Injuſtice to his Mercy and Goodneſs, when we overlook the comfortable Part, and fix our Attention upon nothing, but the Inconveniencies of it. For, ſuppoſe theſe Inconveniencies never ſo great, and ourſelves ſunk into the very *Abyſs* of Calamities; yet, as there is no neceſſary Connection between the preſent and the future, who can tell [n] *what a Day may bring forth?* The ſame God, [o] *who maketh ſore, bindeth up*, who [p] *weakeneth the Strength of the Mighty*, [q] *raiſeth the Poor out of the Duſt, and liſteth the Needy out of the Dunghill, that he may ſet him with the Princes:* And therefore ſince nothing happens without his Determination; ſince he knows our Calamity, and, as it were, *ſympathizes* with us; above all, ſince we have his Promiſe, that he will provide for us in Want, comfort us in Trouble, and ſuccour us in Diſtreſs, we have all imaginable Reaſon to hope for an Amendment of our Condition, when it is bad, rather than to fear a Continuance of it: For this is the wiſe Man's Remark upon the Matter, [r] *the patient Man ſhall bear for a Time, and afterwards Joy ſhall ſpring up to him.*

BUT ſuppoſe, that the Providence of God, for ſundry Reaſons, thinks proper to continue our Calamities upon us, as long as we live; yet there is one comfortable Reflection ſtill behind, *viz.* that Life itſelf cannot be long; 'tis but a *Vapour that appeareth for a little Time, and then vaniſheth away*; and, together with it, all our Sorrows and Complaints for ever: For Death (which may be very near, which cannot be far off) is a ſure *Haven* from all the Tempeſts of Life, a ſafe *Refuge* from all the Perſecutions of the World, and an infallible *Cure* for all the Diſeaſes of our preſent Condition. It will enlarge us from all Reſtraints; it will eaſe us of all our Toils; veil all our Diſgraces, ſtifle all our Cares, wipe all Tears from our Eyes, and baniſh all Sorrow from our Hearts. So that, it is but holding out a little while longer, and then all our Moleſtation will, of its own Accord, expire. In the mean Time, to allay the Uneaſineſs of our Minds, we ſhould do well to reflect on the many ineſtimable Bleſſings we have in our Hands, which are above the Power of Affliction to extort from us: That we have ſtill the Uſe of our Reaſon, which exceeds all the Treaſures of the World; ſtill the Comfort of a good Conſcience; ſtill Acceſs to the Throne of Grace; ſtill the Senſe of the Divine Favour here, and the Expectation of the Divine Preſence hereafter; and how can he be ſuppoſed to want any Thing, who, beſides his preſent Intereſt in all the needful Effects of God's bountiful Love, is an Heir of Heaven and everlaſting Bliſs? And [s] *who ſhall ſeparate us from the Love of Chriſt*, ſays the Apoſtle? *Shall Tribulation, or Diſtreſs, or Perſecution, or Famine, or Nakedneſs, or Peril, or Sword?* All theſe he deſpiſes, becauſe he was very well perſuaded, [t] *That the Sufferings of this preſent Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glories, which ſhall be revealed to us.*

III. ANO-

[l] Eccleſ. v. 12. [m] Ecclus. xxx. 15. [n] Prov. xxvii. 1. [o] Job v. 18. [p] Chap. xii. 21.
[q] Pſal. cxiii. 7, 8. [r] Ecclus. i. 23. [s] Rom. viii. 35. [t] Ver. 18.

From comparing ourſelves with others.

III. ANOTHER Expedient to ſettle in our Minds a Spirit of Contentment, is frequently to caſt our Eyes *upon others*, and compare our Condition with theirs. The Rule, which *Seneca* lays down for this Purpoſe, is a very good one. [u] *When thou beholdeſt how many there are before thee, look back*, ſays he, *and ſee how many there are, that follow behind thee*; but the Miſchief of Mens eager Appetites is, that they will never hearken to this Rule. They ſee a long Train perhaps of Perſons, that march before them, finely attired, ſtately mounted, and adorned with all the Bravery of Fortune, and theſe they gaze on: * They admire the Luſtre of their Condition; they ſigh to think, that they cannot come up with them; and pine away, in the Midſt of many Bleſſings, becauſe they are forced to follow at ſome Diſtance. [x] Whereas, if they would now and then caſt their Eyes behind them, they would behold ſo many conſuming their Lives in perpetual Toil and Drudgery, merely to obtain a ſhort hungry Meal, and a few Hours Sleep and Inſenſibility; ſo many oppreſſed with Slavery, harraſſed with Cruelty, pined with Want and Poverty, overwhelmed with Shame and Infamy, ſo many waſted with long Sickneſſes, out-worn with lingering Pains, conſumed with Sorrow and Anxiety of Soul; and, (what is worſt of all) ſo many ſtung with Remorſe, racked with Horror and Deſpair, and alarmed with perpetual Fears and diſmal Expectations; that they would ſoon think themſelves among the foremoſt Perſons: "For he that will enjoy Tranquillity of "Mind, muſt, in *Proſperity*, conſider how many there are, that enjoy *leſs Good*, "and, in *Adverſity*, how many there are, that ſuffer *more Evil*."

The meaneſt.

IN making Compariſons then between ourſelves and others, there are theſe Rules that muſt direct our Proceeding: 1. That we compare ourſelves with all Men, and not only with ſome few. 2. That we compare ourſelves with them in all Things, and not merely in ſome Particulars. And, 3. That we compare ourſelves with them at all Times, and not only at ſome certain Seaſons.

The greateſt.

UPON theſe Conditions, we may venture to look even into the Palaces of Princes, and make an Eſtimate between our Condition, and that of thoſe, whom we are apt ſo much to admire and envy. For what indeed is the State and Condition of the greateſt Perſons upon Earth, [y] but a State of pompous Trouble, and gay Servility; of living in continual Noiſe and Stir, ſurrounded with Crowds, and ſubjected to the Tediouſneſs of Ceremony; a State, that wants all the ſolid Comforts of Life, true Friendſhip, free Converſation, certain Leiſure, Privacy and Retirement, to enjoy ourſelves, our Time and Thoughts, when and how we pleaſe; and yet a State, encompaſſed with Snares and Temptations numberleſs, which, without extreme Caution and Conſtancy, Force of Reaſon, and Command of all Appetites and Paſſions, cannot be avoided? This, and no better, is the State of the Great; and therefore the Pſalmiſt has juſtly obſerved, that *as Men of low Degree are Vanity*; ſo *Men of high Degree are a Lye*: A Lye, becauſe their State cheateth us, by appearing ſo very ſpecious, which, when nearer inſpected, is found to be ſo beſet with Troubles and Dangers on every Side, that we have Reaſon to bleſs God for appointing us a private Station, and to pity thoſe Kings and ſovereign Princes, on whom he has laid the Burthen of a Crown.

Better Men, that have ſuffered more than we.

[z] BUT if we ſtretch the Compariſon beyond our *Contemporaries*, and look back to the *Generations* of old, we ſhall have ſtill farther Cauſe to acknowledge God's great Indulgence to us, conſidering what has commonly been the Lot of good Men in all Ages. What the ſeveral Forefathers of our Faith, before Chriſt's Incarnation, underwent, the Author to the *Hebrews* has given us a brief, but very full Compendium: [a] *They had Trial of cruel Mockings and Scourgings; yea, moreover of Bonds and Impriſonments: They were ſtoned, were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the Sword: They wandered about in Sheep-ſkins and Goat-ſkins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented: They wandered in Deſerts, and in Mountains, and in Dens, and in Caves of the Earth.* And, if we look on the *primitive* Chriſtians, we ſhall ſoon perceive, that their Privileges conſiſted not in any Immunities from Calamities; for their whole Lives were Scenes of Sufferings. St *Paul* has given us an Account of his own; [b] *in Labours more abundant, in Stripes above Meaſure, in Priſons more frequent; in Deaths often. Of the Jews five Times received I forty Stripes, ſave one: Thrice was I beaten with Rods; once was I ſtoned; thrice I ſuffered Shipwreck;*

[u] Sen. Epiſt. xv. * *Patrick*, on Contentment. [x] *Scott*'s Serm. [y] *Barrow*'s Serm. Vol. III. [z] The Art of Contentment, by the Author of the Whole Duty of Man. [a] Heb. xi. 36, &c. [b] 2 Cor. xi. 23, &c.

Shipwreck; *a Night and a Day have I been in the Deep. In Journeyings often*, &c. And, if his ſingle Hardſhips roſe thus high, what may we think the whole Sum of all his *Fellow-labourers* amounted to together, with that whole *Army of Martyrs*, that ſealed their Faith with their Blood, of whoſe Sufferings the Hiſtory of the Church gives us ſuch aſtoniſhing Relations.

The Inſtance of our Bleſſed Saviour, a great Encouragement.

AND now, [c] *being compaſſed about with ſo great a Cloud of Witneſſes*, the Apoſtle's Inference is irrefragable, *let us run with Patience the Race that is ſet before us*; but ſtill it is more ſo, if we proceed to the Conſideration which he adjoins; *looking unto Jeſus, the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, who, for the Joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the Shame.* And, indeed, if we contemplate him in the whole Courſe of his Life, we ſhall find him rightly ſtiled, by the Prophet, *a Man of Sorrows*, ſince there is ſcarce any Calamity incident to human Nature, that was not tried and exemplified in him. Does any complain of the Lowneſs and Poverty of his Condition? His whole Life was a State of Indigence; and, as he was forced to take up his Lodging with Beaſts at his Birth, ſo he afterwards aſſures us, that he [d] *had not a Place wherein to lay his Head.* Is any oppreſſed with Infamy and Reproach? He may find his Saviour accuſed as [e] a *Glutton*, a *Wine-bibber*, [f] a *Blaſphemer*, a [g] *Sorcerer*; and [h] a common Thief and Murtherer preferred before him. Is any one deſpiſed and deſerted by his Friends? He was contemned by his Countrymen, thought a *Frantick* by his Relations, betrayed by one of his Diſciples, and abandoned by all, unleſs by that one, who followed him the longeſt, to renounce him more ſhamefully, by a ſolemn Abjuration. And laſtly, does any Man groan under ſharp and acute Pains of Body? Let him attend his Saviour thro' all the Stages of his dreadful Paſſion, from his *Agony* in the Garden, to his Expiration on the *Croſs*, and ſo he will perceive the Demand of the mournful Prophet, in the Perſon of the crucified Jeſus, verified to the full; [i] *Behold and ſee if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me, in the Day of his fierce Anger: And* therefore [k] *conſider him*, as the Apoſtle adviſes, *who endured ſuch Contradiction of Sinners againſt himſelf, leſt ye be weary and faint in your Minds.* Set the Example of his Meekneſs and Equanimity before you, confront your petty Uneaſineſſes with his unſpeakable Sufferings, and then it will be impoſſible but that your Admiration will ſilence your Impatiences, and ſhame you for ever out of your Repinings.

The Sum of the whole Argument.

" FOR why ſhould I repine, or be diſcontented with my Condition, *may every* " *conſiderate Chriſtian ſay*, when I am under the Providence and Protection of a " gracious God? He hath placed me, indeed, in a low Station of Life; but then " he hath ſecured me from the Danger of *falling*, and bleſſed me with Repoſe and " Tranquillity of Mind, which Perſons of an high Degree and Eminence are not " acquainted with. He hath given me the Poſſeſſion of no Eſtate, tranſmitted from " my Anceſtors; but then he hath given me Strength of Body, that enables me to " maintain myſelf and Family, by my daily Labour, or ſuch Endowments of Mind, " as qualify me to do it in a more *liberal* Way. At preſent, indeed, I labour under a " diſtreſſed Fortune, but then I have good Reaſon to hope, that ſome lucky Turn will " happen to my Affairs; that, by the Intervention of good Friends, or the Succeſs of " my honeſt Endeavours, God, [l] *who lifteth the Simple out of the Duſt, and the Poor* " *out of the Mire*, will extricate me from theſe Difficulties. But, if this ſhould not " be, in all Probability, theſe Difficulties cannot laſt long, becauſe Life itſelf is not " long, and, together with Life, all the Miſeries and Calamities of it are at an End; " and then I ſhall be as though I had never ſuffered any Thing, only that I ſhall reap " the Benefit of my Sufferings, when Time ſhall be no more. In the mean Seaſon, I " have many ineſtimable Benefits, which the Great and Opulent want, ſound Con- " ſtitution, ſound Sleep, and no Want of Appetite to reliſh my homely Morſel. For " tho' my Allowance be both mean and ſmall, yet Nature, I find, is ſatisfied with a " little, and that little (when I look upon myſelf as a Creature, that have a Title to no- " thing, and as a *Sinner*, that have a Title to Deſtruction only) is certainly much more " than I can any Way pretend to deſerve. Nay, if I look upon others, how tolerable " is my Condition, in Compariſon of many of my *Contemporaries*, who are below me " conſiderably, in Fortune, in Parts, in Health, in Happineſs of moſt Kinds, and yet " may have better Pretenſions to the Divine Favour, than I; in Compariſon of *many* " *faithful Servants* of God, who have been as remarkable for their Sufferings, as they

[c] Heb. xii. 1, &c. [d] Luke ix. 58. [e] Ibid. vii. 34. [f] John x. 33. [g] Matth. xii. 24. [h] John xviii. 40. [i] Lam. i. 12. [k] Heb. xii. 3. [l] Pſal. cxiii. 7.

" have been for their Piety; the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, the *Apoſtles* and firſt *Chri-*
" *ſtians*, eſpecially the Son of God himſelf, when he came into the World to re-
" deem me: And ſhall I repine at any Thing, when my gracious Saviour under-
" went worſe? Or murmur againſt Providence, for placing me in the Condition,
" which he, by his voluntary Aſſumption, and patient Continuance in, has both
" recommended and ſanctified? 'Twill be the Height of Folly, as well as Confi-
" dence, to expect to fare better in this *Valley of Tears*, than did the Son of God,
" when he was pleaſed to ſojourn in it: Eſpecially conſidering, that my Diſcon-
" tentedneſs will avail me nothing, my loudeſt Complaints will never prevail with
" Heaven to alter one Decree; [m] whereas my bearing my Calamities willingly and
" well, *will be a Spectacle grateful to God*, and, beſides rebating the Sting of what
" I ſuffer, will probably prevail with him to releaſe me from it: And, therefore,
" being ſenſible in whom I have put my Confidence, [n] *even in him, who is able to*
" *do abundantly above all that I can aſk or think*; I will [o] *be careful for nothing,*
" *but in every Thing, by Prayer and Supplication, with Thankſgiving, let* my *Re-*
" *queſts be made known unto God.*"

SECT. II.

Of the Government of the Tongue.

The Difficulty of governing the Tongue, and why.

ST *James*, treating on this very Subject, with great Variety of Arguments endeavours to ſhew, how difficult a Province it is for any Man to govern his Tongue. [p] *Every Kind of Beaſt*, ſays he, *and of Birds, and of Serpents, and Things in the Sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of Mankind; but the Tongue can no Man tame: It is an unruly Evil, full of deadly Poiſon. Therewith bleſs we God, even the Father, and therewith curſe we Men, which are made after the Similitude of God; out of the ſame Mouth proceedeth Bleſſing and Curſing; my Brethren, theſe Things ought not to be ſo. For, doth a Fountain ſend forth, at the ſame Place, ſweet Water and bitter?* The *Untameableneſs* of the Tongue muſt be underſtood in a limited Senſe, to denote the great Difficulty of it; that the Thing is poſſible, the ſame Apoſtle ſeems to intimate, when, in the Beginning of his Diſcourſe, he tells us, that [q] *if any Man offend not in Word, the ſame is a perfect Man, i. e.* one of a ſingular Worth and Integrity: And ſuch an one, he preſumes, has as much Command over his Tongue, as [r] he, that manages the *Bit*, has over the *Horſe* he rides; or he, that holds the *Helm*, has over the *Ship* he ſteers; and how far an hearty Purpoſe and Reſolution may carry us in the Execution of this great Taſk, the Example of the Royal Pſalmiſt ſeems to inſtruct us: [s] *I ſaid, I will take Heed to my Ways, that I offend not with my Tongue; I will keep my Mouth, as it were, with a Bridle, while the Ungodly is in my Sight:* For, [t] *I am utterly purpoſed, that my Mouth ſhall not offend.*

WHAT makes the Difficulty of this Regimen then is, in ſome Part, imputable to the Member itſelf. [u] The Tongue is ſo ſlippery, that it eaſily deceives an heedleſs Guard; for Nature ſeems to have given it ſome unhappy Advantages that Way. 'Tis, in its *Make*, the moſt ready for Motion of any Member; it needs not ſo much as the Flexure of a Joint to make it go, and, by Acceſs of Humours, acquires a certain *Glibneſs*, the more to facilitate its moving, by which Means it comes to paſs, that it often goes without giving us Warning. And as Children, when they happen upon a *rolling Engine*, can ſet it in ſuch a Career, as wiſer People cannot on a ſudden ſtop; ſo the childiſh Parts of us, our Paſſions, our Fancies, and other our animal Faculties, can put our Tongues into ſuch Diſorders, as the Aids of our Reaſon cannot eaſily rectify: * Since the Tongue then is ſo very looſe and verſatile a Member, that the leaſt Breath of Thought can ſtir it, and ſet it on going any Way, it cannot but need much Attention of Mind, either to keep it in a ſteady Reſt, or in a right Motion; and ſince numberleſs Swarms of Things are continually roving in the Fancy, and thence inceſſantly obtruding themſelves upon the Tongue, great Judgment and Circumſpection is certainly requiſite to remark their Quality, as they call upon us to utter them, and out of

[m] Spectaculum Deo dignum, vir bonus cum malâ fortunâ compoſitus. *Sen. de Provid.* [n] Eph. iii. 20. [o] Phil. iv. 6. [p] James iii. 7, 8, &c. [q] Ibid. *ver.* 2. [r] Ibid. *ver.* 3, 4. [s] Pſal. xxxix. 1. [t] Pſal. xvii. 3. [u] The Government of the Tongue, by the Author of the Whole Duty of Man. * *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. I.

of the promiſcuous Crowd that came, to ſelect the few only, that our Reaſon and Religion pronounce to be good, and proper to be ſpoken; which may be reduced to theſe three Heads: 1. Such as are holy and religious, with relation to God. 2. Sincere and inoffenſive, with regard to our Neighbour. And, 3. Modeſt and decent, with reſpect to ourſelves.

1. THE Duty, the Reaſonableneſs, and Excellency of religious Diſcourſe in common Converſation, is what we took Occaſion to conſider elſewhere; and therefore on this Head ſhall need only to enquire a little into the Folly and Wickedneſs of that Blaſphemy and Profaneneſs, ſo popular in this Age, which [y] *ſets its Mouth againſt the Heavens*, and manifeſtly oppoſes the Caution and ſtrict [z] *Holineſs*, which the Apoſtle preſcribes us *in all Manner of Converſation*.

The great Boldneſs of atheiſtical *Diſcourſe.*

How tranſient ſoever we may ſuppoſe our Words to be, yet, if there be a ſupreme Being, which we call God, there is ſufficient Reaſon to believe, that he, as well as Man, is provoked as much, nay more, by our Words, than by our Deeds. [a] Our ill Deeds may be done upon the vehement Impulſe of ſome Temptation: Some Profit or Pleaſure may tranſport and hurry us on to the Commiſſion; at leaſt, they may have this Alleviation, that we did them to pleaſe, or advantage ourſelves, and not to ſpite God: But profane and atheiſtical Diſcourſe cannot be ſo palliated. It is an *Arrow* ſhot directly againſt Heaven, and out of no other *Quiver*, but that of *Malice*: And if Malice among Men be an Aggravation of Injuries, how much more ſo muſt it be, in the Eſteem of God, whoſe principal Demand is, that *we ſhould give him our Heart*. 'Till therefore we can prove (againſt the Voice of Nature, and Faith of Hiſtory; againſt the ſettled Judgment of wiſe and ſober Perſons, who have ſtudied and conſidered the Point; and againſt the current Tradition of all Ages, and general Conſent of Mankind, which is a difficult Taſk to do) that there is no God; 'twill be too bold an Advance for us, in this Manner, to dare and defy him, leſt we find him at laſt aſſerting his *Being* in our utter Deſtruction and Confuſion. In the mean Time, it would much better become us, ſoberly to balance with ourſelves the Gains we may expect, and the Hazards we too probably run, by indulging this profane Liberty of Speech.

The Folly of it.

WE cannot pretend to give Pleaſure to our Hearers, for our Hearers are generally of a different Opinion: [b] They are convinced of the Exiſtence of a God, and therefore think themſelves affronted; look upon it as an injurious Reflection upon their Judgment and Choice, and reſent the Indignity with Deteſtation, when they hear their beſt Friend and only Benefactor, the Author of their Beings, and the Founder of their Hopes, traduced and vilified. We cannot pretend to advantage the *Publick*, becauſe the Publick is fully ſatisfied, that the Belief of a God and a future State is the beſt Security of *civil* Society, and, conſequently, cannot but ſuppoſe, that whoever goes about to diſpoſſeſs the World of this Perſuaſion, deſerves to be reputed an Enemy to Mankind, and an injurious Diſturber of their Tranquillity. All that we can then promiſe ourſelves from this hazardous Enterprize, is, to be remarked (as other Monſters are) for our Singularity; or, [c] at moſt, but to obtain a vain Applauſe of *Wit*, as an impious *Jeſter*; or of *Reaſon*, as a *Free Thinker*; and yet, even for this, we muſt incroach upon the Devil's Right too, who, in all Eſſays of this Nature, is uſually the chief Prompter; and therefore, if there be any Credit in the Thing, may juſtly challenge no inconſiderable Share of it to himſelf.

AND now, what a deſperate Madneſs is this, merely for the Sake of daring to do, what every ſober Man would tremble to attempt, to make Shipwreck of our immortal Souls; to expoſe ourſelves to endleſs Wailings and Woe, only to raiſe a Fit of preſent Laughter, and, in order to be reckoned *Wits*, to prove ourſelves ſtark wild. For of ſuch [d] *Laughter*, we may very well ſay with the wiſe Man, *that it is Madneſs*, and of ſuch *Mirth*, *what does it do?* What does it do indeed, but only provoke God, in his Turn, [e] *to laugh at our Calamity, and to mock when our Fear cometh; when our Fear cometh as Deſolation, and our Deſtruction cometh as a Whirlwind?*

ANOTHER

[y] Pſal. lxxiii. 9. [z] 1 Pet. i. 15. [a] The Government of the Tongue, by the Author of the Whole Duty of Man. [b] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. I. [c] The Government of the Tongue, &c. [d] Eccleſ. ii. 2. [e] Prov. i. 26, 27.

The Sin of drolling upon Scripture.

ANOTHER Thing oppoſite to religious and holy Converſation (for the impious Cuſtom of *taking God's Name in vain* we have already conſidered, in the Expoſition of the *third Commandment*) is making his Word the Subject of our profane Mirth and Drollery. For it is no uncommon Thing to hear Perſons, almoſt in all Company, uſing the Scripture, as they do odd Ends of *Plays*, to furniſhing out their *Jeſts*; cloathing all their little Conceits in its Language, and debaſing it by the Mixture of ſuch miſerable *Trifles*, as themſelves would be aſhamed of, were they not heightened and inſpirited by that Profaneneſs. But, to diſcern how God will reſent ſuch Uſage of his moſt ſacred Word, let but any of us put the Caſe in our own Perſons. [f] Suppoſe we had written to a Friend, to advertiſe him of Things of the greateſt Importance to himſelf; had given him ample and exact Inſtructions, backed with the moſt earneſt Exhortations, and enforced with the moſt moving Expreſſions of Kindneſs and Tenderneſs to him; and the next News, we ſhould hear of that Letter, were, to have it put in *doggrel Rhime*, to be made Sport for the Rabble, or, at the beſt, to have the moſt eminent Phraſes of it picked out to be made a common By-word; I would fain know how any of us would reſent ſuch a Mixture of Ingratitude and Contumely. There needs no minute Application I think. The whole Deſign of the Bible does ſufficiently anſwer, nay, infinitely ſurpaſs the former Part of the Parallel; and God knows our vile Uſage of it does too much, I fear too literally, adopt the latter. And, if we think the Affront too baſe for one of us, can we believe God will take it in good Part? The Words of the Apoſtle (and terrible Words they are) denote the very contrary: [g] *If the Word ſpoken by Angels*, ſays he, *was ſtedfaſt, and every Tranſgreſſion and Diſobedience received a juſt Recompence; how ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect*, if we burleſque, and make a mere Jeſt of, *ſo great Salvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken to us by the Lord?*

The Government of the Tongue, with Regard to our Neighbour.

II. WITH *Regard to our Neighbour*, the Duty of *governing our Tongue*, will conſiſt in the *Sincerity* and *Inoffenſiveneſs* of our Words and Expreſſions. St *Paul*, after the uſual Introduction to moſt of his Epiſtles, begins That to the *Philippians* with a ſolemn Prayer to God, [h] *that they might approve Things, that were excellent, and be ſincere, and without Offence, till the Day of Chriſt*; and in That to the *Epheſians*, he gives them ſtrict Charge, that, [i] *putting away Lying, that they ſhould ſpeak every Man Truth with his Neighbour*; which he enforces with this Reaſon; *for we are Members one of another*, *i. e.* as we are Members of one common Society, we are ſeverally, in our different Capacities, obliged to promote the common Good and Happineſs of it: But now, Speech being the proper Inſtrument of our conſulting and providing for theſe great Ends, all *Inſincerity* and *equivocal* Abuſe of Words at once tend to deſtroy the natural Order, and fundamental Rights of Society, and are directly contrary to the true Uſe of Speech in its original Inſtitution.

Sincerity.

[k] FEW Perſons indeed have the Effrontery to affirm what is directly falſe, what they know to be ſo, and may eaſily be detected in: The worſt of Men deſire to preſerve ſome Kind of Reputation in the World, and they obſerve, that there is no Character more infamous, than That of a *Lyar*. They are cautious therefore how they aſſert Things, which have no real or probable Foundation, not out of Regard to Truth, conſidered as a *moral* Virtue, but as an Ornament of *civil* Life: Yet there are ſo many Ways of miſrepreſenting Facts really true in themſelves, of amplifying or ſuppreſſing the Circumſtances wherewith they are attended, and of ſuppoſing this and That, in order to ſet them off in different Colours; that Men of a fertile Invention may eaſily find Means, on certain Occaſions, of impoſing upon the *Credulity* of others, without any ſcandalous Conſequences in Prejudice of their Reputation; and all this may be thought neceſſary to ſuch, as propoſe to live in the World, eſpecially if they would raiſe themſelves to any public or eminent Station. It ſhews however, that the Maxims, whereby Men govern themſelves, who reſolve to make a Fortune at any Rate, are ſometimes oppoſite to thoſe of Religion; and, for that very Reaſon, Perſons, that make Profeſſion of Religion, cannot, without evidently oppoſing it, pretend to juſtify ſuch Maxims, or to act upon them.

THE like may be ſaid of Profeſſions of Kindneſs, that are not *real*, as well as Commendations and Praiſes, that are not due: Though both theſe may, in ſome Meaſure, be apologized for; *the one*, as neceſſary to keep up the Dependencies of great Men

[f] The Government of the Tongue, by the Author of the Whole Duty of Man. [g] Heb. ii. 2, 3. [h] Phil. i. 10. [i] Eph. iv. 25. [k] *Fiddes*'s Sermons.

Men, and to give them an higher Air of Dignity and Power; *the other*, to preſerve the Favour of the *Proud*, and to make us as well thought on, where we are dependent; yet they are far from being an Imitation of the true Diſciples of Chriſt, who made it their great *Joy* and *Triumph*, not how *artfully* they had conducted themſelves; not what exquiſite Maſters of Diſguiſe and Diſſimulation they had been; but [l] *that, with Simplicity, and godly Sincerity, not with fleſhly Wiſdom, but by the Grace of God, they had their Converſation in the World.* This however is not ſo to be underſtood, as if a *Courteſy* to our Benefactors, or all *Reſerve* to ſuch, as are our Enemies, were to be ſuperſeded: [m] There is a wide Difference between Civility and Flattery, between Caution and Diſſimulation; and our bleſſed Saviour, by qualifying the *Simplicity* of the *Dove* with the *Wiſdom* of the *Serpent*, has plainly inſtructed us, that *Candour* is not only very reconcileable with *Prudence*, but ought indeed never to be ſeparated from it.

2. Inoffenſiveneſs.

WITH *Regard to our Neighbour*, another Duty, in the Government of the Tongue, is to have our Converſation *innocent* and inoffenſive, free from that *Calumny* and Defamation, whereby we injure his good Name, (which is an Argument we have ſpoken to [n] before) as well as that *Cenſoriouſneſs* and *Contumely*, which we now come to conſider.

Againſt cenſuring.

WONDERFUL is the Care, which the Chriſtian Religion has taken, to correct the Vice of *cenſuring* and judging others, as knowing it to be one of the moſt miſchievous, and withal the moſt predominant Vices in the World. [o] Sometimes we find it repreſented, as a bold and unjuſt Uſurpation of an Authority, that by no Means belongs to us: [p] *Speak not evil one of another*, ſays St *James*; *he that ſpeaketh Evil of his Brother, and judgeth his Brother, ſpeaketh Evil of the Law, and judgeth the Law: There is one Law-giver, who is able to ſave, and to deſtroy; who art thou that judgeſt another?* Sometimes we find it repreſented, as an inſufferable Incroachment upon the independent Freedom of our Brethren: [q] *For why is my Liberty judged*, ſays St *Paul*, ſpeaking of Things of an *indifferent* Nature, *of another Man's Conſcience? Every one of us ſhall give an Account of himſelf to God; let us not therefore judge one another any more.* Sometimes again we find it repreſented, as a Practice of very miſchievous Conſequence; as it diſturbs the Quiet and Comfort of Society, and commits irreparable Outrages upon the Reputation of innocent Perſons: Hence we are told, that [r] *the Whiſperer ſeparateth chief Friends*; that [s] *the Mouth that ſlandereth, ſlayeth the Soul*; that [t] *the Words* of ſuch Men *are Wounds*; and that *he, who ſcatters them, and ſays, I am in Sport, is as a Madman, that caſteth about Firebrands, and Arrows, and Death.*

BUT if the Reverence due to Almighty God will not reſtrain us from aſſuming his Right to Judicature; if the Evils, that follow this wicked Diſpoſition and Practice, will not prevail with us to refrain from all cenſorious Speeches; yet Regard to ourſelves, one would think, ſhould not fail to work upon us; and therefore our Holy Religion ſupplies us with this Argument likewiſe: [u] * *Judge not, and ye ſhall not be judged; condemn not, and ye ſhall not be condemned; forgive, and ye ſhall be forgiven; for with the ſame Meaſure Men mete withal, it ſhall be meaſured to them again.* They, who put themſelves forward, and are very ſevere in cenſuring their Neighbours, take a moſt effectual Courſe to prepare a Scourge for their own Backs; and in a very *literal* Senſe procure, and lay up for themſelves, [x] *good Meaſure, preſſed down, ſhaken together, and running over*; for the World is ſeldom behind-hand in ſuch *Retaliations*: Whereas the Man of Diſcretion and Reſerve, that aſperſes no-body, nor intermeddles with Matters, that concern him not; that puts the beſt Conſtruction upon every Thing, and allows all People their due Commendation, is much more ſafe from the Laſh of ill Tongues, and beſpeaks the Juſtice and favourable Treatment of all that know him. So very malicious is the World indeed, that even this Man muſt not flatter himſelf with a total Exemption from Cenſure and Miſrepreſentation; but ſtill he has this Advantage, that when Obloquy and Detraction attempt upon his Honour, the Slander is ſcattered with leſs *Bitterneſs*, received with leſs *Delight*, and ſuffered with leſs *Regret* and Self-reproach, than it muſt needs be, where a Man's own Conſcience tells him, that he hath given others juſt Provocation to make *Repri-*

[l] 2 Cor. i. 12. [m] *Fiddes*'s Sermons. [n] Vid. Page 431. [o] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, Vol. III. [p] James iv. 11, 12. [q] 1 Cor. x. 29. [r] Rom. xiv. 12, 13. [s] Prov. xvi. 28. [t] Wiſdom i. 11. [u] Prov. xxvi. 18, &c. * Luke vi. 37, 38. [x] Ibid. ver. 38.

ſits upon his good Name, and, by his own hard Dealing, has deſerved to be treated as a common Enemy.

But 'tis not by Men only that he may expect to be thus treated; even God, the Judge of all, has expreſſly threatened, that *he ſhall have Judgment without Mercy, who hath ſhewed no Mercy.* And this is ſurely Diſcouragement and Terror enough, in all Conſcience, to conſider, that, by giving a Looſe to a Licentiouſneſs of Tongue, we muſt expect to find no more Kindneſs from God, than Men have found from us: and yet, [a] *if God enter into Judgment with his Servants, no Fleſh living can be juſtified in his Sight*; or, [b] *if he will be extreme to mark what is done amiſs*, where is the Man able *to abide it?* Leaſt of all are thoſe Men qualified to abide it, whoſe critical Obſervation, and inhuman Expoſing of other People, ſo hinders them from examining into their own State and Condition, that, while they are [c] *ſpying* and pulling *out Motes from their Brother's Eye*, they perceive not *the Beam, that is in their own*, though never ſo groſs and viſible.

How to cure it in us.

That therefore we may preſerve ourſelves againſt ſo common and ſo pernicious a Sin, let us often reflect upon the Words of the Apoſtle; *thou art inexcuſable, O Man, whoſoever thou art, that judgeſt; for wherein thou judgeſt another, thou condemneſt thyſelf; for thou, that judgeſt, doſt the ſame Things*, or perhaps worſe: And in the Strength of this, whenever we find ourſelves, upon any Miſdemeanour of our Brother, ready to mount the Tribunal, and pronounce our Sentence; let us firſt conſider how competent we are for the Office, and call to our Remembrance the Deciſion of Chriſt, once made in the like Caſe; [d] *he that is without Sin, let him firſt caſt a Stone!* To the ſame Purpoſe, it will be highly requiſite, that we frequently and ſeriouſly contemplate the Laſt and Great Judgment, and then we may aſk ourſelves, as St *Paul* does, [e] *Why doſt thou judge thy Brother; or, why doſt thou ſet at nought thy Brother? We ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt.* Then will come the great Day of Revelation and Retribution, and we are not to anticipate it by our private *Inqueſts* or Sentences. Our own Accounts are Buſineſs enough for us to get ready againſt that Day: And, as it would be a ſpiteful Folly for Malefactors, that are going to the *Bar*, to ſpend their Time in exaggerating one another's Crimes; ſo ſurely it is for us, who are all going toward the dreadful Tribunal, to be drawing up Charges againſt one another. But, if we muſt needs be talking of other People's Faults, let it be not to *defame*, but to *amend* them, by converting our Detraction and Cenſoriouſneſs into fraternal Admonition and Reproof; [f] *exhorting one another daily, while it is called To-day, leſt any of us be hardened through the Deceitfulneſs of Sin*; and, [g] *if any one be overtaken in a Fault, reſtoring ſuch a one in the Spirit of Meekneſs, conſidering ourſelves, leſt we alſo be tempted.*

Deriſion.

What Kind of it allowable.

Once more, *with Regard to our Neighbour:* Another Breach upon the *Innocence* and Inoffenſiveneſs of Converſation, is Scoffing and Deriſion, what the Scripture expreſſes, as I ſuppoſe, by [h] *fooliſh Talking and Jeſting*, which are not convenient. We mightily miſtake the Spirit of Chriſtianity, if we imagine that, it was ever deſigned to debar us from any *innocent*, much leſs from any *uſeful* Pleaſure, that human Life requires: [i] God certainly has not been more rigid to our Minds, than he has to our Bodies; and therefore, as he has not ſo devoted the one to Toil, but that he allows us ſome Time to exerciſe them in Recreations, as well as Labours; ſo doubtleſs he indulges the ſame *Relaxation* to the other, which are not always to be ſcrewed up to the Height, but allowed ſometimes to deſcend to thoſe Eaſineſſes of Converſe, which entertain the lower Faculties of the Soul. [k] If then our gay and jocular Diſcourſe may ſerve to any Purpoſes of this Kind; if it has a Tendency to raiſe our drooping Spirits, to allay our Cares, and recreate our Minds, when tired with graver Occupations; if it any Way occaſions Alacrity, or maintains good Humour; endears Society, or ſweetens Converſation; it is plainly neither inconvenient nor unprofitable, and, conſequently, is not that Kind of *Jeſting*, which the Apoſtle condemns. The Holy Scripture is very remarkable for its great Gravity and Seriouſneſs of Expreſſion, and yet for ſome particular Purpoſes, ſuch as reproving Vices, and reclaiming Perſons, that are too abſurd for any ſolemn Confutation, we find it employing a Spirit of Facetiouſneſs, and dreſſing up, what it means to explode, in a very ludicrous and *ſatyrical* Manner. Thus, of the fooliſh and beſotted Prieſts of *Baal*, it is recorded, that

[a] James ii. 13. [b] Pſal. cxliii. 2. [c] Ibid. cxxx. 3. [d] Matth. vii. 3, 4. [e] Rom. ii. 1. [f] John viii. 7. [g] Rom xiv. 10. [h] Heb. iii. 13. [i] Gal. vi. 1. [k] Eph. v. 4. [l] The Government of the Tongue, &c. [k] *Barrow's* Works, Vol. I.

that *Elias mocked them, and said, cry aloud, for he is a God; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a Journey, or peradventure he sleeps, and must be awaked:* And of those other ridiculous Sinners, the Worshippers of carved Images, no Man can speak in finer Raillery, than does the Prophet *Isaiah*; *he planteth an Ash*, says he, speaking of one of them, *and the Rain doth nourish it. He burneth Part thereof in the Fire; with Part thereof he eateth Flesh: He roasteth Roast, and is satisfied; yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, aha! I am warm, I have seen the Fire: And the Residue thereof he maketh a God, even his graven Image: He falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, deliver me; for thou art my God.*

SINCE then it is apparent, from those and other Passages of Scripture, that a certain Vivacity and Sportfulness of Wit, in many Cases, is allowable, and, in some, is necessary, to banter and expose such Errors, as neither deserve, nor can well bear a serious Confutation; the Apostle's Meaning must be restrained, either to such *Jesting*, as makes Sport and Mockery of the most sacred Things, (which is an Abuse of Speech considered before) or such severe and satyrical *Jesting*, as tends to the Disgrace and Prejudice of our Neighbour, the more of Wit and Poignancy there is in it. A dull Contumely indeed quickly vanishes, because no-body thinks it worth his remembering; but when it is steeled with *Wit*, and Sprightliness of Imagination, it pierces deep, and leaves such Impressions in the Fancy of the Hearers, that thereby it gets Rooting in the Memory, and will hardly ever be forgot. And as Wit gives an Edge, so it also adds Wings to the Abuse, and makes it fly abroad in an Instant. The Jest recommends the *Defamation*, and is commonly so incorporated with it, that they cannot be related apart. From whence it comes to pass, that even those, who like it not in one Respect, are, many Times, so transported with it in the other, that they chuse rather to propagate the *Contumely* than to stifle the *Conceit*. By this Means a Man, for what perhaps is none of his Fault, his *natural* or *moral* Infirmities, or some accidental Singularities of Humour or Temper, or the like, shall be exposed to the Scorn and Contempt, not of his own Generation only, but sometimes of his latest Posterity, it being no unusual Thing to have *Sarcasms* of Wit transmitted to Story.

What Kind, not.

The Mischief of it.

But now, what an inhuman Thing is this, to make the Weaknesses of Men the Subject of our Mirth; which, considering whence they come, and how common they are in most of us, do deserve our *Compassion*, not our *Severity*, and are rather to be *deplored* secretly, than openly *derided*?

THE *Heart of Fools*, says the wise Man, *is in the House of Mirth*, meaning such Mirth, as affects to raise an Admiration of its Wit from ignominious Reflections on the Persons and Actions of others; because, in another Place, he declares, that *it is a Sport to a Fool to do Mischief*. And indeed, what can be a greater Instance of Folly, than, for such mean Ends, to do so great Harm; to lose Friends, and get Enemies for a Conceit; and, out of a light Humour, to provoke fierce Wrath and lasting Hatred. For this daily Experience verifies, that nothing does so speedily inflame, and so thoroughly enrage Men's Passions, as such Scoffs and Invectives, as are *sharper than Swords*. In the mean Time, the Scoffer fails in his main Pretence, and cannot with Reason claim an Interest in Wit; since he manifestly discovers a great Straitness and Sterility of good Invention, who cannot, in all the wide Field of Things, find better Subjects of Discourse; who knows not how to be ingenious within reasonable Compass; but, to pick up a sorry Conceit, is forced to make Excursions beyond the Bounds of Honesty and Decency; and, if the Word of God be true, into the very Confines of Destruction and Death, since *Judgments are prepared for Scorners, and Stripes for the Back of Fools.*

THE Purpose of all this is, to engage Men of Wit and Ingenuity, who place much of their Dexterity, and some Part of their Pride, in the Art of scoffing and ridiculing others, to weigh soberly and seriously the Account they must one Day give, of the Employment of their Parts; and the more they have hitherto embezzled them, the more to expiate that *Unthriftiness*, by a wiser and more careful Managery for the future; and so, instead of that vain, empty, and vanishing Mirth, they have courted *here*, they may find a full and eternal Satisfaction in the Joy of their Lord *hereafter*.

III. WITH

[m] 1 Kings xviii. 27. [n] Isa. xliv. 14, &c. [o] *Barrow*'s Works, Vol. I. [p] The Government of the Tongue, &c. [q] *Barrow*, ibid. [r] *Barrow*, ibid. [s] Prov. xix. 29. [t] The Government of the Tongue, &c.

The Government of the Tongue, with Respect to ourselves. And 1. *Against* Boasting.

III. WITH *Respect to ourselves*, the Duty of governing our Tongues consists in the *Modesty* and *Decency* of our Words and Expressions, to which all Boasting and Ostentation, all Positiveness and Obscenity of Speech are directly opposite. If we look into the Family of *Boasters*, we shall soon perceive the Subjects of their Ostentation are, either some *natural* Excellencies, such as Beauty or Wit; or some *accidental* Acquisitions, such as Honour and Wealth, *&c.* but, since God is manifestly the Author and Giver of all these, the Foundation of our *glorying* in them is utterly taken away. No Man, I suppose, fancies himself to be his own *Creator*; and tho'

Its Vanity.

some have assumed to be the Carvers of their own Fortunes, yet the frequent Defeats of Mens Industry and Contrivance do sufficiently confute the bold Pretence, and give them to understand, that there is a Divine Providence above them, which can either blast or prosper their Attempts. The Piety of some is another Article of their Ostentation: But as this is less owing to ourselves, than any Endowment of Nature; so, when once it begins to be boasted of, it is utterly blasted, and becomes insignificant: For even of the most Christian Actions, such as Prayer, Alms, and Fasting, our Saviour has told us, that, when they are done *to be seen of Men*, and with a Design to catch at their Applause, that is all the Reward, they are likely to have. Nay, that is a Reward, which they frequently miss of too, since Vanity quite drowns the Notice of the Things, on which it is founded, and, as common Experience shews, Men are not so apt to say, "such a Person is handsome, wise, and good, "as that he is proud, upon the Conceit of being so." * In a Word, he that celebrates his own Excellencies, must be content with his own Applauses; for he will get none of others, unless it be from those fawning *Sycophants*, whose Praises are worse than the bittersest Detraction.

Its Ridiculousness.

THUS foolish a Sin is Ostentation, that it effectually undermines and supplants itself. 'Tis Glory that it seeks, and yet instead of gaining That, it loses common and ordinary Estimation. It has a strange Ambition to be *popular*, and yet nothing makes a Man so despicable, and useless in the World. To do him a Kindness most Men are loth, because they foresee he will arrogate it to himself, as the Effect of his Merit; to receive one from him, none, that are not in the greatest Exigence, are willing, because they know it is not only sure to be proclaimed, but magnified much above its true Worth. He is excluded therefore from all Commerce in Life, and seems only of Use to give Sport to his Company; which, by suggesting some Hints, and now and then shewing a Nod or Smile of Approbation, can make him display himself more disadvantageously, more ridiculously, than the most satyrical Character could possibly do.

IN the mean Time, though he goes on at this foolish Rate, yet, according to *Solomon*'s Observation, this Distemper of his precludes all Means of his growing wiser: For [x] *seest thou a Man wise in his own Conceit? There is more Hope of a Fool, than of him*; and the Reason is evident, because he discards the two great Instruments of Instruction, *Admonition* and *Observation*. [y] The *former* he thinks superseded by his own Perfections, and the *latter* he circumscribes within himself; and yet, even here, instead of making Enquiry into his Faults and Defects, he fixes his Contemplation only on his more splendid Qualities, with which he is so dazzled, that, when you bring him to the darker Parts of himself, it fares with him, as with those, that come newly from gazing on the Sun, *he can see nothing*.

Its Cure.

To cure the Imposthumation in our Minds then, which occasions this vain Ostentation of our Tongue, a good Way will be, to put ourselves under the Course, which the Apostle prescribes, [z] *to look not every Man on his own Things, but every Man also on the Things of others, i. e.* to observe the Good, that is visible in every Man, and, when we find ourselves mounting into our *Altitudes*, to clog our Wings with the Rememberance of those, that have out-soared us, not in Opinion only, but in true Merit: Or, if we must needs be looking into ourselves, to take a full and just Survey of all; to estimate our Sins, as well as Virtues, and so considering, how many and heinous are the one, as well as how few and defective are the other, instead of the proud *Pharisee*'s, [a] *Lord, I thank thee, that I am not as other Men are*, we shall be led, with the humble *Publican*, to *smite on our Breasts*, and say, *Lord, be merciful to me a Sinner*.

ANOTHER

[u] Matth. vi. 5. * The Government of the Tongue, by the Author of the Whole Duty of Man.
[x] Prov. xxvi. [y] The Government of the Tongue, *&c.* [z] Phil. ii. 4. [a] Luke xviii. 11, 13.

ANOTHER Breach upon the *Modesty* and Decency of Conversation, (for it will not be expected, I hope, that I should enlarge upon that *obscene* and smutty Talk, which, the Apostle tells us, [b] *should not so much as once be named among* Christians) is a certain *Peremptoriness* in Discourse, which consists either in a *magisterial* Manner of dictating *Matters of Opinion*, or, in a *positive* Manner, of averring *Matters of Fact*. *Against* Positiveness.

[c] Now, besides that the *former* of these is a manifest Incroachment upon the common Birthright of Mankind, who have, every one of them, a Liberty of thinking and judging, according to their own Understandings; there is this manifest Incongruity attending it, that no Man can be positively assured, whether what he dictates so confidently be, in Reality, Truth or no: For, [d] *the Thoughts of mortal Men*, says the wise *Hebrew*, *are miserable, and our Devices are but uncertain. For the corruptible Body presses down the Soul, and the earthly Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind, that museth upon many Things; and hardly do we guess aright at Things, that are upon Earth, and with Labour do we find the Things that are before us, but the Things that are in Heaven*, and of difficult and abstruse Speculation, *who hath searched out?* And, if so, 'tis Pride and Presumption to impose mere Conjectures for infallible Oracles upon other Mens Judgments; for, *who made thee to differ from another?* "Since God has made *Rationality* the common Portion of Mankind, how came it "to be thy Inclosure? Or, what Signature has he set upon thy Understanding, "what Mark of Excellence, that it should be *paramount?*" The great Misfortune is, [e] that Men of this sanguine Complexion, in relation to their own Sentiments, are generally made up of Pride and Ignorance, which, of all others, is the most unhappy Composition. For Ignorance, being, of itself, like stiff Clay, when once Pride comes to scorch and harden it, grows perfectly impenetrable: And accordingly we may observe, that none are so obstinate and inconvincible, as your *half-witted* People, who know just enough to excite their Pride, but not so much as to cure their Ignorance. But even, if this should not be the Case, *Peremptoriness* is certainly a Thing that befits no Form of Understanding. Wise Men it makes *disobliging* and troublesome, and Fools *ridiculous* and contemptible: It casts a Prejudice upon the most *solid* Reasoning, and renders the *lighter* more notoriously despicable: *Good Parts*, by being tinctured with it, are made a Snare to their Owners, and useless to others; and *mean Parts*, under its Infection, are condemned to be always so, by despising the Aids which should improve them.

THE like may be said of that other Kind of *Peremptoriness*, which consists in asserting *Matters of Fact* with so much *Positiveness*, that it is attended with many ill Consequences, though perhaps of a different Nature; that it often engages Men in Oaths and Execrations, to confirm their incredible Stories; that it betrays them into Feuds and perpetual Quarrels, when they meet with others, as positive as themselves; that it exposes them to the Contempt and Scorn of every Company, while the *Good* abominate their Sin, and the *Ill* triumph over their Folly; and yet, after all, that it is so far from gaining Credit to their present Affirmations, that it destroys it for the future. For he, that sees a Man make no Difference in the Confidence of his asserting *Realities* and *Fictions*, can never take his Measures by any Thing he avers, but, according to the common *Proverb*, will be in Danger of disbelieving him, even when he speaks Truth. *Against* Positiveness *in Matters of Fact.*

IN the mean Time, what is there, that he proposes to himself by his Positiveness, that may not be obtained more effectually by a modest and unconcerned Relation? He, that barely relates what he has heard, or proposes modestly what his Opinion is, leaving the Hearer to judge of its Probability, does, doubtless, as civilly entertain the Company, as he, that throws down his *Gauntlet*, in Attestation of what he affirms. He as much, nay, much more persuades his Hearers, because violent Asseverations serve only to give Men an untoward Umbrage, that the Speaker is conscious of his own Falseness; and, all the while, he has his Retreat secure, and stands not responsible for the Truth and Certainty of what he affirms or relates. So that, upon the whole, tho' the Things, which Men advance, be never so certain and infallible, yet it seems much more decent and adviseable, not to press them with too much Importunity; because *Boldness*, as we hinted before, is so known a *Pander* to *Lying*, that Truth cannot but come in Danger of being defamed by its Attendance and Proximity.

[b] Eph. v. 3. [c] The Government of the Tongue, &c. [d] Wisdom ix. 14. [e] The Government of the Tongue, &c.

To conclude, Modeſty is ſo amiable, ſo inſinuating a Thing, that all the Rules of Oratory cannot help Men to a more agreeable Ornament in Diſcourſe. And, if they would but try it in the two foregoing Inſtances, they will undoubtedly find it to be Fact—that a modeſt Propoſal will ſooner captivate Mens Reaſon, and a modeſt Relation, their Belief.

Motives and Conſiderations againſt it.

THESE are ſome of the Duties and Enormities of Speech, in the Purſuit or Avoidance of which, the good or ill Government of our Tongue will conſiſt. And therefore, to heighten our Care in this Reſpect, let it be remembered, [f] that the Uſe of Speech is a peculiar Prerogative of Man above other Creatures, and beſtowed upon us for moſt excellent Purpoſes; which we ſadly pervert, when we make it an Inſtrument, either of reviling God, or injuring our Brother, or expoſing ourſelves: That our *Breath*, as well as other Faculties, is the pure Gift of God, which he may withdraw when he pleaſes; and, in ſo doing, ſurprize us, perhaps, with an Oath, a Blaſphemy, or a Detraction in our Mouths: That, if this he ſhould not do, our Tranſgreſſions, however, of this Kind, do not fly off into empty Air, but are recorded in the Volume of his all-containing Mind, to be produced againſt us at the great Day of Judgment; and that, in the great and terrible Day of the Lord, [h] *every idle Word* (as we are told) and much more then every wicked and profane, every hurtful and abuſive Word, *that Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an Account thereof.* Since [i] *Death and Life*, then, *are in the Tongue*; ſince [k] *by our Words we ſhall be juſtified, and by our Words we ſhall be condemned*; ſince ſo great a Streſs is laid upon this, that [l] *if any Man ſeemeth to be religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, that Man's Religion is vain*; how earneſt ſhould the Conſideration of theſe Things make us in our daily Supplications to God, that, in Conjunction with our own Endeavours, he would be pleaſed to [m] *ſet a Watch before our Mouths, and keep the Door of our Lips*, that [n] *no corrupt Communication*, of any Kind, may *proceed* from thence, *but that which is good to the Uſe of edifying, that it may miniſter* Glory to God, *Grace to the Hearers*, and Salvation to our own Souls.

SECT. III.

Of the Government of the whole Man.

THE two great Virtues relating to the Government of the reſt of the Body, are *Chaſtity* and *Temperance*: But of theſe we ſhall have leſs Reaſon to treat with any great Prolixity, becauſe they are Things obvious to every one's Conception.

Chaſtity, *what.*

I. NOW *Chaſtity*, as it relates to a ſingle State, conſiſts in a total Abſtinence from all Manner of Uncleanneſs; not only that of Adultery and Fornication, but from all other more unnatural Sorts, whether committed upon ourſelves, or in Commerce with any other: And, even in a *conjugal* Eſtate, it requires ſuch Temper and Moderation, as may preſerve the Ends of Matrimony, and continue it (what it was intended to be) a *Remedy*, and not an *Incentive* to Laſciviouſneſs. Nor does this Virtue reſtrain us from the groſſer Acts only, but ſets a Guard likewiſe upon [o] our Eyes, upon [p] our Hands, upon [q] our Tongues, and upon our very Thoughts and Imaginations; for it accounts [r] all laſcivious Looks, obſcene Language, impure Thoughts, and immodeſt Behaviour; all pampering and luxurious Diet to inflame ourſelves; all induſtrious Endeavours to kindle thoſe Flames, and attract, firſt their Eyes, and then the Deſires of others; as well as all *Coquetry*, and Affectation of Dreſs and Deportment, which have a Tendency that Way, among the Number of its Tranſgreſſions. But of theſe Things we have treated already in our Expoſition of the *ſeventh Commandment*, and have only to add, in this Place; that, [s] as of all Vices, to which Mankind are ſubject, there is none of greater Danger and worſe Conſequence to us, than thoſe, which the Luſts of our Fleſh tempt us to; none, to which Nature is more prone; none, by which it is more vilely debaſed, more ſhamefully expoſed, and more mortally wounded; that Perſon we cannot but pronounce very happy, who, in

Its Commendation.

Strength

[f] The Government of the Tongue, *&c.* [g] *Tillotſon's* Sermons, Vol. I. [h] Matth. xii. 36.
[i] Prov. xviii. 21. [k] Matth. xii. 37. [l] James i. 26. [m] Pſal. cxli. 3. [n] Eph. iv. 20.
[o] Matth. v. 28. [p] Ibid. ver. 30. [q] Eph. iv. 29. [r] *Stanhope*, on the Epiſtles and Goſpels.
[s] *Stanhope*, ibid. Vol. IV.

Strength of this Virtue, *keeps under his Body, and brings it into Subjection*; ſince by it he is Conqueror of the ſtrongeſt and ſubtleſt Enemy, and has learnt to be deaf to the buſieſt and moſt importunate Solliciations of a *Syren*, that labours perpetually to ruin him by her treacherous Incantations; ſince by it he ſecures his native Freedom and Greatneſs of Spirit, preſerves his Faculties from thoſe thick unwelcome Miſts, by which Senſe and Appetites ungoverned darken their Sight; ſecures Order and Peace within, by ſubduing all rebellious Paſſions, and keeping Reaſon and Religion conſtantly ſupreme; fixing the Affections upon ſuch Objects, as deſerve their Care and Aſſiduity, and exerciſing the Mind in the ſweet Raptures of Meditations and Prayers, the Thirſt of ſpiritual Comforts, and the unſpeakable Delights, which reſult from an holy Converſation, and fervent Love of God. And ſo we proceed to

II. THE other Virtue, which concerns our Bodies, and that is *Temperance*, which ſeems to be of different Sorts, according to the Objects about which it is exerciſed. For there is, 1. Temperance in *Eating* and *Drinking*, which is not only a neceſſary Duty in Chriſtianity, but a very ornamental Virtue likewiſe. It renders lovely and beautiful the Perſon that is endued with it: It makes him reſpected and reverenced by all, that know him. For a Man, that eats and drinks only for Neceſſity, to repair the daily Decays of his Body, and not to pleaſe his Palate, or ſatisfy the Cravings of a luxurious and extravagant Appetite, lives as becomes a Man; upholds the Dignity of his Nature, and maintains that Dominion, which the *rational* Part of him, his Soul, ought to have over the *brutiſh* Part of him, his Body: Whereas he, who is a Slave to his Palate, or drinks away his Reaſon, turns a wiſe Man into a Fool, and a Man into a Beaſt; and is therefore more vile and deſpicable than other Fools, or other Beaſts; becauſe his Folly, or his Want of Reaſon, is the Effect of his own vicious Choice, whereas theirs was the Lot of their Creation: [u] *Take heed therefore to yourſelves*, ſays our Saviour, *leſt, at any Time, your Hearts be overwhelmed with Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs*; for [x] *Wine is a Mocker; ſtrong Drink is raging, and whoſoever is deceived thereby is not wiſe.* *Temperance* in Eating and Drinking.

2. THERE is Temperance in *Apparel*, which conſiſts in our uſing ſuch Habits and Dreſſes, as ſuit with the *Cuſtom* of the Country, where we live, and that *Station* and Quality of Life, whereunto we are appointed. [y] *Gorgeous Apparel*, as our Saviour obſerves, *is fit for the Courts of Kings*: Nor is it any Oſtentation of Pride, but rather a Matter of good Order and Decency, that Perſons, inveſted with high Power and Authority, ſhould, in their very Garb and Appearance, diſtinguiſh themſelves from others: But then there are theſe Reſtrictions, which this Virtue of Temperance lays upon Men of all Conditions. 1. That the Coſtlineſs of Apparel exceed not the Quality and Ability of the Wearer. For beſides the Debts, and other conſequential Miſchiefs, unavoidably incurred by ſuch Extravagance; [z] this certainly is an Offence againſt the *Decency*, we juſt now mentioned, againſt that natural and becoming *Order*, which the Wiſdom of all Ages has agreed upon, as moſt convenient to diſcriminate People one from another, and, in the Matter of Quality, to prevent Diſreſpect and Confuſion. 2. That the Coſtlineſs of our Apparel obſtruct not our doing the Good, we might otherwiſe do, in ſeveral Acts of Charity: For, ſince Charity and doing Good, is the very End of God's beſtowing Riches upon us, the Pretence of our deſiring them, and the beſt Uſe we can poſſibly make of them; we certainly muſt be ſelf-condemned, if, to pleaſe a vitiated Imagination of our own, or attract the Eyes of others, we lay them out in ſuch extravagant Manner upon ourſelves, as to defraud many poor and needy Creatures of the neceſſary Comforts of Life. 3. That our Dreſs and Attire be ſuch, as ſhall neither naturally, nor deſignedly ſerve to the Purpoſes of Looſeneſs and Immodeſty in ourſelves, nor miniſter Temptations to the unwary Hearts, or the heated and depraved Imaginations of others. 4. That too much of our Time be not taken up in dreſſing and adorning ourſelves; becauſe Time is not our own, and muſt not be expended, as we think fit. And, 5. That, when we are never ſo richly and elegantly dreſſed, we be not ſo conceited, and highly opinionated of ourſelves, as to look down upon others, that make not the like Appearance, with Contempt and Deriſion. For ſince Cloaths (as we muſt allow) add no real Value to any Perſon, the Vanity muſt be egregious, to ſpend any conſiderable Part either of our Thoughts, or Time, or Wealth, or Eſteem, about them. *Temperance in* Apparel.

3. ONCE

[t] *Blackhall*'s Sermons, Vol. I.
[z] *Fleetwood*, on Relative Duties.
[u] Luke xxi. 34.
[x] Prov. xx. 1.
[y] Luke vii. 25.

Temperance in Recreations.

3. ONCE more; there is a Temperance in the Matter of our Recreations. For, though theſe are not only uſeful, but, many Times, neceſſary, to breathe our Spirits, after they have been almoſt ſtifled in a Crowd of Buſineſs, and ſo divert our wearied Thoughts, which, like the Strings of a Lute, by being ſlackened now and then, will ſound the ſweeter, when they come to be wound up again; yet we muſt take great Care, that we turn not our *Phyſick* into *Food*, and make that our *Buſineſs*, which ſhould be our *Diverſion*; that our Recreations be ſhort, and apt to refreſh, but not to ſteal away our Minds from ſeverer Employments. For long Sports and Recreations are like a large Entry to a little Houſe; they take up ſo much Room in the narrow Compaſs of our Time, that there is not Space enough left in it for the more uſeful Apartments; and, ſo far as our Sports do exceed the Meaſures of neceſſary and convenient Recreation, they are unwarrantable Incroachments either upon our Calling, or our Religion. The like Care we muſt take, to make our Recreations a *liberal* Exerciſe to amuſe and recreate us, and not a ſordid Trade to get Money. For ſome Money indeed we may be allowed to play, as much, as will be neither any great Concern to the Loſer, nor Triumph to the Winner; but he, that propoſes to adventure any conſiderable Sum this Way, [b] runs himſelf manifeſtly into the Danger either of *Covetouſneſs*, and an eager Deſire of winning, or of *Rage*, and Anger at his ill Fortune, if he happens to loſe; both of which will naturally engage him in other Commiſſions. *Covetouſneſs* will tempt him to cheat and cozen, and *Anger* to ſwear and curſe, as common Experience ſhews: The Man therefore, who plays *deep*, may every Time be ſaid to ſet his Soul, together with his Money, to ſtake, and is ſure to loſe all Senſe of the Sport and Recreation, which he pretends to aim at; becauſe, all the while that he plays, he is convulſed with alternate Paſſions, and has, at one Time, the Deſires and Fears of the *Covetous*, and, *anon*, the Impatience and Rage of the *furious* Man, boiling in his Breaſt.

Niggardlineſs.

THESE are ſome of the chief Inſtances of that Virtue of Temperance, which concerns our Bodies, and we have only hitherto conſidered the Tranſgreſſions of them, in Point of Exceſs. [c] *There is another Evil*, ſays the Royal Preacher, *which I have ſeen under the Sun; and it is common among Men; a Man to whom God hath given Riches, Wealth, and Honour, ſo that he wanteth nothing for his Soul of all that he deſireth; yet God giveth him not Power to eat thereof.* Miſerable Creatures! who cannot find in their Hearts to borrow ſo much from their Cheſts, as may fill their Bellies, or cloath their Backs; who are ſo intent upon the World, ſo moiling and drudging in it, that they cannot afford themſelves competent Times for Sleep, much leſs for *Recreations*: *This is Vanity, and it is an evil Diſeaſe.* And therefore he very juſtly concludes, [d] *it is good and comely for one to eat and drink*, meaning in Moderation, *and to enjoy the Good of all the Labour, that he taketh under the Sun, all the Days of his Life, which God giveth him; for this is his Portion, and the Gift of God.*

Of Mortification.

Our natural Depravity.

EVER ſince the firſt Corruption of our Nature, our Bodies are become the Inſtruments of Sin, and the Deſires and Appetites, that ariſe from thence, are in a great Meaſure our Prompters and Seducers to it. Theſe are the *Luſts*, which *war againſt the Soul*, as the Apoſtle declares; and yet they have the good Luck to be thought our deareſt Friends, and looked upon as a Part of ourſelves. [e] In them, when *accompliſhed*, we account ourſelves happy; in them, when *croſſed*, we account ourſelves miſerable; and in them, when *unheard*, we account ourſelves affronted. We allow them indeed to do any Thing with us; they can put out our Eyes, and be welcome; they can blind our Judgments, and make Stupification pleaſe us. Our holy Religion however teaches us another Leſſon: It informs us, [f] that, notwithſtanding this dear Union and Commerce between Soul and Body, there are no two in the World at greater Enmity with one another; none, that drive on ſuch different Intereſts, as they. Our fleſhly Luſts are in a State of Rebellion againſt our Reaſon; and to liſten to them, is to be Confederates to our own Ruin. Some of them are *actually*

[a] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, P. I. [b] The Whole Duty of Man. [c] Eccleſ. vi. 1, 2. [d] Ibid. v. 18, 19.
[e] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [f] *Young*, Ibid.

actually evil, and the reſt are inclinable to be ſo; and therefore the Buſineſs of Religion is to deſtroy the *one*, and reſtrain the *other*; from whence ariſe the two great Chriſtian Duties of *Mortification* and *Self-denial*.

Mortification, what, and wherein it conſiſts.

I. THE Apoſtle, ſpeaking of what we have hinted above, *viz.* that [f] *the Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh, and that theſe are contrary the one to the other*, gives us a long Muſter-Roll of that formidable Army of Wickedneſs, againſt which we engaged ourſelves at our Baptiſm to contend. *The Works of the Fleſh*, ſays he, *are manifeſt, which are theſe; Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulation, Wrath, Striſe, Seditions, Hereſies, Envyings, Murthers, Drunkenneſs, Revellings, and ſuch-like.* Now, to ſome, or more of theſe, every one of us, by our depraved Nature, is inclined, and perhaps have run great Lengths in the Commiſſion of them. The Inclination or Appetite therefore, whereby we have been inſtigated to do theſe Things, we muſt ſo totally extirpate and deſtroy, as to leave no Remains of it in our Nature. [g] For it is not enough that we neither *practiſe* any of theſe Sins, nor *conſent* to the Practice of them, unleſs we make it our conſtant Endeavour likewiſe, to wean and abſtract ourſelves from thoſe evil Tendencies and Inclinations, which we have contracted by our adhering to them. Theſe Inclinations indeed are no farther our Sins, than we yield our Conſent to them; yet, while we patiently harbour them in our Boſom, without endeavouring to ſmother and extinguiſh them, they are in ſome Meaſure choſen and *voluntary*, and may be ſaid to have in them the *Bane* and Formality of Sin. Though we ſhould not think it proper, for Inſtance, to run into the ſame Acts of Laſciviouſneſs, that we have formerly done; yet, while we retain, with Delight, our Inclination towards it, and quietly pleaſe ourſelves in the *fantaſtic* Joys of it; while we freely entertain its lewd and filthy Ideas, and ſuffer them to walk to and fro upon the Stage of our Fancies without Check or Controul; we are ſtill incontinent in the Sight of God, to whom our Luſt is as obvious within the *Cloſet* of our Minds, as upon the *Theatre* of our Practice. We muſt not think therefore that our Sin is mortified, becauſe we neither practiſe, nor conſent to the Practice of it; for, while we have any Inclinations to it remaining in us, we muſt ſtrive to ſubdue and conquer them; otherwiſe we have only forced our Enemy into his laſt Retreat, where, by our own Neglect, we give him an Opportunity to *rally*, and re-inforce himſelf againſt us. Our Sin ſtill lives in our *Inclination* to Sin, and will ſoon, if it be not beaten thence, recover its broken Forces, and become as formidable again as ever. If ever therefore we mean to *mortify* our vicious Inclination, we muſt not only abſtain from the Sin itſelf, but avoid all Occaſions, that lead to it; deny ourſelves thoſe lawful Liberties, that too nearly approach it, and impoſe upon ourſelves ſuch voluntary Reſtraints and Severities, as have a natural Tendency to ſtarve and root it out.

A Chriſtian Duty.

How much it is every *Chriſtian*'s Duty, in this Senſe of the Word, to mortify his evil and corrupt Affections, needs not ſurely to be told him, when he remembers, how, at his firſt Initiation into the Service of Chriſt, [h] *he renounced all the ſinful Luſts of the Fleſh*, and at the ſacred *Altar*, when he ratified his baptiſmal Vow, [i] *offered and preſented unto God himſelf his Soul and Body, to be a reaſonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice unto him:* When he reflects, how frequently, in the *Old* Teſtament, he is called upon [k] *to ceaſe to do Evil, to learn to do well*, to [l] *circumciſe himſelf to the Lord, and to take away the Fore-ſkin of his Heart*; and how inceſſantly in the *New*; to [m] *purge out the old Leaven*, in order to become *a new Lump*, and [n] *to put off, concerning his former Converſation, the Old Man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful Luſts, and to be renewed in the Spirit of his Mind:* And when he conſiders, how diſmal a Proſpect is ſet before him, if he continues his vicious Inclinations; but how bleſſed and joyful an one, if he abandons and deſtroys them: For this is a Decree, that ſhould always be ſounded in every Chriſtian's Ear, [o] *If ye live after the Fleſh, ye ſhall die; but, if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye ſhall live.*

And neceſſary to our future Happineſs.

AND indeed, if we conſider the preſent Depravation of our Nature, together with the Nature of thoſe Felicities, which God has provided for us in a future Life, we ſhall find it morally impoſſible for us ever to attain the one, without endeavour-

[f] Gal. v. 17, &c. [g] *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, Part III. [h] Vide Church-Catechiſm. [i] Vide Communion Service. [k] Iſa. i. 16, 17. [l] Jer. iv. 4. [m] 1 Cor. v. 7. [n] Eph. iv. 22, 23. [o] Rom. viii. 13.

ing to correct or amend the other. Our future Felicity will conſiſt in the *beatific* Viſion of God and his Chriſt, in the happy Society of Saints and Angels, and in ſuch rational Pleaſures and Employments, as the Beauty of the Object, and other Circumſtances of the Place may be ſuppoſed to ſupply. But now allowing the Caſe, that all the great Hinderances of Impiety were removed; that God were ſo eaſy and indulgent as to paſs by, in the other World, all the Affronts, that wicked Souls have offered him in this; yet ſuch is the *Incongruity* between their Temper, and the Temper of Heaven, that he could not make them happy *there*, without either creating in them a new Heart, or creating for them a new Heaven. For alas! if we conſider the Matter rightly, how could Souls of their Reliſh and Complexion find a proper Employment for themſelves in the Regions of Bliſs? There are no *wanton Amours* among thoſe heavenly Lovers, no Rivers of Wine, among the Rivers of Pleaſure, to gratify their boundleſs Senſuality: No Paraſite, to flatter their lofty Pride; no Miſeries, to feed their meagre Envy; no Miſchiefs, to tickle their deviliſh Revenge; but all the Felicities, with which that heavenly State abounds, *viz.* Praiſe, Love, and Contemplation, are ſuch, that they would loath and nauſeate them, as too pure and *refined* for their depraved Appetites; and not improbably, if they had their own Option, deſire to flee to Hell for Shelter, and to Spirits of their own Depravity, rather than ſtay to be tormented in an Heaven ſo incongruous to their Nature. And hence we may obſerve, that, as neceſſary as it is to obtain Heaven and avoid Hell, ſo neceſſary it is for us to crucify the Fleſh, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, with *the Affections and Luſts*; becauſe God has reduced us to this ſhort Iſſue, either our Sins or our Souls muſt die; either we muſt ſhake Hands with Heaven, or with our depraved Appetites: So that, unleſs we value eternal Happineſs ſo little, as to exchange it for the ſordid trifling Pleaſures of Sin; and unleſs we love our Sins ſo well, as to ranſom them with the Blood of our immortal Souls, it nearly concerns us, in the next Place, to ſit us down, and conſider a little, by what Helps and Inſtruments we may beſt be enabled to ſubdue them.

The Means and Inſtruments of doing it.

The Holy Spirit.

IN examining the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Ghoſt, we had Occaſion to conſider more largely its *ordinary* Operations, and how far they contribute to the Sanctification of our Minds and Affections, and need only obſerve in this Place, that, conſidering the Infirmity of our Natures, and the many Temptations, we have to encounter; how we are habituated to a *ſenſual* Life, before we are capable of exerciſing our Reaſon, and how much our Wills are *biaſſed*, and led aſide by our carnal Inclinations; it is hardly to be imagined, that we ſhould ever be able to retrieve ourſelves from the Power and Dominion of our Luſts, without ſome *ſupernatural* Aid and Aſſiſtance. We want not indeed an *Underſtanding*, capable of diſtinguiſhing between Good and Evil; nor is our *Will* ſo far determined to Evil, as not to be able to comply with the Dictates of right Reaſon; we can deliberate what is beſt to chuſe, and chuſe what we find beſt upon Deliberation; but then we are like a Man ſtanding between two contrary Roads, naturally indeed free to turn either to the Right-Hand or to the Left; but, on the Left-hand Way, there are ſo many Temptations, perpetually *beckoning* to us, and inviting us unto that which is evil, and our carnal Paſſions and Appetites are ſo ready, upon all Occaſions, to yield and comply with them, that we ſhould certainly attend to their *Lure*, did not the Holy Spirit, with very ſtrong Arguments, importune us to turn to the Right-Hand Way of Virtue and Goodneſs.

Our own Endeavours.

THE great Principle then, which is to begin and conduct the Work of our *Mortification*, is the Spirit of God, operating upon our Minds, ſometimes by the Arguments and Motives of the Goſpel; ſometimes by external Providences, that excite us to our Duty; ſometimes by the Aids and Aſſiſtances of his Holy Angels; and many Times by thoſe internal Motions and Suggeſtions, which he himſelf immediately infuſes. But how great a Share ſoever this bleſſed Agent may have in this Work, yet, ſince we are enjoined to *cleanſe ourſelves from all Filthineſs both of Fleſh and Spirit, perfecting Holineſs in the Fear of God*, there is certainly ſome Part of it incumbent upon us. As we are naturally dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins, we cannot indeed give the firſt Motions to our Minds, in the Buſineſs we are now ſpeaking of; but, when once we perceive it given, we have the Means and Inſtruments in our Power, that are proper to continue it, and, by the Bleſſing of God, to bring it to Perfection. Upon any ſudden Conviction of the Sinfulneſs of our Ways, we can ſit ourſelves down, and conſider the Motives and Arguments, which our Holy Religion

gion has provided us againſt the moſt pleaſant and alluring, the moſt profitable and advantageous of our Luſts: When we have weighed theſe in a juſt Balance, the momentary Pleaſures and Profits of this Life, with that Eternity of Happineſs or Miſery, that waits us in the next, we can then take a Survey of the Road that leads to our Duty, and view carefully all the Difficulties and Temptations, that lie in our Way; and, when we have made a proper Eſtimate of both, aſk our Hearts ſeriouſly, whether, for the Joys, *that are ſet before us*, in a diſtant Country, they are willing to ſurmount the one, and renounce the other. After we have thus calmly conſidered with ourſelves all the Arguments againſt our Luſts, and all the Difficulties of forſaking them, and have reaſoned our Wills into an *expreſs* Conſent to abandon them for ever; we can then fall down upon our bended Knees, and, in a ſolemn Manner, devote ourſelves to God's Service, moſt religiouſly vowing and promiſing, that whatever we have done amiſs, we will never do ſo any more. In Obedience to this Reſolution, we can keep ourſelves at a wary Diſtance from our Luſts, and every Thing, that may prove an Excitement to them; at leaſt, till we have ſo far gotten the *Maſtery* of them, that their Nearneſs ceaſes to be a Temptation to us: And, to compleat this Maſtery, we can draw off from the Enemy their Succours, by Faſting and Abſtinence; can confirm our Party by a religious Obſervation of God's holy Ordinances; and procure freſh *Auxiliaries* from above, by conſtant Invocation and Prayer.

THIS is certainly what any of us can do: And, if we continue to do this, with an hearty Purpoſe to extricate ourſelves from the Paths of Deſtruction, there is no Doubt, but that *God's Grace will be ſufficient for us.* By the Concurrence of this Principle with our own Faculties, this holy Reſolution was at firſt *begotten* in us; and therefore 'twill injure the Character of our *Heavenly Father*, to think, that, for Want of any Aſſiſtance, ſo long as our own Endeavours are not wanting, he will ſuffer his own *Offſpring* to become *abortive*.

Of Self-denial.

Our Saviour's Words, Matth. xvi. 24, *explained.*

THE only Place, as I remember, wherein the Duty of *Self-denial* is expreſſly enjoined us, is in [q] the Diſcourſe, which our Saviour held with his Diſciples, not long before his *Crucifixion*; and, to find out the true Senſe of the Word, it may not be amiſs to enquire a little into ſome Circumſtances, that occaſioned the Diſcourſe. Our Saviour, as the Text acquaints us, had, ſome Time before, [r] *ſhewn unto his Diſciples, that he muſt go up to Jeruſalem, and ſuffer many Things of the Elders, and Chief Prieſts, and Scribes, and*, at laſt, *be killed.* Upon the hearing of this, *Peter*, who was always particularly zealous for his Maſter's Welfare, preſumes to expoſtulate with him, and (as the Text expreſſes it) [s] *to rebuke him, ſaying, be it far from thee, Lord, this ſhall not be unto thee.* There is a peculiar *Emphaſis* in the Words, Ἱλεώς σοι κύριε, which our Tranſlation does not ſo well anſwer. For they properly mean, *Lord, favour thyſelf, or be not ſo negligent of thy Safety, as to ſuffer ſuch Evils to come upon thee.* This in itſelf was no unkind Speech of the Apoſtle; but then the Misfortune was, that he had made no proviſional Exception for the Glory of God, nor any Reſerve for thoſe Obligations, which the Cauſe of Righteouſneſs required of his Maſter; and for this Reaſon he met with ſo ſevere a Reprehenſion —— [t] *Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an Offence to me; for thou ſavoureſt not the Things that be of God, but thoſe that be of Men.* The Character of this Diſciple will hardly admit us to think, that, how much ſoever his Advice might favour of *Fleſh and Blood*, there was any Spark in it, either of Pride, Diſſimulation, or Malice of Intention, which the Devil is wont to make uſe of in his Addreſſes to Mankind; and therefore it may be no bad Conjecture, that our Bleſſed Saviour called his Diſciple *Satan*, "becauſe he had imprudently run upon the ſame Advice, that Satan "employs, the moſt ſucceſsfully of all others, to ruin and undo Men by, and that "is the Advice of *Self-indulgence*."

HOWEVER this be, 'tis certain, that our Saviour takes Occaſion from hence, to recommend two Duties, which himſelf intended to practiſe, though little in Uſe, before his Example taught us the Way; *Self-denial*, which being a Man's own Act, requires,

[q] Matth. xvi. 24. [r] Ibid. ver. 21. [s] Ibid. ver. 22. [t] Ibid. ver. 23.

requires, that he ſhould ſuffer *from himſelf* by *voluntary* Inflictions; and *taking up our Croſs*, which, being inflicted by another's Act, (for every condemned Perſon was, by his Sentence, to bear his Croſs to the Place of Execution) requires a ſubmiſſive and patient Bearing of *involuntary* Evils, or ſuch as the Providence of God ordains to come upon us from other Hands. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto his Diſciples, if any Man will come after me*, in the Capacity of a Diſciple, and Profeſſor of my Religion, *let him deny himſelf, and take up his Croſs, and follow me.*

Self-denial, what.

FROM this Expoſition of the Context we may obſerve, that by the Word *Self*, in the Compound, we are not to underſtand (as ſome have imagined) any of the *criminal* Affections of our animal Part, but ſuch only, as are of an *indifferent* Nature. In our Conſtitution (as we ſaid in the former Section) we have Appetites, ſome that are morally *evil*, and others, that in themſelves are *innocent*, and only liable to be depraved, if they chance to be immoderately indulged. Of this Kind are the Deſires of Eaſe and Indolence, of proper Refreſhments and honeſt Pleaſures, and of avoiding ſuch Things, as are noxious and afflicting to human Nature; theſe were in our Nature from the very firſt, even before Sin had defaced its Purity, and, conſequently, our Saviour took them upon him with our Nature, tho' it is certain, he partook of nothing that was ſinful in it. To theſe it was, that St *Peter*, in the Advice he gave his Maſter, addreſſed himſelf; and his Maſter, in his Rejection of that Advice, has given us to underſtand, that even the moſt innocent Deſires of Nature are, upon ſome Occaſions, to be reſtrained. So that the Sum of the Doctrine, we are to inſiſt on under this Head, will amount to this—— [u] "That "there are *voluntary* Severities, conſiſting in the Submiſſion of ourſelves to many "unpleaſing Things, though otherwiſe *avoidable*; and in the Reſtraint of ourſelves "from many pleaſant Things, though otherwiſe *lawful*, which, upon their reſpective "Occaſions, we ought to engage in, as abſolutely neceſſary to make us good "Chriſtians."

The Neceſſity of it in a ſettled State.

WHEN we find the Chriſtian State ſo often compared unto a *Warfare*, it is to let us underſtand, that there is a neceſſary and continual Engagement of our *rational* Deſires againſt our *ſenſual*, in order to bring them under, and keep them in Obedience; and this is a Warfare, from whence there muſt be no *Diſmiſſion*. There muſt be no League, no Truce, no laying down of Arms in it: For our Enemies are perfidious, and will never keep the Peace; and therefore we are never out of Danger, but while we are actually fighting. St *Paul*, a Man of Miracles, and Viſions, and of Sanctity of Life more glorious than either, even while he was daily fought againſt from without, by the Malice of Satan and evil Men, was nevertheleſs obliged to fight againſt himſelf, to *caſt down* his Mind, as he calls it, and *to beat down his Body*, and bodily Affections: And leſt we might ſuppoſe, that he did this from a Principle of Vain-glory, the Affectation of Singularity, or a ſimple Miſtake of Judgment, he tells us withal, that the Reaſon of his exerciſing ſuch Diſcipline over himſelf was, leſt, for the Want of it, [x] *he might poſſibly be a Caſt-away*: And, if ſo great a *Saint* was obliged to maintain this Fight, for Fear of being a *Caſt-away*, who among Chriſtians can lay down their Arms, and be ſafe?

Now this fighting with our Appetites and Deſires is the very ſame Thing, as *denying ourſelves*; and the Practice of it conſiſts in reſtraining them, and not giving them leave to *ſatiate* themſelves on their particular Objects: For he that gives his Appetites their looſe and their Fill even of Enjoyments, that are otherwiſe lawful, brings himſelf in Danger of being worſted by them: Becauſe, by what he allows them, they will grow ſo very ſtrong, that 'tis a Thouſand to one, but they will take the reſt, in ſpite of his Approbation.

In a penitential *State.*

THUS, in the *ordinary* Courſe of every Man's Life, the Duty of *Self-denial* is neceſſary, even though he has never fallen into any flagitious Way: But then, if unhappily he has been engaged in a Courſe of Sin, the Reaſons and Obligations of it become ſtronger, To this Purpoſe, St *Paul*, ſpeaking of the ſeveral Offices of Repentance, reckons them up in the following Manner; [y] *behold this ſelf-ſame Thing, that ye ſorrowed after a godly Sort, what Carefulneſs is wrought in you, yea, what Clearing of yourſelves, yea, what Indignation, yea, what Fear, yea, what vehement Deſire, yea, what Zeal, yea, what Revenge!* So that a Man cannot repent, in the Senſe of the Scripture, without bringing himſelf under the daily Severities of Mourning, and Vigilance, and Reſtraint of Delights, and Labour in the Works of Charity, and whatever elſe may conduce to the humbling of our Nature, and taking *Revenge*

[u] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. [x] 1 Cor. ix. 27. [y] 2 Cor. vii. 11.

Revenge upon thoſe Paſſions and Deſires, whereby we have offended God. And, for this Reaſon, I ſuppoſe, it is, that the *Ancients* were wont to call ſuch Inſtances of *Penance* by the Name of *Satisfactions*: Not that they eſteemed them of Value to ſatisfy the Divine Juſtice, nothing but the Blood of *Jeſus* can do that; but that they thought them the Conditions, which the Goſpel requires of *Penitents*, as highly neceſſary, both for their preſent Correction, and future Caution: And accordingly we may obſerve, that [a] whenever the *Fathers* uſed this Word, 'tis either with Reſpect *to Men, or to God*; if *to Men*, then the Meaning of it is, that, by theſe external Acts of Sorrow, we *ſatisfy* the *Church* of our Repentance, and make Reparation for thoſe Offences and Scandals, which we gave by our Sins; but if *to God*, then 'tis taken for the Acknowledgment of our Faults, and the earneſt Deſire we have of Pardon and Forgiveneſs.

to a glorified *State.*

NOR is the Duty of Self-denial neceſſary to our preſent Condition only, whether we conſider it in a *ſettled* or *penitential* Capacity; but as it has a Tendency likewiſe to our future Glory and Felicity. It can hardly eſcape the Obſervation of any common Reader, that there is, in Scripture, a certain *Fitneſs* or *Meetneſs* required in thoſe, that are to be *Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*; but then the Queſtion is, how we muſt acquire this *Fitneſs?* And by what Means we are to induce this perfective Diſpoſition into our Souls? The Apoſtle, indeed, tells us, concerning our Saviour himſelf, that [a] *he was made perfect through Sufferings*; *for it became him*, ſays he, *of whom are all Things, and by whom are all Things, in bringing many Sons unto Glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through Suffering:* But then theſe Words do not abſolutely imply, that theſe Sufferings of our Saviour were neceſſary for his *perſonal* Perfection: He might have paſſed to Glory an eaſier Way, becauſe he wanted no Virtue to accompliſh and qualify him for that State. They imply, however, that his Sufferings were neceſſary for his *exemplary* Perfection, *i. e.* as he was to be an Example to us, and the Captain and Preſident of our Salvation; as he was to lead us the Way, by which many *adopted Sons* of God might likewiſe paſs into Glory, ſo it was neceſſary that he ſhould be made *perfect by Sufferings*, becauſe no adopted Son, no Chriſtian, can ever be perfect without them: And accordingly we find it mentioned in the Chriſtian Covenant, as an expreſs Condition of our future Glory, [b] that, *if we ſuffer with Chriſt, we ſhall alſo reign with him*; for it is [c] *through much Tribulation*, (through many Wreſtlings or Contendings, as it is in the *Original*) *that we muſt enter into the Kingdom of God.*

Now, if the Spirit of God gives us Warning, that Sufferings are of ſo neceſſary Importance to our future Welfare, and yet, at the ſame Time, does not lay upon us any outward Neceſſity to ſuffer; this is a plain Indication, I think, that the Neceſſity lies upon ourſelves to take Care, that we ſuffer from our own *voluntary* Diſcipline; that we faſt often, pray much, impoſe Taſks of Labour, ſtrict Rules of Abſtinence, and have a continual Watch over ourſelves, which, in the Time of the Church's Peace and Tranquillity, was called a *daily Martyrdom.*

And even in Uſe among the beſt Heathens.

THE primitive Chriſtians were very remarkable for this Kind of Diſcipline. [d] Their callous Knees, and guttered Cheeks, and meagre Looks, occaſioned by their faſting, weeping, and praying, are often taken Notice of in Antiquity, though with us miſtaken for ſuperſtitious Uſages, and Acts of Supererogation. That Chriſtian, however, (as St *Jerom* calls one upon a like Occaſion) that Chriſtian, I ſay, is by much too *delicate*, who would excuſe himſelf from this Diſcipline in the School of Chriſt, when we may find, that, in every *Heathen* School, they required no leſs to make a *Philoſopher*; that is, in the Senſe of their ſober Stile, an honeſt and good Man.

[e] *EPICURUS*, indeed, preſented the World with a very *ſpecious Scheme*, when he pretended to ſatisfy the Aims both of *Senſe* and *Morality* together, when he invited Men to Virtue and Pleaſure at the ſame Time; telling them, that a Life, which was both virtuous and pleaſurable, was purely *the Life of the Gods.* But all the other Sects remonſtrate againſt this new *Doctor*, as one, who, by hanging out the Flag of Pleaſure, had covered all that was *true*, and laid aſide all that was *great* in Philoſophy. They had juſter Notions of the Corruption of human Nature; and therefore they teach, that whoever intends to be a virtuous Man, muſt by

[a] *Cave*'s Primitive Chriſtianity, Part III [a] Heb. ii. 10. [b] 2 Tim. ii. 12. [c] Acts xiv. 22.
[d] *Cave*, ibid. [e] *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II.

no Means, propoſe his Life to be a Scene of Pleaſure. They teach us, that *Wiſdom* and *Felicity* have built their *Palaces* together upon a craggy *Rock*, whither it is not a little difficult to aſcend: They repreſent their *Hercules*, as always engaging in Labours, always ſeeking Conflicts, always harſh and ſevere to himſelf; and his Character they propoſe to their Scholars, as the common Guide to Proficiency in good Living. But we have our Inſtruction from a better Fountain, and are ſufficiently advertized what we are to do, when we are commanded, by our Bleſſed Saviour, [f] *to enter in at the ſtrait Gate; for wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way, that leadeth to Deſtruction; but ſtrait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way, which leadeth to Life, and few there be that find it.*

Of Regeneration.

The Occaſion of our Saviour's Words, Matt. xix. 16.

THE firſt Place, wherein we find expreſs Mention made of our *Regeneration*, is, (as I take it) in our Saviour's Conference with *Nicodemus*. *Nicodemus* was a Ruler of the *Jews*, and of the Sect of the *Phariſees*, great Enemies to our Bleſſed Lord; but being convinced, by his Doctrine and Miracles, of his Divine Miſſion and Authority, he came, no doubt, though it was at Night that he came, with an Intent to be farther inſtructed by him. The Evangeliſt has recorded the firſt Addreſs, which this Ruler makes to our Saviour; but, from the Nature of our Saviour's Anſwer, ſome have been induced to think, that his whole Speech is not related; and that, after he had done his Preface, he might not improbably put ſome ſuch Queſtions to our Lord, as we find the young Man did in the Goſpel, *viz.* [g] *What good Things he was to do, that he might obtain eternal Life?* Becauſe the Anſwer, which is returned him, is ſo very much to this Purpoſe, and ſeems to have ſo ſlender a Connexion with what went before; [h] *Verily, verily, I ſay unto thee, except a Man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God.*

To *be born again* is a Form of Speech, which not only occurs in the Writings of ſome [i] *Gentile Moraliſts*, but was of common Uſe among the *Jewiſh* Doctors. They received *Proſelytes* into the Church by Baptiſm; and being perſuaded, that the *Heathen* Soul was, by this Means, waſhed away, and a new and pure one ſubſtituted in its room, they were, for this Reaſon, wont to call theſe Proſelytes *new-born*, *new Men*, *new Creatures*, and the like. This was the common Phraſe and Stile of the *Rabbins*, and therefore our Saviour very juſtly reproves *Nicodemus* for his Ignorance of it; *The Notion,* [k] *Art thou a Maſter of* Iſrael, *and knoweſt not theſe Things?* The Deſign of the Expreſſion, however, is to inform us, that there is a two-fold Birth or Nativity, which every one is to undergo: The *firſt* is common and *natural*; when the tender Infant quits its cloſer Cell, wherein it has been ſome Months impriſoned, and, coming into the World, enters into a new and different State from what it was in before: But the *ſecond* is ſpiritual and *ſupernatural*, when a Perſon, upon his firmly believing and embracing the Goſpel of Chriſt, is not only changed from his wicked Courſes, to a contrary Form of living, but is poſſeſſed likewiſe with Thoughts, and Deſires, and Affections, quite different from what he had before; inſomuch, that, both to himſelf and others, who behold him, he looks not like the ſame Man, but in the Temper of his Mind, as well as the Tenor of his Actions, is indeed another Creature.

and Nature of Regeneration.

HIS *Underſtanding*, which was before [l] *darkened, being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that was in him*, becomes then *enlightened* to diſcern his true Intereſt, and is informed with the Knowledge of thoſe great Truths, which he is moſt of all required to know, concerning God and himſelf, and a Life to come. [m] This Knowledge has a powerful Effect and Influence over his Will and Affections. The Belief of the great Truths of the Goſpel gives him a new Set of Principles, makes him have different Notions and Opinions of Things, form different Proſpects and Projects, and ſteer quite a contrary Courſe, to what he did before. For, whereas before he conſulted only his preſent Eaſe and Pleaſure, ſtudied the Gratifications of his ſenſual Luſts and Appetites, and gave himſelf up to the Intereſts of

[f] Matth. vii. 13, 14. [g] Ibid. xix. 16. [h] John iii. 3. [i] Thus both the *Platonicks* and *Stoicks* uſe the Word Παλιγγενία, which is no other than *Regeneration*; the *former*, for the Renovation of all Things, after certain Intervals and Revolutions; and the *latter*, for the Renovation of all Things, after the Conflagration of the World. [k] John iii. 10. [l] Eph. iv. 18. [m] *Ibbot*'s Sermons, Vol. I.

of this Life, the Welfare of his Body, and the Concerns of the World; he now *mortifies his Members, which are upon the Earth*, endeavours to ſubdue his Paſſions, and to get above his Body, and above the World. He is now governed by Reaſon, and not by Senſe; *he walks by Faith, and not by Sight*; and the World is crucified to him, and he to the World. He calculates all his Actions for Eternity, and is not ſo much concerned what befals him here, as what ſhall become of him hereafter. In a Word, he is new moulded and faſhioned, formed over again, and created, as it were, anew, by being furniſhed with a new Principle of Life and Action, engaged in new Courſes, and put upon new Deſigns and Undertakings. He has new Objects of his Hopes and Fears, of his Love and Hatred, new Thoughts and Sentiments of Things, and new Rules for the Conduct of his Life and Actions. *Old Things are paſt away, and all Things are become new* to him; nay, he is even new to himſelf, as well as others; and therefore very properly in Scripture-Language is he called *a new Creature*, or *a new Creation.*

AT the *firſt* Creation of the World, *the Spirit of God*, as we are told, *moved upon the Face of the Waters*, and was concerned in the Formation of Man: And, in the *ſecond* Creation, or Redemption of the World, the ſame Spirit moves in Mens Hearts, and inclines them to comply with thoſe gracious Terms of Reconciliation, which are offered to the World. And, for this Reaſon, St *John*, ſpeaking of thoſe that believed in our Saviour, gives us to know, that [n] *they were born, not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Fleſh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God, i. e.* it was not by any Strength of their own, that they had this Power of becoming *the Sons of God*, by believing in our Saviour, but by the Power of Divine Grace, proceeding from the Spirit of God. The ſame Power, which firſt formed Man out of the Duſt of the Earth, and, when he is returned to Duſt, will raiſe him out of it again, does create us again unto good Works, and faſhion us after the Image of him, who firſt created us in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs: For, [o] *if the Spirit of him, that raiſed Jeſus from the Dead, dwell in us; he, that raiſed up Chriſt from the Dead, ſhall quicken our mortal Bodies, i. e.* from dead Works *now*, and *hereafter* from Death itſelf, *by his Spirit, that dwelleth in us.*

WE muſt not however imagine, that, becauſe the Author of our Regeneration is an Almighty Agent, the Effects of his Operations upon our Minds are either *inſtantaneous* or *irreſiſtible*; that ourſelves are purely *paſſive* under them, can contribute nothing towards them, and are wholly ignorant of the Steps and Meaſures, that are taken in them. [p] For, beſides that, theſe Notions are a manifeſt Defeat of all the Exhortations and Threatenings recorded in Scripture, and a great Diſcouragement to all virtuous Endeavours; they are a plain Contradiction to Reaſon and common Experience, both of which do abundantly teſtify, that the Grace of God, and thoſe good Motions, which are ſtirred up in us, may be, and frequently are, neglected and reſiſted; that Men muſt do ſomething themſelves, in order to conquer their vicious Inclinations, and acquire ſettled Habits of Piety and Virtue; and that this is a Work, which cannot be done in an Inſtant, but requires Time, as well as Pains, to bring it to Perfection.

FROM what hath been ſaid on this Subject, thus far purſued, we may plainly perceive, that Regeneration is that Change and Alteration in a Man, whereby his Nature, which is corrupted by Sin, is ſanctified and purified; whereby his Iniquities are purged away; and he, by God's Spirit, endued with true Knowledge, Righteouſneſs, and Holineſs: And we come now to ſhew the abſolute Neceſſity of it, in order to our future Happineſs.

Its Neceſſity to future Happineſs.

ST *Paul*, ſpeaking of ſome, who deſired *to make a fair Shew in the Fleſh*, and *conſtrained* others to *be circumciſed*, tells us expreſſly, that [q] *in Chriſt Jeſus neither Circumciſion availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but a new Creature.* Circumciſion, we know, was an Ordinance of God's own Inſtitution, the *Seal* of the Covenant between him and his People, a *Mark* of Diſtinction between them and other Nations, and a *Symbol* of inward Purity, or Sanctity of Mind; and yet the Apoſtle tells thoſe, that held themſelves obliged to the Obſervation of it, that all its ſuppoſed Privileges and Prerogatives, without a Renovation of their Nature, availed nothing: And, [r] by Parity of Reaſon, he muſt be interpreted to ſay to us, that our Sacramental Waſhing in Baptiſm, our ſpiritual Gifts and Endowments. our profound Knowledge

[n] John i. 13. [o] Rom. viii. 11. [p] *Ibbot*'s Sermons, Vol. I. [q] Gal. vi. 15.
[r] *Edwards*, on Regeneration.

ledge and Learning, our Obſervation of the Ordinances of Chriſt, and our outward Acts of religious Worſhip will all *avail* us *nothing*, unleſs we have a new Principle implanted in us, ſuch as influences our Lives, and produces Evangelical Obedience. For it is not ſaying to our Saviour, *Lord, Lord!* nor all the fair Speeches, and Profeſſions in the World, that will recommend us to the Favour of God, who hath eternally decreed, that [z] *without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee him*; and that [a] *into the heavenly Jeruſalem*, there *ſhall, in no wiſe, enter any Thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lye.*

WHAT all the Particulars of that City of God may comprize, it *does not yet appear*; but this we know in general, that the Company, the Employment, and the Happineſs of it, are of a pure and ſpiritual Nature, very different from any Thing here below, and directly contrary to all the ſinful Pleaſures, and ſenſual Enjoyments of the Men of this World. And therefore, if we would be Partakers of the Reſurrection of the Juſt; if we would be numbered among the Saints, and bear a Part in the Buſineſs and Employment, in the Joys and Pleaſures of a future State; we muſt qualify and prepare ourſelves for it, by cleanſing our Hearts from all inordinate Paſſions, ſubduing our Luſts, and conquering the vicious Inclinations of our corrupt Nature; by acquiring good and virtuous Habits and Diſpoſitions of Mind, an holy Frame and Temper of Soul, and renewing ourſelves, Day by Day, after the Image of him, that *created* us, and the Likeneſs of him, that *redeemed* us. For this is the Will of God, even your *Sanctification*, [b] *that ye put off, concerning the former Converſation, the Old Man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful Luſts; and be renewed in the Spirit of your Mind; and that ye put on the New Man, which, after God, is created in Righteouſneſs, and true Holineſs.*

How to know whether we are regenerate, *or no.*

IF ſuch then be the Ordination and Appointment of God, that, without being *regenerate*, there is no entering into the Kingdom of Heaven; it ſeems to be a Matter of no ſmall Concernment to us, to be ſatisfied, unto what *Claſs* of Men it is that we belong. As long as we continue in this State of Infirmity, we cannot but be liable to Sin, nor is every Tranſgreſſion an immediate Forfeiture of our Birth-Right: But then the Difference between the *Regenerate* and *Unregenerate* is this——that the one ſins out of Incogitancy, or Want of Conſideration; the other out of propenſe Malice and Deſign; the one uſes Means for the Diſcovery and Conviction of his Sin, the other negligently overlooks, and thinks no more of it; the one laments and bemoans it ſeverely, the other makes a Mock of it perhaps, or pleaſes his Imagination with frequent Reflections on it; the one, from his Failings, improves his future Vigilance, the other hardens himſelf in ſinning, and comes every Time to his Iniquity with more and more Greedineſs. * The Senſe, in ſhort, and Conviction of Sin, the Confeſſion of it, and the Remorſe and Repentance for it, which the *Regenerate* expreſs, proceed from their real Hatred of it, as it is the greateſt Evil in its own Nature, and as it is diſpleaſing to God. Their Wiſhes, and Reſolutions, and Promiſes, come from their Hearts, and therefore prove effectual. Their Belief of the Doctrines of the Goſpel is well-grounded, which makes it permanent and laſting. Their religious Exerciſes and Performances are Acts of the *inward Man*, of the Soul and Spirit, and ſpring from a deep Senſe of the Majeſty of him, to whom they are addreſſed. Their Obedience to the Divine Commands is impartial, and univerſal, and without Reſerve. It flows from a lively and active Faith, from a Love of God and their Duty, and from Sincerity of Heart; and laſtly, they ſtrive to do all this in a right Manner, and for a right End, the Glory of God, and of their Redeemer, *Jeſus Chriſt.*

THESE are ſome of the *Signs*, whereby ye may perceive, whether or no ye belong to the Number of the Regenerate: If, upon Examination, ye find ye do not, [x] *neither ſhould your Eyes ſleep, nor your Eye-lids ſlumber, nor the Temples of your Head take any Reſt*, until ye reſolve upon a Change. *This is the one Thing neceſſary*; and therefore let all your Cares and Projects, all your Aims and Deſigns give way to this. Without this, ye muſt periſh everlaſtingly; and [y] *what is a Man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul?* If, on the contrary, ye experimentally find, that the Grace of God's Holy Spirit has begun the Work of *Regeneration* in your Souls, has renewed your Mind, and tamed your Paſſions, and changed your

[z] Heb. xii. 14. [a] Rev. xxi. 27. [b] Eph. iv. 22. * *Edwards*, on Regeneration.
[x] Pſal. cxxxii. 4. [y] Matth. xvi. 26.

your Lives, *rejoice and be exceeding glad*, becauſe your Renovation, being thus happily commenced, is a good Pledge, and Reaſon to hope, that your Names ſhall be *written in the Book of Life.*

Of abſtaining from Evil-appearance.

To abſtain from Evil-appearance, what.

ST *Paul*, towards the Concluſion of his firſt Epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians*, praying with all Earneſtneſs for them, *that the very God of Peace would ſanctify them wholly*, and that *their whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, might be preſerved blameleſs, unto the Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, makes it on their Part a Means highly neceſſary to this good Effect, that they ſhould *abſtain from all Appearance of Evil, i. e.* that the whole Tenor of their Actions ſhould not only be *innocent*, but of *good Report*; not only free from the Guilt of Sin, but even from the leaſt Colour or Suſpicion of it; ſo guarded with Care, and guided with Diſcretion, as not to give the leaſt Occaſion for any to blame or cenſure their righteous Doings.

The Extent of this Duty.

THIS ſeems, at firſt Sight, to be the proper Senſe of the Precept; but then we muſt take Care to reduce it under ſome Reſtrictions. For, [y] ſince Mankind, as we daily find, are ſo very ignorant and paſſionate, apt to judge without Evidence, or according to Prejudice or Reſentment; ſo full of Hypocriſy, and willing to exalt themſelves by abaſing others; ſo full of affected Wiſdom, which they think they can beſt diſplay by finding Faults; ſo addicted to Detraction, and careful to furniſh themſelves with Materials for Slander; and ſo conſcious of their own Sins, and willing to conclude others under the like Condemnation: Since there are theſe, I ſay, and many more Reaſons, to deprave Mens Judgments concerning others, 'tis certain, that no Action can be *innocent*, but what, for aught we know, may chance to appear ſinful to ſome ignorant Men, nor any Duty ſo highly *obligatory*, but what, through Prejudice or Corruption, may be evil thought of: And therefore we ſhould lay an unſupportable Reſtraint upon our Liberty, if we were to debar ourſelves from all innocent Actions for Fear of offending ſome; or we ſhould ſtretch it too far, if we ſhould preſume to omit what is abſolutely required of us by the Laws of God, merely to avoid the Cenſure of others.

Is it to the *Good* and *Wiſe* only then, that we are thus to approve ourſelves? This perhaps were no difficult Taſk, becauſe they are not apt to miſtake, nor diſpoſed to miſconſtrue our Actions; and therefore not likely to be offended with any Thing, but what is evidently and notoriouſly ſinful. But then the Misfortune is, that this is a Limitation, which the expreſs Letter of Scripture will not admit of. For that we may not think, that we are concerned to juſtify our Conduct only to the *Wiſe*, we are taught by St *Peter*, that [z] *it is the Will of God, that, by Well-doing, we ſhould put to Silence the Ignorance of fooliſh Men:* That we may not ſatisfy ourſelves with the good Opinion and Commendation of the *Charitable* and *Good-natured*, we are inſtructed by St *Paul* to [a] *do all we can do, that we may cut off Occaſion of Cenſure, even from them, which deſire Occaſion:* That we may not acquieſce in the good Eſteem of our own Friends and Adherents, we are required [b] *to ſhew ſuch Uncorruptneſs and Sincerity, that he, who is on the contrary Part, may be aſhamed, having no evil Thing to ſay of us:* And finally, that we may not ſuppoſe any Man under ſuch a State of *Sin* or *Ignorance*, as to ſlight his Opinion, and be altogether indifferent in what Manner our Actions appear to him, we are ſtrictly enjoined, [c] *by the Manifeſtation of the Truth, to commend ourſelves to every Man's Conſcience in the Sight of God.*

WELL then, ſince, by Virtue of this Precept, we are not obliged to abſtain from all Actions, that appear evil, becauſe the moſt innocent and unblameable may appear ſo to ignorant and wicked Men; and yet, in the ordering of our Converſation, we are bound to have a Reſpect to the Opinion of all Men, and to fence our Actions againſt the Miſtakes and Calumnies of the moſt ſimple and malicious; ſince that, which to ſome will actually *appear evil*, both lawfully may, and ſometimes neceſſarily muſt be done; and yet the *Appearance of Evil* muſt at all Times, and in all Caſes, be ſtudiouſly avoided; the Duty, which reſults from the Precept, can be no other than this, —— "That we do whatever in us lies to juſtify ourſelves to Men, as

[y] *Smalridge's* Sermons. [z] 1 Pet. ii. 15. [a] 2 Cor. xi. 12. [b] Titus ii. 7. [c] 2 Cor. iv. 2.

" well as God; that we take all poſſible Care, ſo to place our innocent and laudable " Actions in their true Light, that the wrong and accidental Appearance of Evil " may not be our Fault; and that we uſe our utmoſt Endeavour to avoid that *Ap-* " *pearance of Sin*, which, after our utmoſt Endeavour, cannot always be avoided." This muſt certainly be the true Senſe of the Apoſtle's Precepts; which we will, 1. Endeavour to enforce with an Argument or two; and then, 2. Adjoin ſome ſuch Directions, as may conduce towards the Practice of it.

The Appearance of Evil, hurtful to our own Reputation.

I. [d] THAT Men, who have no other Meaſures to judge by, than outward Appearance, muſt neceſſarily judge of us according to what we *openly* ſeem to be, and not according to what we *inwardly* are; and that therefore the *Appearance* of Evil will give as deep a Wound to our Eſteem among Men, as *real* Guilt itſelf can do, is a Truth ſo evident in *Theory*, and ſo well confirmed by conſtant *Experience*, that there needs no entering into a Detail of Arguments to prove it. The only Queſtion is, whether a good Name be of that Value, as to deſerve a wiſe Man's Care, either to get it, or preſerve it; whether a ſincere Chriſtian, who ought to ſit looſe to the World, and to approve himſelf to God and his own Conſcience, ſhould let a Regard to his Reputation bear any Sway at all in the governing of his Actions; whether, when he can honeſtly ſatisfy himſelf, that what he doth is in itſelf *innocent*, though to others it may appear *offenſive*, the Fear of hurting his good Name thereby ought to reſtrain him from an Action, which, by carrying the Face of Evil, will tend to his Diſgrace. And there is the greater Room for this Queſtion, becauſe ſome *Divines*, as well as *Moraliſts*, have taken a great deal of Pains to ſhew the Emptineſs of that vain imaginary Thing (as they pleaſe to term it) which we call *Reputation*.

THIS however ſeems to be a great Miſtake: For, if we conſider the ſtrong Averſion to Shame, which the Author of our Nature has implanted in us, as a Guard againſt Sin; the warm Reſentments we feel, and the large Demands we make upon having our Reputation, at never ſo great a Diſtance, attacked: If we conſider the high Price, which both *human* and *divine* Laws ſet upon it; the *one*, making the Penalty of Slander riſe in Proportion to the Perſon that is injured; and the other ranking *Slanderers* and *Backbiters* among the Number of thoſe, [e] *that ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*: If we conſider the Chriſtian Perfection of ſpeaking well of thoſe, that ſpeak ill of us, and of ſuffering Reproach patiently, when we are reviled by Men for keeping a good Conſcience towards God; neither of which could be of any Value, if Calumny and Reproach were not evil in themſelves: Or laſtly, if we conſider, that the main Spring of thoſe laudable Actions, by which the *Worthies* of the heathen World both ſignalized themſelves, and adorned the Ages wherein they lived, was no other than the Deſire of Glory and juſt Commendation; we cannot but be concluded by the Royal Preacher's Opinion, that [f] *a good Name is better than precious Ointment*: But then, to go along with him in the *Metaphor*, we muſt ſubſcribe likewiſe to this other Obſervation, that [g] *as dead Flies cauſe the Ointment of the Apothecary to ſend forth a ſtinking Savour; ſo doth a little Folly him, that is in Reputation for Wiſdom and Honour*.

And to our Neighbour's Soul.

BUT it is not our own Reputation only, but the Salvation likewiſe of our Neighbour's Soul, that is concerned in this Affair. Were we indeed required only to *work out our own Salvation*, without any Regard to that of our Brethren, there would be leſs Occaſion for all this Circumſpection in us. Upon this Suppoſition, we might do every Thing that appeared fit and reaſonable to us, without putting ourſelves to any Pain about the Conſtruction, which others may paſs upon it: But when we are ſo frequently told, that other Mens Safety depends upon our Conduct, and that therefore we ought to exert our utmoſt Power to do every Thing that may advance it, and watch, with all poſſible Care, againſt doing any Thing, that in the leaſt may hinder it; there hence ariſes a Duty and Obligation, to guard our Actions againſt the Miſchief and Prejudice they may poſſibly do, by any ſlight Shew and *Appearance of Evil*.

UNDER the Law of *Moſes* it is provided, that, [h] *if any Man ſhall open a Pit, or if any Man ſhall dig a Pit, and not cover it, and an Ox or an Aſs fall therein, the Owner of the Pit ſhould make it good*. Now, moſt of theſe Laws, as the Apoſtle intimates, had a *figurative*, as well as a *literal* Senſe in them; and therefore this in particular may well be ſuppoſed to denote, that, as a *Jew*, when he ſunk a Pit for the Service of his Houſe or Ground, for Fear his Neighbour's

[d] *Smalridge's* Sermons. [e] 1 Cor. vi. 10. [f] Eccleſ. vii. 1. [g] Ibid. x. 1. [h] Exod. xxi. 33.

bour's Beast should fall into it, and be drowned, was bound by the Law to provide a sufficient Cover for it; so we, when we enter upon any Action, in itself innocent, and fit to be done, should do it in such a Manner, and so *cover* it against the Suspicions of Evil, that it may not, thro' our Default, be an Occasion of our Brother's Ruin. But we need not have Recourse to Allegories to find out a Duty, which is delivered in the express Letter of the Gospel. St *Paul*, in his Epistles, very often, and very largely insists upon the Obligation, which all Christians are under, to abridge their Liberty in Things otherwise indifferent, for Fear of offending or scandalizing their weaker Brethren. [l] *Take Heed*, says he to the *Corinthians*, *lest, by any Means, this Liberty of yours become a Stumbling-block to those that are weak. For if any Man see thee, which hast Knowledge, sit at Meat in the Idol's Temple, shall not the Conscience of him, which is weak, be emboldened to eat those Things, which are offered to Idols? And through thy Knowledge shall thy weak Brother perish, for whom Christ died? But, when ye sin so against the Brethren, and wound their weak Conscience, ye sin against Christ.*

THIS is a Passage so very full, that we need go no farther for Conviction: Only, for our better understanding it, it may not be amiss to observe, [k] that, in relation to the Sacrifices here spoken of, some Part of them was eaten in the Idol's Temple; which being an Act of religious Worship and Communion with the Idol, as our eating the Bread in the *Sacrament* is a Communion with Christ, the Apostle utterly disallows, as absolutely unlawful; but the Remainder of them, which fell to the Priest's Share, and they, having no Use for, sold to those, who afterwards exposed it to Sale, promiscuously among other Meats, upon the Shambles: This the Apostle allows might lawfully be bought, and eat in any *private* House, without the least Sin; only with this Caution, that whereas there were some *Converts*, who well understood, that Meat could have no defiling Quality imprinted upon it by its *Consecration* to an Idol, and others, on the contrary, who, having not so much Knowledge, supposed that the Consecration left such a polluting Quality upon it as certainly defiled the Eater; the *former* Sort might innocently and freely eat such Meats in private Families, provided it was not before those of the latter Sort, who, thro' Weakness, having an Opinion of the Unlawfulness of such Meats, might nevertheless be induced to use the same Liberty, tho' their Consciences, in the mean Time, having quite another Judgment in this Matter, esteemed the eating them little better than *Idolatry*. Now the Argument, whereby the Apostle abridges the Liberty of the former Sort of Converts, in Condescension to the latter, proceeds upon the Strength of this Assertion——That the Lawfulness of Mens Actions depends, not solely, either upon the Lawfulness of the Subject-Matter, nor yet upon the Conscience of the Doers of them, considered in itself, but as considered with Reference to the Consciences of *others*, to whom, by the Law of *Charity*, they are bound so to behave themselves, as, by none of their Actions, to give them Occasion of Sin. And therefore the Apostle concludes with this noble Resolution, as supposing it his own Case; [l] *If Meat make my Brother to offend, I will eat no Flesh, while the World standeth, lest I make my Brother to offend.*

II. SINCE *the Appearance of Evil* then, even in the most indifferent Actions, may prove prejudicial both to our own Reputation, and the Salvation of our Neighbour's Soul, it cannot but be of Use to insert a Direction or two, how we may happily avoid it: And, to this Purpose, it must be allowed, 1. That the Foundation of a fair Appearance in the World must be primarily laid in the inward Sincerity of the Heart: For the shortest, and safest, and perhaps the only Way, to appear good and virtuous, is really to be such, as we desire to appear. [m] *If we first seek the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness*, we have a sure Gospel-Promise, that all other Things, which we want, the Necessaries and Comforts of Life, shall be super-added to us; and, in like Manner, if we make it our principal Aim, to approve ourselves in the Sight of God, we may securely depend upon his Goodness, that *he*, who can turn the Hearts of Men as he pleases, will dispose them to think well of us, and to judge favourably and tenderly of all our Actions. Nay, this will follow in the Way of natural Consequence: For when once Integrity, and an uniform Practice of Virtue, founded upon religious Principles, have established our Character, and procured us a good Esteem in the World, this Reputation will be the best Guard against unkind Suspicions,

Directions how to avoid it; as,

1. *Inward Sincerity.*

[l] 1 Cor. viii. 9, &c. [k] *South*'s Sermons, Vol. III. [l] 1 Cor. viii. 13. [m] Luke xii. 31.

Suſpicions, and ſevere Cenſures. What is *doubtful* in our Carriage, and admits of ſeveral Interpretations, will be conſtrued in *Analogy* to what was, without Controverſy, worthy of Praiſe: An Eſteem for our Perſons, gained by what we have done *confeſſedly well*, will incline Men to judge the beſt of thoſe Actions, which are not *manifeſtly evil*; and thoſe, who have entertained a favourable Opinion of us, for our former good Life, will be deſirous to continue it, to ſhew the Steadineſs of their own Judgment, as well as Eſteem and Affection for us.

2. Outward Prudence.

AND as an honeſt Sincerity of Heart, and Integrity of Mind, is the beſt Way to ſecure our Actions from *an evil Appearance*; ſo, 2. The Apoſtle has laid it down as a certain Rule, that Prudence and Circumſpection in our outward Behaviour is the beſt Guard of Integrity, and the greateſt Ornament of Virtue: [n] *See*, therefore, (ſays he to the *Epheſians*) *that ye walk circumſpectly, not as Fools*, who unneceſſarily expoſe themſelves to Danger, to being ill uſed, or evil-ſpoken of; *but as wiſe*, who are careful to ſecure their Intereſt, and their good Name, where they can ſhelter themſelves from Suffering, and from Diſgrace, by behaving themſelves with Diſcretion: And, in like Manner, to the *Coloſſians, walk in Wiſdom toward them that are without, i. e.* towards the Adverſaries of your Religion, who will be careful to watch all your Steps, and lay hold on any imprudent, any indiſcreet, any unwary Carriage, whereby they may caſt a Blemiſh upon you, and your holy Profeſſion: And, upon this Account, the good Advice, which our Saviour, in his Time, gave his Apoſtles, is very applicable, in this ill-natured and inſidious World, to all Chriſtians, in all Ages, [o] *Behold, I ſend you forth as Sheep in the Midſt of Wolves, be ye therefore wiſe as Serpents, and harmleſs as Doves.*

3. Setting our Virtues in a clear Light.

WE muſt obſerve farther, that as there is ſcarce any one Vice, which does not borrow the Features of ſome Virtue, nor any Virtue, which, to a tranſient and careleſs View, may not, perhaps, ſeem to have the Colour of ſome Vice; and as it is this *Likeneſs*, which gives room to the erroneous Judgment of the *Ignorant*, or the wilful Miſrepreſentations of the Malicious: If ever therefore we would ſecure our *innocent*, and even *commendable* Actions, from an *evil Appearance*, we muſt be very diligent to *diſtinguiſh* them from thoſe particular Vices, from which they may chance to be miſtaken.

THUS, for Inſtance, Devotion and Hypocriſy, Zeal and Paſſion, Moderation and Lukewarmneſs, Prudence and Cunning, *&c.* have ſome *Lineaments*, ſo much reſembling each other, and, by being ſo frequently called by each other's Names, are ſo liable to be taken the one for the other; that, unleſs we attend carefully to theſe particular Circumſtances, in which they differ, and ſtudy to expreſs theſe diſtinct Characters in our Practice, the World muſt be much better-natured, than we have Reaſon to expect it is, *if our Good be not evil-ſpoken of.*

WOULD a truly *devout* Perſon then not be ſuſpected of *Hypocriſy:* In his *publick* Devotions, he muſt take Care, that there be nothing ſingular or affected; that, in his Countenance, in his Geſtures, in his Voice, there be no Air or Appearance of Oſtentation; and, in his *private Devotions*, he muſt ſtrictly attend to our Bleſſed Saviour's Direction; [p] *When thou prayeſt, enter into thy Cloſet, ſhut thy Door, and when thou haſt ſhut thy Door, pray to thy Father, which is in Secret; and thy Father, which ſeeth in Secret, ſhall reward thee openly.* Would a *zealous* Perſon not be looked upon as *paſſionate:* He muſt take ſtrict Care, that his Zeal be guided with Knowledge, and tempered with Charity; that it be more converſant about Things, than about Perſons; bear a due Proportion to the Objects that employ it; and, above all, that it be not ſo intemperate and outrageous, as either to eat himſelf up, or put him upon devouring his Chriſtian Brethren. In like Manner, would a *moderate* Perſon avoid the Imputation of being *Lukewarm:* He muſt take Care to be moderate only in ſuch Things, wherein there is Danger of Exceſs; but, in thoſe Things, wherein it is laudable to excel, he muſt not affect *Moderation.* About Things, in their own Nature *indifferent*, he may be indifferent too, or not very much concerned; but it would badly become him to be thought a *moderate Lover* of Piety and Virtue, of Peace and good Order; one, that has a moderate Concern for the Laws and Liberties of his Country, or for the Welfare and Proſperity of his Church.

THESE Inſtances, without proceeding any farther, are ſufficient to ſhew us, that, how reſemblant ſoever Virtue and Vice may be, there are certain Notes and Characters, whereby we may diſtinguiſh them, not only in our Thoughts, but in our Practice; and that, therefore, to avoid the *Appearance of Evil*, it is highly expedient and

[n] Eph. v. 15. [o] Luke x. 3. [p] Matth. vi. 6.

and neceſſary, that we endeavour to expreſs this Difference in the whole Conduct of our Lives, as fully, and ſignificantly as we poſſibly can; but, if all this will not do to conciliate the good Opinion of a perverſe World, the Apoſtle's Advice will then come in to our Comfort and Relief: [q] *Sanctify the Lord God in your Hearts, and be always ready to give an Anſwer to every Man, that aſketh you a Reaſon of the Hope that is in you, with Meekneſs and Fear: Having a good Conſcience, that, whereas they ſpeak Evil of you, as of Evil-doers, they may be aſhamed, that falſely accuſe your good Converſation in Chriſt*; and others, [r] *by your good Works, which they behold, may glorify God in the Day of Viſitation.*

Of the Deſire of Righteouſneſs.

BLESSED *are they which do hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled,* is one of the happy Sentences of our Saviour's Sermon upon the Mount, and may be a proper Argument for the Concluſion of this Work. By *Righteouſneſs* here, we are to underſtand the whole Duty of Man, in all Relations and Capacities; or that Integrity of Obedience, and univerſal Regard to all God's Commandments, which thoſe, that endeavour to ſerve him in Sincerity and Truth, are ready, on all Occaſions, to expreſs, both in their Temper of Mind, and outward Behaviour: And *to hunger and thirſt after this Righteouſneſs* [s] implies an ardent and intenſe Deſire of it; ſuch a Deſire, as will not be ſatisfied without it; ſuch a Deſire, as puts Men upon trying all poſſible Means, and uſing their utmoſt Endeavours to attain it. 'Tis an earneſt Appetite and Intention of Mind to *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*; to follow his Example, and to be *counted worthy of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.* 'Tis a ſincere Endeavour [u] to mortify all the Remains of Sin in us, to get the perfect *Maſtery* of our Affections and Paſſions, and to bring them under an entire Subjection to the Law of God; to increaſe daily in all Chriſtian Virtues; and to walk in every Thing, as it becomes the Profeſſors of a moſt holy Religion. 'Tis a fervent Breathing after greater Degrees of Charity, Humility, Patience, and all other Graces; [x] *forgetting thoſe Things, that are behind,* the Pitch of Goodneſs we have already attained; *and reaching forth unto thoſe Things, that are before,* that Perfection in Piety and Virtue, which alone can ſatisfy a generous Chriſtian; *and preſſing towards the Mark of the Prize of the high Calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus:* A Weaning our Hearts from the World, and fixing them upon that happy State, where we ſhall ſin no more, but be eſtabliſhed for ever in conſummate Righteouſneſs. In ſhort, 'tis ſuch an eager and importunate, ſuch a ſincere and efficacious Deſire for all this, as the Man, who is almoſt *famiſhed* with Hunger, and *parched* up with Drought, has for that Meat and Drink, with which, if he be not ſoon ſupplied, he knows he muſt unavoidably periſh.

The Deſire of Righteouſneſs, what.

THIS is the full Force of the *Metaphor*, and proper Import of the Duty; and the Reward annexed to it, though comprized in theſe few Words, *they ſhall be filled*, is, in itſelf, of an adequate Extent. For, 1. *They ſhall be filled* with the Righteouſneſs, they deſire. 2. *They ſhall be filled* with Comfort and Satisfaction of Mind *here*; and, 3. *They ſhall be filled* with all imaginable Happineſs *hereafter.*

The Bleſſing and Reward of it are,

1. THE great Deſign of God, from the Beginning of the World, was, that all Mankind might ſerve him in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, and be accordingly rewarded by him; and, to effect this, he, in his infinite Wiſdom, has contrived many wonderful Ways. [y] He has imprinted the Law of Righteouſneſs upon the Hearts and Conſciences of Men; he hath bound it up with their Reaſon and Underſtanding; he hath ſent his Son into the World to promote the Practice of it, both by his Inſtruction and Example; by his Holy Spirit he begins the good Work, where it is not, and cheriſhes it, where it is begun: and, in ſhort, he hath omitted no Methods of engaging us; all that Promiſes and Threatenings, that kind Intreaties and vehement Expoſtulations can do, he hath not left unattempted; and, after all this, it would be incongruous to think, that he will refuſe the Gift of Righteouſneſs and Sanctification to ſuch, as heartily deſire and endeavour it. We cannot ſay ſo

1. *The Acquiſition of Righteouſneſs.*

[q] 1 Pet. iii. 15, 16. [r] Ibid. ii. 12. [s] Matth. v. 6. [t] *Blackwell's* Sermons, Vol. I.
[u] *Gardiner's* Sermons. [x] Phil. iii. 13, 14. [y] *Gardiner*, ibid. 1

with Reſpect to the Bleſſings of this preſent Life: *The Race*, as the wiſe Man obſerves, *is not always to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong, nor Bread to the Wiſe, nor Riches to Men of Underſtanding, nor yet Favour to Men of Skill; but Time and Chance happen to them all.* Though Art and Induſtry do naturally tend to make Men rich, yet they are often blaſted in the Event. Experience is a ſtanding Evidence of this, that neither Fraud nor Honeſty, Righteouſneſs nor Unrighteouſneſs, the moſt likely Endeavours, nor the moſt diligent Application can effectually command the Things of this World: But it is not ſo with the Bleſſings, that are better worth enjoying. There is no Defeat in the Endeavours after *Righteouſneſs*. A Man cannot be diſappointed, who labours to be *virtuous*. The Love and Deſire of the Thing does naturally enforce the *Practice*, and the Practice brings on the *Habit*, and the Habit is continually ſtrengthened by the *Influence* of God's Holy Spirit, till it be finally confirmed and rewarded in Glory. God may refuſe, and refuſe, in Kindneſs, to hear the Prayers even of a good Man, when he prays for *temporal* Bleſſings; but he never refuſes (at leaſt he never does it in Mercy) to grant Requeſts for *Spiritual*; upon which Preſumption it is, that *Solomon* founds this Exhortation: [a] *If thou crieſt after Knowledge, and liſteſt up thy Voice for Underſtanding; if thou ſeekeſt her, as Silver, and ſearcheſt for her, as for hid Treaſures; then ſhalt thou underſtand the Fear of the Lord, and find the Knowledge of God; then ſhalt thou underſtand Righteouſneſs, and Judgment, and Equity, and every good Path.*

Comfort and Satisfaction here, eſpecially at the Hour of Death.

2. He *ſhall be filled* with Comfort and Satisfaction *here*. The Progreſs and Proficiency he makes in the Ways of *Righteouſneſs* will fill him with a ſpiritual Joy, far exceeding the Pleaſure, which any Thing elſe in this World can afford. For God has ſo adapted Religion to the Mind of Man, that, though there be *Labour* in the Undertaking, yet there is always a *Reliſh* that goes along with it. The conquering of an evil Habit, or a ſtrong Temptation, is like the conquering of a powerful Enemy, difficult to perform, but what, when accompliſhed, fills him with mighty Joy and Triumph. Every Grace he obtains, every ſinful Inclination he ſubdues, every good Action he performs, is no leſs, than a new Conveyance to him of eternal Glory, a new Aſſurance of his Right and Title; and this, being what is congenial to his Soul, muſt be entirely agreeable to all his Faculties. But we have not Time to follow the righteous Man through all the pleaſurable Perceptions of his Life; and ſhall therefore chuſe to conſider him only, as he is drawing to the Period of it: When, if ever, he will rightly underſtand the ineſtimable Price of a quiet Conſcience, of a ſatisfied Mind, and of an Hope full of Glory and Immortality: When, if ever, he will find That, which was always a *continual Feaſt*, then a ſovereign *Cordial*, and Food of Angels; for never certainly is Peace and Comfort more ſeaſonable, than at this Inſtant.

[b] What an unſpeakable Satisfaction then muſt it be to a dying Man, when, if he looks *backward*, he ſees a Life well ſpent; if *forward*, he has before him a bright Proſpect of immortal Glory: When he can ſay, with King *Hezekiah*, [c] *Remember now, O Lord, I beſeech thee, how I walked before thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart*; or, with the great Apoſtle, even when within View of his Diſſolution, [d] *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, ſhall give me at that Day.* It muſt needs, I ſay, be an unſpeakable and inconceivable Satisfaction for a Man in his laſt Hour, when he is taking Leave of his Body, and ſhaking Hands with the whole World; when all are ſad about him, and concerned for him; then to conſider, that there is a better State, and that he has a Title to it; that, when his [e] *earthly Tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved*, he has *a Building with God, an Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens*; that, when he ſhall ceaſe to converſe with Men, he ſhall dwell with God, and converſe with Angels; in a Word, that he is to leave nothing but Vanities and Shadows behind him, and that he has the ſolid and real Happineſs of a whole Eternity before him. What a mild and unterrifying Thing is Death to ſuch a Man as this, and with what Serenity and Chearfulneſs does he entertain its Summons! He can ſmile in the Phyſician's Face, when he hears him pronounce his Sickneſs deſperate; can receive his Sentence without Trembling, and, if his Senſes hold out ſo long, can hear even his *Paſſing-Bell* without Diſturbance. So true is that of the Prophet, [f] *the Work*

[a] Eccleſ. ix. 11. [a] Prov. ii. 3, 4, 5, 9. [b] *Norris*'s Diſcourſes, Vol. II. [c] Iſa. xxxviii. 3. [d] 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. [e] 2 Cor. v. 1. [f] Iſa. xxxii. 17.

Work of Righteousness shall be Peace, and the Effect of Righteousness, Quietness, and Assurance for ever.

And Happiness hereafter.

3. THEY *shall be filled* with all imaginable Happiness *hereafter*. For when all their Sins shall be pardoned and done away; when their Righteousness shall be advanced to a full Strength and Perfection; when they [g] *shall awake up after the Likeness of God*, and, with joyful Acclamations, be conducted into his glorious Presence; so far shall their Happiness be from falling short of their present Expectation, that it will far exceed, not only what *Eye hath seen, or Ear heard*, but every Thing, that can now *enter into the Heart of Man to conceive*: For [h] *they shall be before the Throne of God, and he, that sitteth on the Throne, shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more: The Lamb, which is in the Midst of the Throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living Fountains of Waters; and God*, who is their Portion and their Inheritance, [i] *in whose Presence there is Fulness of Joy, and at whose Right-hand there are Pleasures for evermore, shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes.*

[k] FINALLY then, *my Brethren*, since *Godliness has the Promises both of this Life, and of that which is to come*, we cannot conclude, better, than with St *Paul*'s Advice to the *Philippians*; *whatsoever Things are true, whatsoever Things are honest, whatsoever Things are pure, whatsoever Things are lovely, whatsoever Things are of good Report; if there be any Virtue, if there be any Praise, think on these Things, and the God of Peace shall be with you.*

[g] Psal. xvii. 15. [h] Rev. vii. 15. [i] Psal. xvi. 11. [k] Phil. iv. 8, 9.

FINIS.

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